

I FEEL
SLOVENIA

 **SLOVENIA**
EUROPEAN REGION OF GASTRONOMY
CANDIDATE 2021



TASTE SLOVENIA
Okusiti Slovenijo

Slovenija's candidature to become European Region of Gastronomy

2021

04	Slovenia. Green. Active. Healthy.
06	Where gastronomic diversity meets local flavours
08	About the development of Slovenia's gastronomy
14	Gastronomic strategy of Slovenia
16	Protection of food items and dishes
18	Local and regional brands related to cuisine and gastronomy
20	Viticulture, wine production and beer brewing
24	Slovenian Food Day and Traditional Slovenian Breakfast
26	Bees – bearers of sweet pleasures and health
28	Gastronomy and tourism
30	Culinary and gastronomic events
34	Slovenia's candidature
36	Objectives and guidelines
40	Projects and programmes planned by interested partners
48	Financial framework of the project
50	European partnership and collaboration with other European Region of Gastronomy Platform partners
52	Education and training
54	Involvement of the population
56	Supporting small and medium-sized enterprises
58	Marketing, communication and promotion
60	Monitoring and evaluation
64	Ambassadors of the project
66	Partners of the Slovenia European Region of Gastronomy 2018–2022 project





Slovenian President Borut Pahor visiting the second national potička baking competition, Žužembek 2016



*CANDIDACY OF THE REPUBLIC
OF SLOVENIA FOR
EUROPEAN REGION OF GASTRONOMY 2021
IS UNDER THE HONORARY PATRONAGE OF
His Excellency Mr Borut Pahor,
President of the Republic of Slovenia*

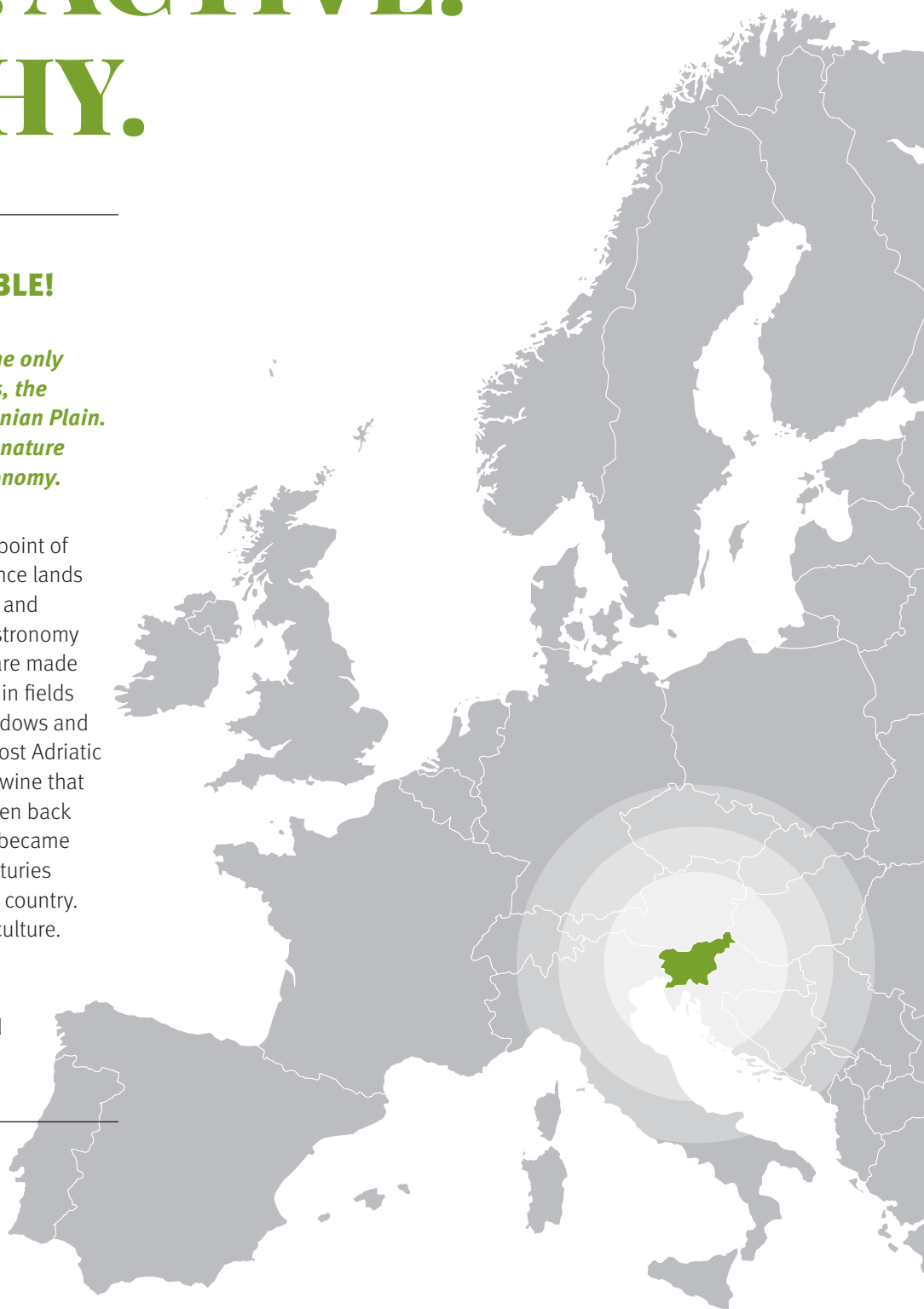
SLOVENIA. GREEN. ACTIVE. HEALTHY.

SO DIFFERENT. SO ACCESSIBLE!

Green, active and healthy, Slovenia is the only European country that connects the Alps, the Mediterranean, the Karst and the Pannonian Plain. Its exceptionally diverse landscape and nature are tied to a colourful culture and gastronomy.

At the very heart of Europe, at the meeting point of the Germanic world to the north, the Romance lands to the west, the Slavic Balkans to the south and Hungary to the east, is where Slovenian gastronomy evolved through history. Slovenian dishes are made with local ingredients: from produce grown in fields and gardens, to ingredients foraged in meadows and forests, salt harvested from the northern-most Adriatic salt pans, honey made by native bees, and wine that was a common drink around these parts even back in Antiquity, to healthy mineral waters that became the focal point of world-renowned spas centuries ago. Slovenia is a green, healthy and active country. Diverse gastronomy is therefore part of its culture.

Slovenians preserve and cultivate it with the utmost respect for the environment and principles of sustainable development.



population of
2,065 million

20,273 km²
surface area

10,000 km²
of forests

26,000 km
of watercourses

46,6 km
of coastline

Mt. Triglav 2,864 m
the highest peak

over 10,000
karst caves

13.29 %
of the surface covered
by protected areas

Ljubljana
the capital

Slovenian
the official language
(also Hungarian and Italian
in ethnically mixed territories)

1 May 2004
accession to the
European Union

476,682 hectares
of agricultural land in use



wine



wheat



hops



potatoes



grapes



meat



maize

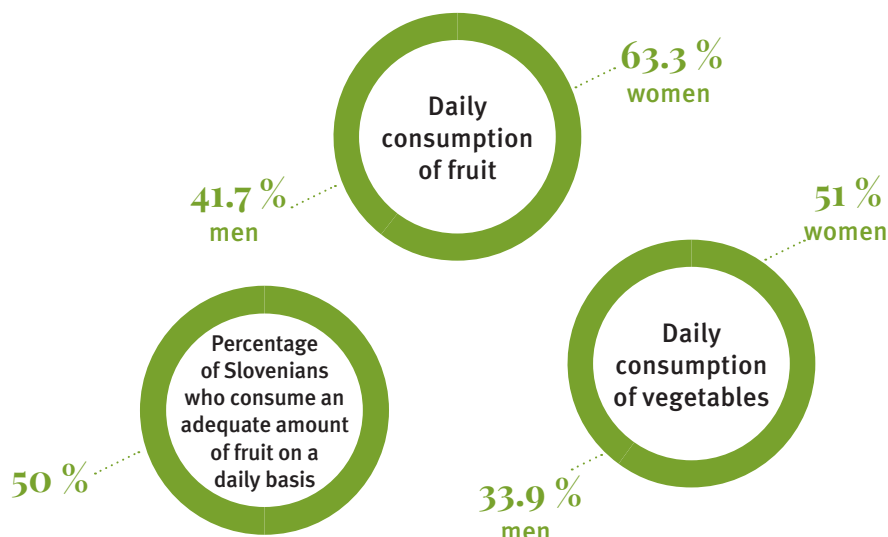


apples



milk

main agricultural products



20 May
World Bee Day



On Slovenia's initiative, the United Nations proclaimed 20 May as World Bee Day, a day for raising awareness on the extraordinary significance of bees for the survival of humankind.



WHERE GASTRONOMIC DIVERSITY MEETS LOCAL FLAVOURS

In Slovenia, the grain fields are entwined with wine-growing hills, forests converge with Alpine meadows, where bovine and small cattle graze, luxuriant gardens alongside people's houses flow into meadow orchards, and olive groves offer vistas of the sea. Slovenian cuisine draws its originality from nature, and its cosmopolitan spirit from the influences of the four corners of Europe.

Notable features of Slovenia's gastronomic image



THE ALPS



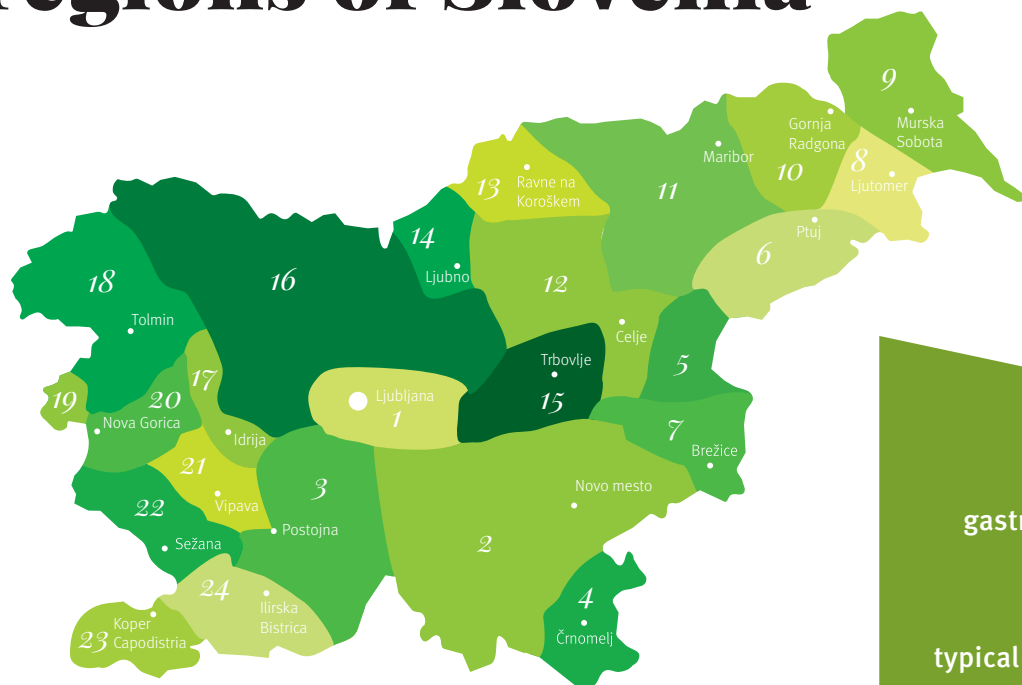
THE MEDITERRANEAN AND THE KARST



THE PANNONIAN PLAIN

Notable features of Slovenia's gastronomic image stem from its unique cultural and developmental juncture of the European **Alpine, Mediterranean, Karst and Pannonian areas**, which over the centuries dictated the development and shaping of the specific cultural and life styles in the territory now known as the Republic of Slovenia.

Gastronomic regions of Slovenia



24
gastronomic regions

365
typical local and regional dishes and drinks

3
wine regions

1. Ljubljana and surroundings
2. Dolenjska and Kočevska
3. Notranjska
4. Bela krajina
5. Kozjansko
6. Haloze, the area below Donačka gora and Boč, Ptujsko polje (Ptuj plain)
7. Posavje and Bizeljsko
8. Prlekija
9. Prekmurje
10. Slovenske gorice
11. Maribor, Pohorje, Drava valley and Kozjak
12. Celje, lower Savinja and Šaleška valley, Laško
13. Koroška
14. Upper Savinja valley
15. Zasavje
16. Gorenjska
17. Rovtarsko, Idrijsko, Cerkljansko
18. The Soča valley
19. Goriška brda
20. Goriška
21. The Vipava valley
22. Kras (Karst)
23. Slovenian Istria
24. Brkini, the Karst fringes

About the development of Slovenia's gastronomy



The gastronomic heritage developed through history

under the influence of numerous factors. Upon populating this area in the 6th century, the Slavic settlers encountered indigenous inhabitants, people who had a significant impact on the economic life and, indirectly, eating. This is true of, for example, processing milk into dairy products, especially cheese-making. Through a lengthy process (lasting at least to the 9th century and even longer in some parts), a unified Slovenian ethnic community evolved from various groups of Slavic settlers. Its nutrition was influenced considerably by the feudal lords and foreign colonisation of individual parts of the Slovenian territory, the growing towns, and, above all, the multi-faceted trading, which stemmed from the remarkable transport position of the Slovenian territory, located between the Mediterranean, Central Europe and partially also the neighbouring Balkans. In the Middle Ages, the range of food items available was relatively modest. Because grains and bread were scarce, the most common dishes were various types of **mush, broad beans** and other legumes. People also ate **peas, lentils, cabbage** and **turnips**, and produced oil from **poppy seeds** and **flax seeds** (as well as from gourd seeds, but this was much later). On festive occasions, they had flat cakes and pork or other meat products, which they made at **koline**, i.e. upon slaughtering a pig and processing its meat into various products. Far from being merely a technological process, killing a pig was considered to be the biggest Slovenian secular holiday and has retained a number of different local features up to the present-day. **Honey** and **dairy products** held a special place in people's diet. Here, one could speak of the heritage of Slovenia's first brands.

From the 15th century on, the Slovenian lands witnessed the arrival of



buckwheat, which profoundly changed people's eating habits. A similar process occurred with **maize**, which became more widespread in the 17th century, along with **beans** and, in the second half of the 18th century, **potatoes**, which went on to become one of the most popular dishes in Slovenia a century later.

In the second half of the 18th century and in the 19th century, Slovenia, part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy at the time, adopted numerous new items that could be found on the menus from the Danube region. Certain typical Slovenian dishes gained international renown (e.g. **potica**, a special rolled dough cake with various fillings, **kranjska klobasa** or Carniolan sausage, and **Štruklji**, a strudel). The most significant achievement of the enlightenment period, which spanned several years of the French occupation, is the first cookery book in Slovenian (**Valentin**



Vodnik, Kuharske bukve, Ljubljana 1799

The cookery terminology and naming of dishes as well as the methods of food preparation described in this book are a testament to how evolved Slovenian culinary terminology already was at that time.

From the second half of the 19th century on, Slovenian culinary art became increasingly rich through more and more literature on the subject. No longer merely translations of foreign publications, these were the result of experience gained by Slovenian women authors. Among them is **Slovenska kuharica** (Slovenian Cookbook) by **Magdalena Knafelj Pleiweis** (Ljubljana, 1868), which has remained the most frequently reprinted cookbook, accompanied by the works of sister **Felicita Kalinšek** and many other female authors right up to the present-day.



The 19th century saw Slovenian Alpine towns and regions becoming actively involved in the budding European and international tourism. Tourist centres such as Bled, Rogaška Slatina, Dobrna and, a little later on, also Portorož with its hotels and restaurants, contributed significantly to the development of the gastronomic culture and training of personnel. Minor resorts and inns (with accommodation) situated near railway stations also introduced numerous new features and culinary knowledge. This was the result of frequent cookery classes and schools organised in rural areas and towns.



A new era in the evolution of Slovenia's culinary and gastronomic culture was ushered in by the periods of political and state ties with the Balkans, specifically after 1918 with the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and from 1945 to 1991 with Socialist Yugoslavia. In addition to major social changes and changes in the population structure, this period saw the arrival of various Balkan dishes in Slovenia, the most notable among them being grilled dishes (e.g. **čevapčiči** (sausage-shaped minced meat), **ražnjiči** (meat on a skewer), etc.), with **baklava** and **Turkish delight** representing the range of desserts. As the Italian **pizza** began its successful conquest in the 1960s, a similar journey was undertaken around the same time by the Balkan dish called **burek** (a baked phyllo pastry featuring various fillings). **Peppers, watermelons** and **melons** also became widely used.

In 1926, the Gostilničarska šola (Innkeepers' School) was opened in Maribor, and the first vocational catering school in Ljubljana was established in 1937. Since 1945, its work has been carried on by the first Secondary School for Catering and Tourism in Ljubljana, which was reformed into a vocational catering school after 1954. After 1965, eight more vocational catering schools were established in Slovenia, which have operated as secondary schools for catering and tourism from 1981 on.

After Slovenia gained its independence in 1991, the discovery of certain distinct features of its food began on a larger scale. At that time, there was a significant rise in the number of published books offering an overview of the regional culinary and gastronomic characteristics, as well as monographs on certain groups of dishes. The first culinary map of Slovenia was drawn

in 2001. In the same year, the highly popular **Society for the Recognition of Sautéed Potatoes as an Independent Dish** was established in Ljubljana. The 1990s saw the slow food movement spreading across Slovenia from neighbouring Italy, with several regional centres; although its influence is somewhat diminished today, it had a number of positive impacts on the development of modern Slovenian cuisine. Since 2005, the oldest international gastronomy association has been operating in Slovenia with great success, namely the **Chaîne des Rôtisseurs (Bailliage National de Slovénie)**, whose activities have a significant effect on the development of cuisine and gastronomy. As elsewhere in the world, it unites select, premium Slovenian restaurants and inns as well as certain wine cellars and numerous amateur members. The international **Jeunes Restaurateurs d'Europe** association has also been active for a few years now. In 2018, Slovenia will welcome the arrival of **Gault & Millau**, the international restaurant guide. A prestigious Slovenian selection of the top 100 restaurants competing for **The Slovenia Restaurant Award** takes place every year.

Internationally, individual top Slovenian chefs are becoming increasingly well-known. In addition to the **Slovenian National Culinary Team**, certain chefs have earned an international reputation, such as **Janez Bratovž** (in 2010 ranked among the 100 world's best restaurants on the San Pellegrino list), **Ana Roš** (World's Best Female Chef 2017 and ambassador of Slovenian tourism), **Tomaž Kavčič**, **Igor Jagodic**, **Uroš Štefelin**, **Bine Volčič**, **Luka Jezeršek**, **Jure Tomič** (2016 Pasta World Champion in Parma, Italy), **Luka Košir**, **Andrej Kuhar** (the only Slovenian recipient of a Michelin star for his former restaurant in Germany) and more.

In cuisine and gastronomy, numerous **wine associations** and informal communities are also very important, as they are founded on raising the wine and beer drinking culture, as well as pairing the diverse range of Slovenian wines with food.

Although still relatively unknown internationally, Slovenian cuisine is one of the most intriguing gastronomic environments in Europe precisely due to its dynamic development as presented above. This is especially attested by the abundant range of high-quality regional items in the most typical food service establishments called **gostilna**, i.e. inns, which constitute one of the most distinct symbols of Slovenia and are based on a more or less old family heritage and tradition. In addition to inns, Slovenia boasts a number of top **restaurants**, most of them located in Ljubljana and the surrounding area, along with a network of **farm tourism establishments**.

Slovenia places great importance on its **own production of food**. Its people produce quality food in their own gardens and fields. In Slovenia, the potato is featured prominently, while buckwheat is a very popular grain and is used in numerous savoury and sweet dishes. Milk and dairy products are of superior quality because the farm animals graze in a healthy natural environment, which provides them with natural fodder. No less exceptional is the quality of various types of meat, including game, which is reflected in the broad range of cured meat products. Although pig farming has experienced a decline, the situation is on the mend. Native plants and animal species are being introduced in numerous areas of food production. This also applies to the wines indigenous to the three wine-growing regions.

Neighbouring Italy has had the most significant influence on the area of the Slovenian Mediterranean, i.e. in the Primorje region. In Piran Bay, the **Piran sea bass** of the Fonda Fish Farm is grown in line with the optimum biological

methods, while the Sečovelje Salt Pans produce **sea salt** and the exquisite **Fleur de Sel (salt flower)**, which is prized by the world's top restaurants. Karst dishes feature combinations of vegetables, meat sauces, pasta and **Karst prosciutto**, accompanied with superior wines such as **teran**, thus undoubtedly adding to the wonderful experience of learning about this picturesque landscape and its people. In the spring, nothing could be better than the outstanding omelette called **frtalja**. Similar dishes can be found in the Karst Edge area, Istria and coastal towns, where they are accompanied by combinations of dishes made with sea fish and seafood, as well as the excellent **refošk** and **malvazija** wines, which perfectly round off the dishes prepared with Mediterranean herbs and spices. In the Soča Valley, Kobarid and the surrounding areas alone are a veritable treasure trove of exquisite cuisine featuring a mix of traditional and innovative dishes.

Central Slovenia with Ljubljana and the surrounding areas offers delicious original dishes under the brand of Taste Ljubljana such as wheat or buckwheat **štruklji** (strudel with walnut, tarragon, apple or cottage cheese filling), as well



Mineral water spring, Nuskova



Walnut Slovenian Potica

as a wide variety of **potica** cakes, among which the walnut, tarragon, honey and raisin varieties stand out the most.

Poppyseed potica cake is first and foremost a dish typical of Prekmurje, a region that features a plethora of flour-based dishes. This area and the nearby regions are home to a variety of dishes universally referred to as **pogača** (these are flat cakes bearing names such as **gibanica, kvasenica, zle/j/vanka, posolonka, krapci**) and a wide range of various types of **bread**. As elsewhere in Slovenia, **koline** gatherings are a particularly special event that results in a number of fresh, semi-durable and cured meat products, including **prekmurska šunka (Prekmurje ham)** and **prleška tünka (meat preserved in a lard**

barrel). The Koroška region is famed for its meat dish of **mežerle** or **mežerli**, which is an excellent warm appetizer made from pork lung and intestines. In the Gorenjska region, people still prepare certain special dishes, such as **ajdovi krapci** (buckwheat flour pastry pockets filled with cottage cheese or dried fruit filling) or **masounik** (lard-dressed dish made from sour and sweet cream and flour). **Buckwheat mush with beans** or **mushrooms (ajdova kaša)** is also delicious. The most notable dish is called **ajdovi žganci (buckwheat mush)** with sauerkraut or turnips, while the Primorje region is more known for various other flour-based dishes and pasta (e.g. **gnocchi**). Bled takes pride in its **Bled cream slice**, called **kremšnita**.

Freshwater fish lovers will enjoy the premium delicacies that are the **American brook trout** and the **Bohinj lake trout**, which can be prepared in several ways, including frying them in buckwheat or corn flour.

The third freshwater fish speciality is the **Soča trout**, which is rolled in corn flour and fried to a crisp perfection. In the Dolenjska region, various types of **štruklji (strudel)** are prepared, which are flour-based cooked or baked rolls featuring cheese, walnut or apple filling. Another speciality from Dolenjska is **matevž**, a creamy dish made of beans and potatoes that can be served as a side dish or a dish on its own. Another typical dish of the region is **štruklji** with various savoury or sweet fillings. In addition to being home to the masters of **roast lamb and sucking pigs**, Bela Krajina features three local, protected flatbreads, namely **belokranjska povitica (Bela Krajina nut roll)**, **belokranjska pogača (Bela Krajina flatbread)** and **prosta povitica (the simple nut roll)**. Different kinds of **soups, stews** and delicious **hotpots (šelinka (hotpot with celery), jota and mineštra** in the Primorje region, and **bograč** in the Prekmurje region) are staple dishes across Slovenia. **Poultry** is quite a frequent feature of Slovenian menus. In addition to the popular fried **chicken, roast duck** and **geese** are also worth mentioning. These are ceremonially served upon Slovenia's greatest wine **festivity of St Martin's Day** (11 November), when Slovenians celebrate the new wine vintage.

The culinary range is rounded off with many types of fresh, preserved or dried fruit, along with cider and pear brandy, as well as various fruit or grape-based spirits, spirits with forest fruits and medicinal herbs. The greatest wealth of Slovenia's gastronomy comes from the natural mineral and spring **water**.

Slovenia's gastronomic strategy

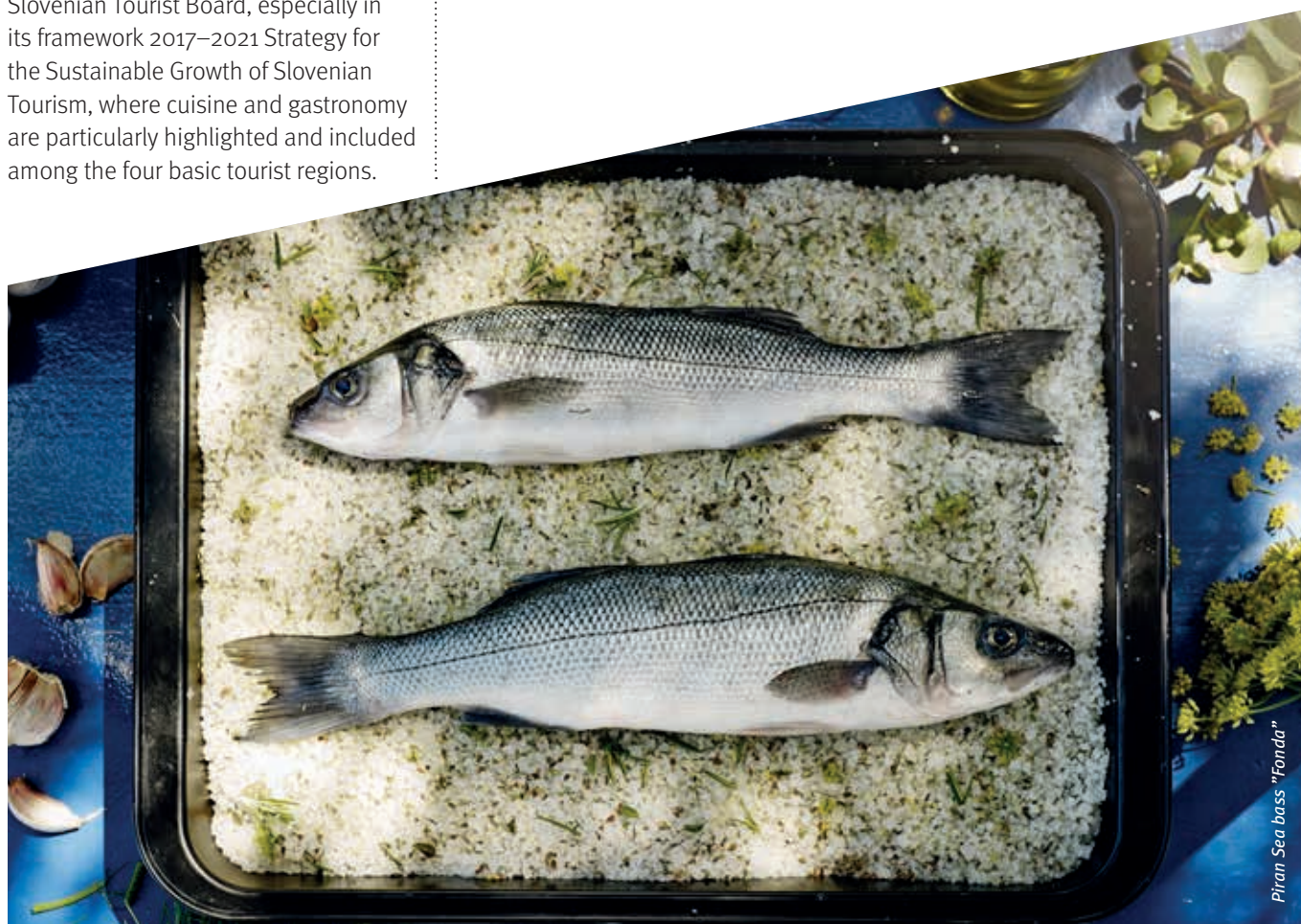


Mašter, chef Tomaž Kavčič

At the turn of the 21st century, Slovenia's cuisine and gastronomy were relatively unknown to the world. The degree to which they were included in tourist services was rather modest. As the interest in these two areas grew on a global level, and the publication of culinary literature increased, along with culinary events, they became increasingly important elements of tourism-related and general efforts. Slovenia's gastronomy was still an undiscovered gem of food diversity, which required a systematic approach in order to become visible and promoted on an international scale. In 2006, the **Development Strategy of Slovenia's Gastronomy** (Maribor, 2006, 263 pages) was formulated and became the fundamental and guiding document for the promotion and development of Slovenia's gastronomy. Although its core purpose was to set up a model for the development and promotion of gastronomy to meet the needs of Slovenia's tourism, it soon became clear that it went beyond mere tourism. The significance of gastronomy is in fact much broader, playing an important role in the promotion of Slovenia, and is also relevant at the entrepreneurial, local, regional and international levels. The more specific purpose of the strategy is to help achieve comprehensive recognisability of Slovenia as a green, healthy and active tourist country. It lists the measures that are essential for the development of gastronomy and pertain to economy, culture, education, etc. The gastronomic pyramid was determined as the foundation of gastronomic recognisability. In addition to the complete national gastronomic wealth (heritage) and modern forms, the pyramid comprises as many as **24 gastronomic regions**. These are self-contained cultural and geographic areas, where the concentration of a certain number of dishes is highest and enables clear demarcation. After

some amendments, these 24 regions now feature **365 typical, i.e. flagship dishes and drinks**. From this range, a distinct top of the gastronomic pyramid was determined, which serves as the essential starting point of Slovenia's gastronomic recognisability. The Strategy also determines the central slogan of gastronomic recognisability, namely **Taste Slovenia (Okusiti Slovenijo)** or, alternatively, **Tastes of Slovenia (Okusi Slovenije)**. The important elements of the Strategy include the marketing strategy, which involves pinpointing target segments and key foreign markets, as well as issues pertaining to legislation and education and determining measures to be taken in Slovenian gastronomy. In over a decade, the Strategy's provisions were most consistently implemented by Slovenia's tourism sector, i.e. the Slovenian Tourist Board, especially in its framework 2017–2021 Strategy for the Sustainable Growth of Slovenian Tourism, where cuisine and gastronomy are particularly highlighted and included among the four basic tourist regions.

IF YOU WANTED TO GET TO KNOW THE MOST DISTINCT DISHES AND DRINKS OF AS MANY AS 24 GASTRONOMIC REGIONS OF SLOVENIA, YOU COULD SAMPLE A NEW DISH OR DRINK EVERY DAY FOR 365 DAYS. CULINARY DIVERSITY IS AN INCREASINGLY DECISIVE REASON FOR PAYING A TOURIST VISIT TO SLOVENIA.



Piran Sea bass "Fonda"

Protection of food items and dishes



Prekmurska gibanica (Prekmurje layer cake)

Within the European Union Slovenia has protected several agricultural products and foods with protected designation of origin, protected geographical indication and traditional specialty guaranteed labels. Since the late 18th century, the distinct culinary brands of Slovenia include the **kranjska klobasa (Carniolan sausage)**, which is one of the foods labelled with a protected designation of origin. This designation has also been given to three Karst meat products, **kraški pršut (Karst prosciutto)**, **kraški zašink** and **kraška panceta (pancetta)**. From Prekmurje, the list includes the exceptional smoked **prekmurska šunka (Prekmurje ham)**, while the Upper Savinja Valley farms produce **zgornjesavinjski želodec (stuffed pig's stomach)**, and **prleška tünka**, consisting of cooked and sautéed prime pork cuts which are then preserved in lard, is a remarkable product hailing from Prekija. The oldest testimonies to this method of meat preservation date back to the 15th century. Protected geographical indication was also granted to **štajersko prekmursko bučno olje (pumpkin seed oil from the Štajerska-Prekmurje region)**, a special variety of onion called **ptujski lük**, **chicken eggs from around Kamnik**, **štajerski hmelj (Styrian hops)** and **slovenski med (Slovenian honey)**. The protected designation of origin was granted to three types of cheeses, namely **tolminc**, **bovški sir (Bovec cheese)**, and a special spicy cheese from Bohinj called **mohant**. The list also includes **piranska sol s solnim cvetom (Piran salt with salt flower)**, **kočevski gozdni med (Kočevje forest honey)**, **kraški med (Karst honey)**, **istrski pršut (Istrian prosciutto)**, and **ekstra deviško olje slovenske Istre (extra virgin olive oil from Slovenian Istria)**. The olive oil has won numerous recognitions and awards at international competitions. The traditional speciality guaranteed indication has been

**FOODS WITH
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THE REGIONAL AND
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OF SLOVENIA.**

bestowed upon three Slovenian culinary specialities. **Belokranjska pogača (Bela Krajina flatbread)** is a type of flat, originally unleavened bread, circular in shape, which is egg-washed and sprinkled with cumin or coarse salt. Before baking, the surface is cut with a knife to form a square mesh, which indicates how pieces should be torn off and eaten. Prekmurje is home to **prekmurska gibanica (Prekmurje layer cake)**, which is the juiciest, sweetest and most delicious Slovenian pogača-type cake, consisting of several layers of fillings in the following order: poppy seeds, cottage cheese, walnut and apple, with layers of phyllo pastry in between.

In what was once second largest European mining town of Idrija, where mercury was extracted, the first half of the 19th century saw the creation of **idrijski žlikrofi**, pockets of dough stuffed with potato, onion, crackling or minced lard and spices. Žlikrofi have remained the



Kranjska klobasa (Carniolan sausage)

core speciality of Idrija, whose technical heritage has earned it Unesco protection. The main culinary symbol of Slovenia is **potica**, a festive round cake that is rolled and stuffed with a variety of fillings. It is one of the newly protected dishes bearing the designation of traditional speciality guaranteed label and is currently still in the procedure to be protected by the European Commission.

The most widely known and popular is potica with walnut filling. Potica with walnut filling and raisins, raisin potica, tarragon potica, and potica with cottage cheese and tarragon filling have also been protected.

More than a hundred varieties of potica with both sweet and savory fillings are known in Slovenia.



Local and regional brands related to cuisine and gastronomy



In recent years, a few successful culinary and gastronomy brands have been developed in addition to the master brand of **TASTE SLOVENIA (OKUSITI SLOVENIJO)**. The rights to use the brand and market products can be acquired through a detailed certification system, which includes professional evaluation and verification of quality. Success achieved with individual brands has encouraged growers and producers to turn to local and regional foodstuffs. The number of growers and producers is on the rise, and the system is becoming interesting to farmers as well as young people. The following are the most successful local and product brands:

DOBROTE DOLENJSKE (DOLENJSKA DELIGHTS)

An excellent brand with numerous certified food products featuring a uniform design. In addition to being sold at the registered office in Trebnje, in the Ljubljana store and online, the brand is also available at service stations along

the motorways. The brand's activity is spreading to include catering.

BOHINJSKO (FROM BOHINJ)

This brand's solid selection of high-quality products from Bohinj features Bohinj cheeses and other dairy products, cured meats, non-alcoholic and alcoholic drinks, mountain teas, etc. The brand also includes a range of local and regional dishes in food service establishments in the Bohinj area, as well as various handicraft products in the souvenir range.

OKUSI LJUBLJANE TASTE LJUBLJANA

Ljubljana has always had a diverse cuisine. The selected culinary products are Zmajeva potica (the Dragon potica cake) and Prešernove fige (chocolate covered dried figs). The Taste Ljubljana project includes a selection of restaurants that serve traditional Ljubljana dishes from local ingredients prepared with an air of modernity.



OKUSI ROGLE (TASTES OF ROGLA)

Food products and farm produce from the Zreče area and Zreško Pohorje.

OKUSI KAMNIKA (TASTE KAMNIK)

This is a range of food items and dishes from the Municipality of Kamnik, which includes high-quality products of the local food industry, and products that aim to preserve the local shepherding heritage of the Kamnik Alps.

GEPARK IDRIJA (IDRIJA GEOPARK)

A range of food items that keeps expanding, as the brand was established only in late 2017.

SRCE SLOVENIJE (THE HEART OF SLOVENIA)

Various farm crops, food and handicraft products. The activity is under development. The brand's registered office is located in Litija.

REGIONAL SPECIALITIES UNITE BRANDS OF SELECT DISHES, FOOD ITEMS AND FOOD PRODUCTS. THE BRANDS ARE USED BY PROVIDERS WHO MEET THE CRITERIA SET OUT WITHIN CLEARLY DEFINED CERTIFICATION SYSTEMS.

Viticulture, wine production and beer brewing



Podravje wine-growing region, Jeruzalem

Slovenia is a green, boutique wine-growing country. Most of the grapes are picked manually, and the process of wine production is based on the principles of organic farming. The abundant Slovenian wine range comprises wines from the three wine-growing regions: the regions of **Primorje, Posavje and Podravje**. These three wine-growing areas are further divided into nine districts, each featuring its own distinct characteristics.

The vine and wine were said to be known in the territory of today's Slovenia in the period of the Illyrians and Celts (400 B.C.). This economic activity continued to develop during Roman times. Wine-growing and the cellarman's trade largely spread due to the work of monasteries. In 2017, Ptuj celebrated 777 years of continuous production of wine at the Minorite Monastery. In Slovenia's second largest city, Maribor, an over 450 year-old žametovka vine grows and bears fruit every year, and is proven to be **the oldest vine in the world**. It produces over 40 kilograms of grapes per year, which are used to produce ceremonial wine.

A systematic viticultural and wine-making economy began developing in the 19th century. Today, Slovenian wine growers and wine merchants produce excellent native and other varietal wines. All three wine-growing regions are criss-crossed with **wine trails**, which are yet to be developed further.

In 1987, the capital of Ljubljana was awarded the title **City of Vine and Wine** (Mesto trte in vina) by the International Organisation of Vine and Wine (OIV). There were several reasons for honouring Ljubljana in this manner. For centuries, Ljubljana has been an important centre of the wine trade. Even more important is the oldest international wine evaluation, which has taken place in Ljubljana (apart from a brief period) since 1955. In 2016, a city vineyard was planted across the southern slope of the Ljubljana Castle Hill, comprising 1,050 vines.



The oldest vine in the world, Maribor

Notable Slovenian exporters of wine include Klet Brda, Puklavec Family Estates and Dveri-Pax. Family-owned wine-growing and wine-making estates, such as Movia, Marjan Simčič, Verus, Edi Simčič, Santomas and Batič, have

established themselves globally with the highest marks bestowed by world-renowned critics. The quality of Slovenian wines is attested by distinguished acknowledgements and medals from competitions such as the Concours Mondial de Bruxelles, Decanter, and Mundus Vini. Mentions in the Wine Spectator magazine are also highly important, and two Slovenian winemakers (Kabaj, Movia) found themselves ranked among the top 100 in 2015 and 2016 according to Wine & Spirits Magazine. Slovenian wines are featured at acclaimed restaurants from New York to London and Tokyo.

In the range of varietal wines and sorts, original or native wines are a speciality. The white grape varieties include **zelen**, **pinela**, **klarnica** and **rebula** (first mentioned as early as 1390) from the Primorje wine-growing region, **šipon** and **ranina** from the Podravje region, while the red grape varieties include **teran** and **refošk** from Primorje and **cviček**, **metliška črnina**, **belokranjec**, and **beli** and **rdeči** (**white and red**) **bizeljčan** from the Posavje wine-growing region. **Cviček**, **metliška črnina**, **belokranjec** and **bizeljčan** are assorted red wines from several grape varieties.

Slovenia also takes pride in its **beer-brewing tradition**. Two large breweries are in operation today, Laško and Union, along with a number of highly successful **micro/craft breweries** that produce superb beer. In Žalec, the first beer fountain in Europe was set up and became an appealing tourist attraction. Hop-growing began developing in the Lower Savinja Valley in the second half of the 19th century. Today, Slovenia is an important exporter of high-quality hops.



Primorje wine-growing region, Goriška Brda

Slovenian viticulture and wine-making in numbers

Total surface covered by vineyards

18,544 ha

Annual production of wine around
0.8 million hectolitres

districts

9

sites
384

wine-growing regions

3

Annual import

13 million litres

Annual export

5-8 million litres



53 WINE VARIETIES

Main white varieties: laški rizling, chardonnay, sauvignon, malvazija, rebula

Main red varieties: refošk, žametovka, merlot, modra frankinja, cabernet sauvignon



70 : 30

Ratio between white and red varieties



10

major wine cellars



2,500

wine growers who bottle their own wines



460

important family wine estates with over 5 ha of vineyards



30,000

professional and amateur wine-growers and wine makers in total

(Source: Dušan Brejc, Slovenia – a winegrowing region as we know today, Ljubljana 2018)

Slovenian Food Day and Traditional Slovenian Breakfast



Traditional Slovenian Breakfast

The Traditional Slovenian Breakfast

came about on the initiative of the Slovenian Beekeepers' Association and has been held since 2011. According to 2017 data, the event involves 260,000 primary school children. This is especially important in light of the information that around 50% of children skip breakfast, which is an essential part of a healthy diet and lifestyle. Through the healthy breakfast event, we show our attitude towards the country in which we live. What is also important is our interest in the future of Slovenian farmers, which we can only secure by buying their food products. By ordering and buying local food, we also protect the environment. The long transport routes used to convey food around the globe are major environmental pollutants. **Slovenian Food Day** and **Traditional Slovenian Breakfast** show that we must appreciate locally produced Slovenian food. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food conducted a brief survey to

find out how the educational institutions mark Slovenian Food Day and what activities are prepared in honour of Traditional Slovenian Breakfast, i.e. how successful they are when it comes to ordering local food. The survey was completed by 37 kindergartens and schools and 30 homes for senior citizens. According to the surveys, 70% of respondents buy bread directly from suppliers, 73% buy butter this way, while milk and honey is bought directly from suppliers by as much as 92% and apples by 97% of institutions. The rest is bought from merchants/store chains. Based on the experience so far, the institutions acknowledged numerous advantages and reasons to procure local Slovenian food. The most frequently mentioned factors were freshness, richer flavours, higher nutritional value with fewer additives, shorter supply chain, direct contact with producers and taking care of rural areas by encouraging local production.

PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS BUY MORE AND MORE FOOD FROM LOCAL PROVIDERS. BY DOING SO, THEY ENSURE CHILDREN ARE PROVIDED WITH FRESH FOOD FROM THE NEARBY ENVIRONMENT, WHILE ENCOURAGING LOCAL PRODUCTION THROUGH THEIR PURCHASES.



Carniolan honey bee

In 2017, after three years of efforts, the Republic of Slovenia, spurred by the initiative of the Slovenian Beekeepers' Association, achieved the proclamation of 20 May as World Bee Day. From a global aspect, this is an important step for Slovenia, as it encourages us to think beyond our own problems and to become aware of the fact that there are 815 million hungry people in the world, which is something that must concern us all.

Bees – bearers of sweet pleasures and health



It is a rarely known fact that several Slovenians were among the most highly respected European beekeeping teachers and innovators. In the mid-18th century, one such figure was **Anton Janša** (1734–1773), who was the first beekeeping teacher at the beekeeping school in Augarten, Vienna. His contemporaries and Europe-wide known beekeeping experts were **Peter Pavel Glavar** (1721–1784) and **Giovanni Antonio Scopoli** (1723–1788). For centuries, beekeeping was an important branch of the economy for the Slovenian population, and in addition to honey, the beekeepers (aided by bees) developed a number of products that constitute globally-recognised pioneering efforts in apitherapy.

Various types of honey (meadow flower honey, mountain honey, fir honey, chestnut honey, lime honey, sage honey, acacia honey, and acacia chunk honey), royal jelly, propolis, bee venom, pollen and a whole range of other honey-based products, combined with vitamins and aromatic herbs, serve as important natural remedies, cosmetic products and, above all, ingredients in food. Honey and other bee products represent a unique call to nature. We can turn to nature to draw a healthy source of power for daily exertions and efforts. In today's world, we increasingly look for natural substances that help strengthen our health. In addition to bees, a rich selection of various types of honey is mainly possible thanks to the dynamic, lush Slovenian landscape. Honey also plays an important part in Slovenian cuisine. After all, it is the oldest natural sweetener.

The diverse range of products includes an ancient Slovenian alcoholic drink, a honey wine called **kranjska medica (Carniolan mead)**. This exquisite drink is sometimes referred to as **the drink of the ancient Slavs**.

WHEN IT COMES TO BEEKEEPING, SLOVENIAN EXPERTS AND PROVIDERS ARE REGARDED AS WORLD PIONEERS IN INNOVATIONS SUCH AS THE INCREASINGLY POPULAR APITHERAPY.

Two methods of preparing mead are known in Slovenia, resulting either in a refreshing non-alcoholic beverage or in an alcoholic drink. For the latter version, the oldest recipe, which has remained unchanged up to the present-day, was recorded by **Janez Vajkard Valvasor** in his work entitled ***Slava Vojvodine kranjske (The Glory of the Duchy of Carniola)***, published in Ljubljana in 1689. Honey beer and honey sparkling wine were also developed in Slovenia.

One of the most notable achievements is **World Bee Day**, proclaimed in 2017 by the United Nations, on Slovenia's initiative, to be celebrated on 20 May. In recent years, urban beekeeping has been developing with great success, especially in Ljubljana, and has been included in tourist tours of the city.

The Municipality of Ljubljana boasts up to 3% of all Slovenian beekeepers, with more than 4,500 beehives that produce Ljubljana honey. In recent years urban beekeeping has been developing successfully, and it has been included in the Bee Path and tours of the city. The Botanical Garden features an urban beehive, which serves as an urban information point with information on the traditional and the modern cultures of beekeeping.



Gastronomy and tourism



Rural tourism

In the historical development of Slovenian tourism, gastronomy held a prominent position even as certain tourist centres evolved in the 19th century, e.g. Bled, Rogaška Slatina, Dobrna and Dolenjske Toplice. Thanks to the tourism activity, the locals were able to earn extra income through the sale of food items and employment. Culinary education and the influence of hotel and inn kitchens were also very important for the local population's cuisine. From the 1960s, tourist activity also began developing at farms as a special form of supplementary activity. From the very beginning, the main motive behind such visits was the food prepared at farm tourism establishments, i.e. home-grown and processed food and a range of dishes as typically prepared by the rural population. Today, Slovenia boasts around 900 farm tourism establishments, of which approximately half also provide accommodation, while the rest of them are farms that cater to groups on excursions, wine shops, and, in the Primorje region, special types of temporary/seasonal wine shops called *osmica*. At these types of farm tourism establishments, the culinary range and natural environment come first.

From 2006, the Slovenian Tourist Board has systematically implemented the provisions of the Gastronomic Strategy of Slovenia in tourism planning, which is already yielding many positive results. **As a result, Slovenia will be developed as a gastronomic destination for five-star experiences based on the green scheme of Slovenian tourism, green facts and principles of sustainability.** The new Tourism Development Strategy (2017) included gastronomy as an important element of what the country has to offer, which goes hand in hand with nature, culture and travels.

In 2017, Slovenia was ranked among the world's top 5 sustainable countries according to Yale University's Environmental Performance Index.

In early December 2017, Slovenia completed an extensive online research survey entitled Market Potential Identification, which was conducted in six key and two promising markets

for Slovenian tourism (Italy, Germany, Austria, France, United Kingdom, Russian Federation, the Netherlands and Poland). According to the research results, the segment of tourists who consider themselves to be **foodies** is the fourth largest segment in terms of size; the estimated size of this segment is 9.5 million individuals. Foodies usually travel with a partner or family,

which makes them, together with their travel companions (factor 2.5), a 24-million potential in all markets. The research also showed that enjoying good food and drink is the main motive when choosing a holiday destination for 31% of Austrians, 29% of Britons, 23% of Germans and 21% of the Dutch and Russians.

SLOVENIA'S TOURISM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY UP UNTIL 2021 PLACES A SPECIAL ROLE ON CUISINE AND GASTRONOMY. THIS RANGE OF SERVICES WILL REPRESENT A KEY PART OF DEVELOPING EXPERIENCES OF THE HIGHEST QUALITY WHICH ARE BASED ON PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABILITY.



Wine tasting

Culinary and gastronomic events



Open Kitchen, Ljubljana

Every year, over 40 major culinary/gastronomic events with extensive content take place in Slovenia. This does not include the numerous events connected with St. Martin's Day celebrations, events taking place in the Christmas/New Year period, or events in any way relating to food and wine (e.g. **cviček, rebula and refošk festivals, the Vinska Vigred wine festival, Days of Open Cellars, Teran and Prosciutto Festival, Ljubljana Wine Route**, etc.) Not only are the data on the number of events encouraging, it should be noted that the diversity and quality of their content have seen drastic changes. Culinary/gastronomic events are namely one of the elements recommended by the Gastronomic Strategy of Slovenia.

The diverse culinary events can be followed most clearly by seasons. In the spring, there are a number of events related to the food items available in this season. Most of them take place before Easter and include, for example, competitions in **potica** baking. Dobrovo in Brda is the location of one of the oldest culinary events in Slovenia, the **Cherry Festival**. A similar event is held in late spring at Janče near Ljubljana, namely the well-attended **Strawberry Sundays**. There are quite a few events related to olive trees in this season. In Ptuj, there is an annual exhibition entitled **Delicacies of Slovenian Farms**, which is of great importance in terms of imparting the value of appreciation and quality production of local and regional dishes and foods in the countryside. The creators of the best products and dishes are awarded certificates. Rečica ob Savinji is the venue of the traditional professional evaluation of the protected **zgorrnjesavinjski želodec (stuffed pig's stomach from the Upper Savinja Valley)**, while **sausages and salamis are evaluated** in numerous towns across Slovenia. These events

are called **salami festivals**, the most venerable of them being the salami festival in Sevnica.

In terms of numbers and diversity, summer and autumn are the most abundant in events. A lot of events are connected with local and regional dishes. Tolmin celebrates its **Frika Festival**, while the nearby Kobarid does the same for its famous **kobariški štruklji (Kobarid strudel)**, and Ozeljan organises a well-known **Polenta Festival** competition and tasting. Many events are connected with bread, flatbreads and other, mainly flour-based delicacies, which are connected to the end of the harvest period.



Kozjansko Apple Festival, Podsreda

*THE DIVERSE
RANGE OF
CULINARY EVENTS
MAKES SLOVENIA
AN ATTRACTIVE
TOURIST
DESTINATION IN
ANY SEASON.
THE LOCAL
CUISINE IS
PROMINENTLY
CONNECTED
WITH SEASONAL
INGREDIENTS.*

Autumn is replete with events that present the dishes and food items typical of this particular season. The annual international festivals celebrating **sautéed potatoes**, which are held in a different town every year, are extremely popular. The village of Hrovača near Ribnica in the Dolenjska region organises a remarkable **Bean Day**, its purpose being systematic development of the significance of the local bean variety called **ribničan**, which is used to cook numerous dishes. They even make bean cakes! In Strunjan, the **Persimmon Festival** familiarises visitors with the multitude of possibilities of using this fruit in cuisine. In Podsreda, all autumn events tie in with the **Kozjansko Apple Festival**, which is an important part of the region's efforts in the fruit-growing tradition. A number of events are connected with chestnuts and chestnut-based dishes, cabbage, plums and pumpkins. In Koper, an extremely successful, dessert-focused event called **Sweet Istria** has been taking place for 10 years and has been growing beyond the regional borders. This is also one of the largest gastronomic events in Slovenia.

Winter-time is full of various types of **koline**, known also as **furež**, which, far from being merely about the technological process of slaughtering pigs and producing meat products, are also an important social ritual observed in families and local communities. Wine cellar tours and other forms of celebrating wine begin a week or two before **St Martin's Day** (11 November). Most of the Christmas/New Year's events also have a culinary streak.

Throughout the year, gastronomic events are enriched by various competitions in cooking and preparing dishes, the most popular among them

being **Bogračfest**, a competition in cooking the **bograč** hotpot, which is a dish typical of north-eastern Slovenia. Within the complete event scheme in Slovenia, there is an increasing amount of gastronomic and culinary content that stems from local and regional food features. The culture of the Balkan-style grill, which was prevalent not that long ago, is giving way to the culinary diversity of Slovenia or, alternatively, is becoming part of learning about other food cultures.

The culinary and gastronomic events in Ljubljana, which take place under the **Gourmet Ljubljana** brand, are especially wide-ranging. The winter **Gourmet Cup Ljubljana** is a far-reaching event held at the Krvavec ski resort and in Ljubljana, while November Gourmet Ljubljana is the central event. Every Friday from April to October, the Ljubljana Market Place hosts a highly popular celebration of street food called **Odprta Kuhna** (Open Kitchen). Throughout the year, the city centre is the venue for several other successful culinary events that reflect the seasons and focus on various products, such as **Čokoljana, Ljubljana Wine Route, December in Ljubljana, Beer and Burger Fest, Countryside in the City, St. Martin's Day celebrations,**

Veganfest and more. The capital also hosts several wine salons and offers a range of experiences centred around wine, beer and culinary delicacies. In Slovenia's largest shopping centre, BTC City, in Ljubljana, a new brand called Food Bluz – Okusni Bluz has been developed since 2017, and includes an abundant range of culinary items prepared in this shopping emporium. Visitors and customers can get to know the tastes of Slovenia and, indeed, the world, all in one place.

In Maribor, a popular festival of positive street food called **Sladolent** is held, while **Teden restavracij (Restaurant Week)** is organised with great success twice a year across Slovenia. In the course of one week, restaurant owners lower menu prices to attract a great number of visitors, which is why this event is one of the most successful ones.

Among fair events, the **International Agricultural-Food Fair AGRA** in Gornja Radgona plays an important role. Certain other towns host minor fairs (**Gast Expo** in Ljubljana, **Salon VinDel** - International Wine & Culinary Fair in Maribor).



Cherry Festival, Goriška Brda

Calendar of the most important culinary and gastronomic events

January

Gourmet Cup Ljubljana, Ljubljana
National Exhibition of Štruklji, Mirna Peč

February

Prešeren Fair, Kranj
Culinary items at Shrovetide events, across Slovenia

March

Sevnica Salami Festival, Sevnica
Restaurant Week, across Slovenia

April

Chocolate Festival, Radovljica
Easter Potica Festival, Otočec
Potica Festival, Prebold
Salon Sauvignon, Ptuj

May

Open Kitchen, Ljubljana
(every Friday until the end of October)
Evaluation of Upper Savinja Stomachs, Rečica ob Savinji
Rebula and Olive Oil Festival, Višnjevnik
Refošk Festival, Marezige
Delicacies of Slovenian Farms, Ptuj
Wine Spring, Metlika
Wine Fair, Ljubljana

June

Cherry Festival, Dobrovo in Brda
Lent Festival, Sladolent, Maribor
Traditional Olive Festival, Dekani

Festival of Wine, Fish and Olive Oil, Izola

Day of Open Cellars, Brda
Čatež Cviček Festival, Čatež
Cviček in Šentrupert, Šentrupert
Ljubljana Wine Route, Ljubljana
Strawberry Sundays, Janče pri Ljubljani

July

Beer and Flowers Festival, Laško
Harvest Festival, Polenšak
Polenta Festival, Ozeljan
Numerous mushroom picking festivals and exhibitions from July to October

August

Days of Honey, Polhov Gradec
Days of Poetry and Wine, Ptuj
Days of Poetry and Wine, Medana
Peach Festival, Prvačina
Fishermen's Festival, Izola
Salt Makers' Festival, Piran
Teran and Prosciutto Festival, Dutovlje
Shepherd's Ball, Jezersko
Onion Festival, Dornava
Cows Ball Cheese and Wine Fest, Bohinj

September

Sweet Istria, Koper
Jam Festival, Land of Hayracks, Šentrupert
Bean Day, Hrovača
Tržič Bržola Festival, Tržič
Day of Honey in Cuisine, Radovljica and Lesce

Plum Days, Slivje

Cabbage Festival, Ljubljana
Pumpkin Festival, Bodonci
Dödöli Festival, Puconci
Idrijski Žlikrofi Festival, Idrija
Old Vine Festival, Maribor (from late September to 11 November)

October

Restaurant Week, across Slovenia
Original Bled Cream Cake Festival, Bled
Taste Radol'ca, Radovljica (also in November)
Chestnut Sunday, Janče pri Ljubljani
Kozjansko Apple Festival, Podsreda
Traditional Chestnut Festival, Lig above Kanal

November

Numerous **St Martin's Day celebrations** across Slovenia
November Gourmet Ljubljana, Ljubljana
Ljubljana Wine Route, Ljubljana
Wine Cellars of the Vipava Valley, Vipava Valley
Persimmon Festival, Strunjan
Svečina Cellars Beckon, Svečina
Hike along the Drašiči Vineyard Cottage Trail, Drašiči
Must Party, Prevalje

December

Potica Day, Bled (island)
Christmas/New Year's fairs with culinary attractions, in all major Slovenian towns

SLOVENIA'S CANDIDATURE

Slovenia's candidature to become a European Region of Gastronomy is focused on improving the quality of life. It includes educational opportunities relating to healthy and environmentally-friendly living, and sustainable development of gastronomy.

THE EUROPEAN REGION OF GASTRONOMY AWARD IS MORE THAN A MERE TOOL OF PROMOTING NATIONAL CUISINE AND GASTRONOMY. ITS EFFECTS CONTRIBUTE TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WORLD, ENCOURAGE SUSTAINABLE GASTRONOMIC TOURISM, SUPPORT LOCAL SELF-SUFFICIENCY, AND CONNECT RURAL AREAS WITH THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT. THE TITLE HIGHLIGHTS THE IMPORTANCE OF NUTRITION FOR ONE'S HEALTH AND ALSO SUPPORTS SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES.

- The European Region of Gastronomy Award will undoubtedly enhance the national promotion of cuisine and gastronomy, and create synergy with local environments/cultures.
- It is our wish to highlight and promote Slovenia's protected farm produce and food items much more thoroughly.
- Slovenia has established a few food-related regional and local brands, which have achieved a certain level of success, but further work is necessary in terms of promotion (within Slovenia and internationally) and drawing special attention to organic farming. In addition to foodstuffs and dishes, this applies especially to alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks. These involve mainly (boutique) wines, which are already garnering deserved international success, although the promotional investments are rather modest.
- Over the past few years, especially since 2006, Slovenia has endeavoured to develop and promote gastronomic tourism. Although certain successes have been achieved in this area, further work is still necessary, especially in terms of connecting culture and health.
- The Gastronomic Strategy of Slovenia has greatly stressed the relationship between nature and (food) culture, as well as the relationships between local and regional gastronomy, tradition (food culture heritage) and creative innovation, which is one of the fundamental conditions for future visibility and gastronomic identity.
- By means of the European Region of Gastronomy Award, excellent opportunities are opening up for inter-sector connections in relation to food, gastronomy, cuisine, hospitality sector, tourism, culture, health, principles of sustainability, etc.
- Despite the elaborated core starting points of the 2006 Gastronomic Strategy of Slovenia, certain line ministries exhibited relatively poor work in terms of cooperation and adherence to the principles set out. Membership in the European Region of Gastronomy Platform will therefore provide us with opportunities to establish better connections of agriculture with gastronomy and tourism. Gastronomy can become an important facilitator of local and regional development in the fields of economy, culture, social relations and environmental protection. In this area, Slovenia has already produced some results, which can serve as an additional argument supporting this candidature and functioning within the European Region of Gastronomy Platform.
- Slovenia would also like to join the European Region of Gastronomy Platform because it realises how important it is to network and share knowledge. It has knowledge to share in certain specific areas, e.g. upbringing and education of primary school children.
- By becoming an European Region of Gastronomy Platform member, Slovenia is bringing to the table superb experience as well as a model of educational forms for young generations. We therefore see the possibilities of imparting successful models of educating children and youth on local and regional dishes, which can be implemented in the form of national competitions.
- Furthermore, we regard the membership as an opportunity to improve the competitive edge of Slovenia's gastronomy. Slovenia has decided to establish inter-sector connections based on its gastronomic recognisability, and has serious intentions in this regard. Membership in the IGCAT platform also means a lasting competitive edge.
- We regard membership as an opportunity to reinforce the national promotion of cuisine, which is based on diverse food culture heritage and the related modern innovative creativity. This is the foundation on which we are going to build Slovenia's international recognisability.
- Slovenia is striving to improve its range of healthy catering and the recognisability of that range.
- It prides itself on extensive experience in the culinary dimension of village tourism. Furthermore, numerous forms of urban gardening and other agrarian activities in urban surroundings are developing with increasing intensity (urban beekeeping, urban gardening). All these forms require further development and upgrading in the future, which is something that will be made possible through European Region of Gastronomy Platform membership and the exchange of experience with other members.

Objectives and guidelines



The following strategic objectives are envisaged in individual focus areas:

Sustainable development and concern about feeding the planet

- Raising awareness about the significance of bees for sustainable farming and ensuring a secure supply of food in the world, as well as reinforcing the awareness on the extreme importance of bees for the survival and existence of humankind, as they are essential in terms of preventing hunger on a global scale. Upon the initiative brought forward by Slovenia, the United Nations proclaimed 20 May as World Bee Day.
- Consistent development of sustainable gastronomy forms and content, based on local and regional cultures.
- Emphasis on eating with the seasons.
- Taking into account local and regional supply chains and consistent traceability of food.
- Making sure natural food resources are utilised in a balanced way, especially in forests (mushrooms, forest fruits, game).

Development and promotion of sustainable gastronomic tourism and gastronomic offer within tourism

- Developing the principle that food diversity is also cultural diversity, as individual dishes and drinks enable us to learn about the local and regional daily routines and festive seasons.

- Emphasising the principle that sustainable tourism improves the quality of food products and the culinary services on offer within a certain region/town.
- Gastronomy and cuisine should contribute more to environmental protection and help create biodiversity.
- Menus could be used to convey stories about dishes and drinks.
- Realisation that improving the quality of life in the region is especially important and also connected with tourist visits. However, the quality of life is also connected with highlighting the gastronomic and cultural diversity, which stems from the foundations of food culture heritage conveyed in a contemporary manner.
- Encouraging innovations that arise from local and regional food heritage.
- Encouraging a healthy range of catering and tourism, as well as active tourism in conjunction with catering.

All-round improvement of the culinary range in restaurants, on streets and at events

- All-round improvement of the culinary range.
- Encouraging sustainable ways of producing and consuming food.
- Ensuring suitable hygienic, logistic, organisational and other standards related to the improvement of the culinary range in restaurants, on the street and at various events.

Enhancing the field of education for the needs of gastronomy and cuisine in tourism

- Emphasis on innovations that enable new knowledge and skills rather than copying global trends.
- Enabling the development of young chefs who, in collaboration with local food providers, develop innovative

dishes that stem from local and regional cultures and their food culture heritage.

- Revival of hospitality sector professions, especially waiters, as well as professions related to the hospitality sector, particularly butchers.
- Continuation of good educational practices for children and youth, such as Kuhna pa to (Cooking and that), Zlata kuhlarnica (Golden Ladle), Tuševa zvezda (Tuš Star).
- Expansion of Slovenian Food Day and Traditional Slovenian Breakfast projects to include young people in secondary schools and university faculties.



Local produce on offer at tourist farm establishments

Development of food diversity as well as of related cultural variety, supporting self-sufficiency, foods and dishes with protected origin

- Expert support for the growing number of events that are based on local and regional food characteristics.
- Support for efforts relating to self-sufficiency and familiarisation of the urban population with possibilities in this area.
- Consistent use of protected origin symbols on food items and at various public events, where such products are used, presented or offered.
- Using foods with protected origin in school food and familiarising young people with their story.
- Designing local and regional gastronomic brands, which has a beneficial financial impact on the population; expansion of the network of certified brands and enabling access to them in tourism.

Connecting the rural and the urban

- Expanding experience with urban beekeeping to the area of urban gardening and numerous other areas of agricultural production.
- Preparing appropriate educational programmes, courses and publications relating thereto.

Health and healthy diet

- Improving health and well-being by means of properly chosen and conveyed culinary features.
- Raising consumer awareness through appropriate labelling, presenting and marketing of food, and restricting the marketing of foods that are not conducive to health, especially the health of children and young people.
- Ensuring healthy nutrition in line with the guidelines and recommendations for different age groups, which applies especially to school and student food, food in kindergartens, hospitals and senior citizen centres, efforts to improve nutrition for employees.
- Increasing the intake of fruit and vegetables, increasing physical activity and introducing breakfast as an important meal.
- Transparent and responsible marketing of food.
- Improving the range of food on offer in natural spas and introducing thorough changes in hotel food (e.g. breakfast).
- Ensuring safe food that is beneficial to health, with emphasis on sustainable local supply, self-sufficiency and local food production.
- Ensuring local and regional marketing partnerships with local and regional producers and suppliers.

Supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)

- Consolidation of the *Gostilna Slovenija* brand and group in terms of organisation and personnel, and its international expansion.
- Helping in the search for suitable methods and possibilities of promoting small and medium-sized companies active in food production and processing, and the catering on offer.



- Helping to achieve appropriate economic results.
- Support geared towards innovation that is based on local and regional food culture; it is intended for various forms of education, ways of integrating into the supply chain, preserving and developing family-owned food service traditions, connecting tourism and its programmes, etc.



Anja Roš, World's Best Female Chef 2017

Projects and programmes planned by interested partners



Visit to the Ljubljana marketplace

MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

— The *Slovenia – European Region of Gastronomy 2018–2022 project* is being coordinated and implemented by the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology in cooperation with other Slovenian partners.

SLOVENIAN TOURIST BOARD

The Slovenian Tourist Board will focus its activities on preparing a document entitled **Strategic Guidelines for the Development and Marketing of Gastronomy 2018–2022**. It will involve analysing the situation, identifying opportunities, assessing the size of and segmenting the market of culinary tourists, initiatives related to promoting the development of gastronomic attractions and devising a communication and marketing plan.

There will be a special focus on developing innovativeness (within the **Snovalec** project) and preparing guidelines and incentives to develop products with higher added value (**five-star experience model**).

In addition to development-focused activities, the Slovenian Tourist Board also attends to the promotion of Slovenian gastronomy. In the 2020–2021 period, Slovenian tourism will therefore centre around Slovenia's cuisine and gastronomy.

The Slovenian Tourist Board also acts:

- as one of the key providers of the traditional expert event entitled **Days of Slovenian Tourism**, where gastronomy-related issues will be at the forefront;
- in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in terms of culinary diplomacy/gastrodiplomacy;
- in the formation of tourist and gastronomic content at the annual **Strategic Forum** held in Bled;
- in commemorating **World Bee Day** on 20 May 2018, as well as in the planning of Slovenian beekeeping in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, and the Ministry of Culture.

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FOOD

- In collaboration with the Slovenian Beekeepers' Association, the Ministry drafted a proposal to declare **World Bee Day (20 May)**, which was approved by the UN General Assembly in December 2017. The main purpose of World Bee Day is to raise awareness about the enormous importance of bees for the survival and existence of humankind, as they are essential in terms of preventing hunger on a global scale. To this end, the Ministry will continue to commemorate World Bee Day.
- The **Traditional Slovenian Breakfast** project is one of the central events within **Slovenian Food Day**, which is marked in Slovenia on the third Friday in November. The project has been implemented for the seventh year together with kindergartens and primary schools. Several ministries, chambers, the food industry and other institutions mark **Slovenian Food Day** and implement the **Traditional Slovenian Breakfast** together. The project gives an important stamp on local food, raising public awareness about the

importance of in-house and local food production and processing as well as consumption. Breakfast as a daily meal is an important element of healthy nutrition and lifestyle. Project-related activities are to be extended in the future and encompass other meals as well, not only in kindergartens and primary schools, but also in secondary schools, hospitals, hotels, etc. Locally produced food will play an important role in this process.

- For a number of years now, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food has devoted special attention to organising and implementing the traditional **International Agricultural-Food Fair AGRA** in Gornja Radgona.
- The Ministry will take part in the **Slovenian Wine Festival** in Ljubljana, as well as in other important events dedicated to wine.
- Another special project involves preparing a **Catalogue/calendar of all gastronomic and culinary events in Slovenia**.
- The Ministry will liaise with other line ministries and tourist organisations in connection with all these projects.



Preparing idrijski žlikrofi dumplings

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

- Ensuring healthy nutrition in schools is one of the Ministry's top priorities, which is rooted in the School Meals Act. This act lays down the mandatory application of dietary guidelines, which serve as directions for schools on incorporating a lot of vegetables and wholesome food items in school meals. These food groups are less popular among school children. The Ministry therefore supports the **Kuhna pa to** project, in the framework of which children, aided by the school kitchen staff, prepare traditional meals for their peers in the school kitchen. Through intergenerational influence, children can bring traditional, healthy, local and seasonal dishes closer to their peers and friends. The project will develop the possibility of (partial) food self-sufficiency of schools, and encourage the setting up of school gardens, orchards, beehives, etc. The Ministry will thus take part in the continuation of the excellent **Kuhna pa to** project, as it successfully develops the primary school children's relationship with local and regional cuisine through cooking competitions held in all Slovenian regions. Also important is the formation of special training modules for chefs to prepare food in schools; these are being devised by the National Institute of Public Health with partners.
- The **Dober tek Slovenija – zdravo uživaj, več gibaj** project is the title of the National Programme on Nutrition and Physical Activity for Health 2015–2025. The national programme will also involve setting up a **Dober tek, Slovenija** web portal.

- The Ministry of Health implements this programme together with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, and other ministries.

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

- The Ministry's project involves creating a system of supplying typical and high-quality Slovenian food items to the network of Slovenian consular posts across the world, and promoting these food items at receptions, banquets and other forms of promoting Slovenia.
- This project is one of the core elements of Slovenia's gastrodiplomacy.

- The project to be implemented in 2018 involves organising a reception upon the Republic of Slovenia being awarded the title of receiving the **European Region of Gastronomy Award**, which is expected to be held on 8 October in Brussels.

- Implementation of culinary events with renowned Slovenian chefs with the aim of promoting Slovenia as a gastronomic country.

MINISTRY OF CULTURE

- The core project planned by the Ministry of Culture will be executed in 2021 under the title *Gastronomska dediščina za vse* (Gastronomic Heritage for All). The project will take place in the framework of European Heritage Days, which is a project that has grown strong



Young kitchen helpers

roots in Slovenia. It involves various stakeholders, from museums, galleries and archives to libraries, non-governmental organisations, kindergartens and schools. A wide variety of participating organisations leaves a special mark on the topic chosen anew each year. The last week of September sees around 400 events, attracting over 50,000 visitors from 150 Slovenian towns. In 2021, European Heritage Days will focus on gastronomy-related immovable, movable and intangible heritage.

- The Slovenian Ethnographic Museum, the central Slovenian ethnological museum institution, will hold an exhibition in May 2018 entitled ***Kjer so čebele doma (Home of the Bees)***. Open until May 2019, the exhibition will be organised in honour of World Bee Day. It will present the beekeeping heritage of Slovenia and compare it with that of Europe.
- With regard to the 2020–2022 period, the Museum is thinking of putting together an extensive exhibition relating to cuisine and gastronomy, which should outline certain new directions in this field as well. This would also make appropriate content for the period when cuisine and gastronomy will serve as the central topic of Slovenian tourism.

VOCATIONAL COLLEGE FOR CATERING AND TOURISM MARIBOR

- The Vocational College for Catering and Tourism in Maribor acts as the general evaluator of the entire European Region of Gastronomy 2018–2022 project.

The College also has the following projects planned:

- The ***Restavracija Sedem (Restaurant Seven)*** project is connected with the school restaurant activity, which follows a highly innovative model. Guided by their mentors, the students interpret the culinary heritage of Maribor and the wider region, thus participating in the creation of what the restaurant offers.
- The ***Ambasador gostoljubja (Ambassador of Hospitality)*** project is carried out once a year. Its aim is to promote the catering and tourism vocation as well as the culinary heritage of Maribor. Especially important in this process are the food culture of the working population, certain festive dishes, the connection between cuisine and music, etc.
- The ***Živa dvorišča (Living Courtyards)*** project contributes innovative content to urban events, more specifically to urban courtyards, which will be enriched with culinary content to connect the courtyard residents with other Maribor citizens.
- ***Festival solat (Salad Festival)*** will be organised in cooperation with the Maribor – Pohorje Tourist Board in the autumn of 2018. The organisers' aim is to highlight the culture of salads, the wide selection of ingredients available, ways of serving salads in different seasons, possibilities of using local and regional food items, locally produced food, as well as the social dimensions of eating vegetables and salads, etc. The entire event will take place in a "salad" street in the city centre, where various

vegetable growers will be presented, and the programme will also feature a number of workshops on the production and creation of salads. The Salad Festival will target the general public and tourists.

- The ***Velneški dan (Wellness Day)*** project presents wellness activities, in which healthy local food is of special importance. The project therefore directly promotes healthy local food.
- ***Cafoodfest*** is a project involving a two-day street event during the Christmas period, where secondary school and university students will present and offer festive dishes prepared with creative twists.
- Another project will be the annual national selection of Slovenia's representative for the ***Young Chef Award***, and 2021 will see the European competition for this award taking place in Maribor.
- The 2019 project involves organising the ***International Cooking and Service Competition*** in Maribor for European schools of EURHODIP, the international association of leading hotel schools.
- For 2019, the project entitled ***Festival divje hrane (Wild Food Festival)*** is planned.
- The project ***Kulinarične delavnice za stanovalce študentskih domov (Culinary Workshops for Students in Halls of Residence)*** has been implemented with great success ever since 2013, stressing the importance of incorporating local and seasonal food into everyday meals.

LJUBLJANA TOURISM

- Ljubljana Tourism's project involves substantively expanding the **Gourmet Ljubljana** brand and events. This is a new brand that connects prominent figures of Slovenian cuisine, Ljubljana's food service establishments and what they offer in the nation's capital. Events unfold throughout the year, highlighting the culinary and gastronomic content of Ljubljana, the Central Slovenia region and the country as a whole through individual events. In the future, certain events will be supplemented with international, European content. This applies especially to the central event within **November Gourmet Ljubljana**, which will further quicken the city's pulse and tie in with events such as January's **Gourmet Cup Ljubljana**. It combines the culinary dimension in the winter embrace of the Kamnik-Savinje Alps with an expert and educational conference in Ljubljana.
- This will be followed by culinary products and services enhanced with adventure tours of the city and the Central Slovenia region. This includes the Ljubljana Wine Experience that involves visiting

Ljubljana Castle, following the Bee Trail, indulging in the Ljubljana Beer Experience and tasting beer made by craft brewers, and taking in the Taste Ljubljana food tour and tastings.

- They will continue with the **systematic education of Ljubljana hospitality sector workers** in order to guide their services towards the general tourist efforts in Ljubljana and Central Slovenia.
- They will continue and promote the **Green Supply Chain** project, the aim of which is to encourage Ljubljana's restaurants and hotels to use locally produced food.
- Aided by a panel of experts and applying the "secret guest" method, Ljubljana Tourism regularly evaluates the quality of what is offered to tourists by catering establishments, and bestows quality labels to those that meet the criteria.

MARIBOR – POHORJE TOURIST BOARD

- The **Pohorska omleta (Pohorje Omelette)** project aims to promote the original recipe of this dish, which will be presented in partnering

establishments. The plan is to make the dish a constant feature of their year-round menu. The Pohorje omelette will be presented with a one-day event targeted at the general Slovenian public and tourists. The project will be implemented in collaboration with the Secondary School for Catering and Tourism in Maribor.

- **Vinsko-kulinarični večeri (Wine and Culinary Evenings)** is a project to be held at the Old Vine House in Lent, Maribor. The purpose of these evenings is to promote local wines and dishes. Three evenings will be organised for the general public and tourists. The event will involve local wine growers and food producers and processors.
- The **Salad Festival** will be organised together with the Vocational College for Catering and Tourism in Maribor, and will premiere in the autumn of 2018. The aim is to highlight the culture of salads, the wide selection of ingredients available, possibilities of using local and regional food items, ways of serving salads in different seasons, locally produced food, as well as the social dimensions of eating vegetables and salads, etc. The entire event will take place in a "salad" street in the city centre, where various vegetable growers will be presented, and the programme will also feature a number of workshops on the production and creation of salads. The Salad Festival will target the general public and tourists.
- Maribor, too, pays homage to the new young wine and generally celebrates the end of harvest by throwing **St Martin's Day celebrations**. In Leon Štukelj Square, urban St Martin's Day

THE PARTNERS' PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES ARE DIRECTED TOWARDS REINFORCING THE GOOD PRACTICES IMPLEMENTED THUS FAR, AND TOWARDS DEVELOPING INNOVATIVENESS.

celebrations are organised, with over a thousand visitors in attendance. The colourful cultural and entertainment programme includes a diverse range of wines and cuisine. It involves certain wine growers and tourist farm establishments, which offer locally produced food, dishes and wines. The event is promoted throughout Slovenia and in the nearby regions of neighbouring countries (Austria, Italy, Hungary, Croatia).

TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY CHAMBER OF SLOVENIA

- A project of devising a new, modern scheme and content for the oldest trade gastronomic and tourist event, the **Gostinsko turistični zbor (Hospitality and Tourism Assembly)**.
- The project entitled **Natakar, torej sem! (I am a waiter, therefore I am)** is intended to promote and enhance the reputation of the

waiter's occupation, which is grossly underrated in Slovenia. The project comprises appropriate education modules and various presentations of this occupation. There will also be a round table discussion on this topic, along with expert workshops and the professional code for the waiter's occupation. The revamped scheme of the Hospitality and Tourism Assembly will include a competition to select the **Waiter of the Year**.

- The Tourism and Hospitality Chamber will work together with its HIT Alpinea member from Kranjska Gora in a project entitled **Večerja treh dežel (Dinner of Three Lands)** at the three-border point of Slovenia, Italy and Austria.
- The Chamber will cooperate with its Sava Turizem member to develop two projects, **Izberimo zdravo (Make a Healthy Choice)** at the

Zdravilišče Radenci spa resort and **Bodimo fit (Be Fit)** at Grand Hotel Primus in Ptuj.

- The Tourism and Hospitality Chamber already collaborates successfully with the Tourist Association of Slovenia, Slovenian Association of Chefs and Confectioners and the Ministry of Health within the **Zlata kuhalnica (Golden Ladle)** and **Tuševa zvezdica (Tuš Star)** projects, which have been implemented for several years. The projects contribute significantly to the attitude towards local and regional gastronomy among primary and secondary school children.



CHAMBER OF CRAFTS AND SMALL BUSINESS OF SLOVENIA, TOURISM AND CATERING SECTION

- One of its important tasks is to reinforce the **Gostilna Slovenija** project and expand it to include all hospitality workers in Slovenia. “Gostilna” (inn) is the most typical and recognisable hospitality establishment in Slovenia, built on the foundation of family tradition, local and regional dishes, and Slovenian drinks. Up until now, the **Gostilna Slovenija** group was only open to members of the Chamber of Crafts and Small Business of Slovenia. By expanding the project, the membership will be available to all hospitality workers meeting the brand acquisition criteria. The Gostilna Slovenija group members will thus be connected by food

heritage, recognisability, foundations built on family tradition, natural and traceable high-quality food, superb and innovative culinary knowledge and specific forms of hospitality.

- Another important project involves **Overhauling the Guidelines of Good Hygiene Practice and the Application of HACCP Principles in the Hospitality Industry**. The overhaul is expected to begin in early 2019 and is connected with the potential organisation of an international conference on this subject. The Tourism and Hospitality Chamber of Slovenia also expressed willingness to participate in this project.
- Furthermore, Slovenian hospitality workers regularly organise annual expert meetings, which they will continue in 2020 and 2021 by participating on an international scale. Within these meetings, peer recognitions are also bestowed.

PORTOROŽ TOURIST ASSOCIATION

- In Slovenian Istria, the Portorož Tourist Association and other local tourist organisations (in Koper and Izola) will continue and build on some of the already launched gastronomic events projects in the period leading up to 2021, such as the **Sparkling Wine Festival, Malvazija Wine Festival, Festival of Olive Oil and Chard, Festival of Wine and Garlic, Orange Wine Festival, Olive, Wine and Fish Festival, and Sweet Istria**. This last event, which takes place in Koper, is the largest dessert event in Slovenia. The aim of all these gastronomic events is to evaluate the local produce of Slovenian Istria.
- Like all of the planned and already launched projects undertaken by the Portorož Tourist Association and its partners, **Food Crawling, Bike & Taste, Wine Shuttle, Culture & Taste and Dinner on the Pier (Večerje na pomolu)** introduce



new experiences in Slovenian Istria's cuisine and gastronomy. The projects will also feature the use of electric bicycles to incorporate and co-create the green orientation of tourism in this part of Slovenia. The projects are relevant in terms of connecting the features of the coastal areas with the hinterland, and will significantly enhance what is offered on the wine trails.

- Another two projects are ***Večeri Michelinovih kuharjev (Evenings with Michelin Star Chefs)*** and ***Kuharska izobraževanja Michelinovih kuharjev (Culinary Training with Michelin Star Chefs)***. The latter is one of the new ways of training chefs.
- Special training workshops will be dedicated to knowledge in wine consultancy in order to produce an adequate number of superb wine consultants (sommeliers) in their territory.
- The ***Fine Dining*** project envisages a chain of five-star ***haute cuisine*** restaurants offering special culinary experiences, and appropriate promotion thereof.
- In terms of promoting Slovenian Istria, several sub-projects are planned, such as digital promotion, setting up/creating new video/photo material, and exploring the possibility of promoting the cuisine of Slovenian Istria with top young chefs, who may well be the best representatives of Slovenia.
- A special project will be implemented to introduce a new event called ***Festival rose vin in***

vrtnic (Rose and Rosé Festival).

The roses will be celebrated because they are typical of Portorož and are its symbol.

- All efforts and projects with gastronomic content in Slovenian Istria are directly connected with establishing a system of quality standards, creation of a joint catalogue of gastronomic offer and strategy of offer, as well as the sales network of local and regional food and culinary products as souvenirs.

TOURIST ASSOCIATION OF SLOVENIA

- Together with the Tourism and Hospitality Chamber and the Slovenian Association of Chefs and Confectioners, the Tourist Association of Slovenia will further enhance the competition called ***Zlata kuhalnica (Golden Ladle)*** for pupils of upper primary school classes. At this competition, pupils cook for their older peers, secondary school students. The national competition reaches its high point within the annual ***Days***

of Slovenian Tourism and the Hospitality and Tourism Assembly, as an element of the programme.

- ***Tourist souvenirs and gifts related to cuisine and gastronomy (Turistični spominki in darila s področja kulinarike in gastronomije)*** is a new project. It will be implemented systematically in each of the four tourist regions and completed in 2021.

ISTRIA LOCAL ACTION GROUP (LOKALNA AKCIJSKA SKUPINA (LAS) ISTRE)

By 2021, Istria Local Action Group will implement a project entitled ***Gastronomic Identity of Mediterranean Slovenia; Between Tradition and Modernity (Gastronomska identiteta mediteranske Slovenije; Med tradicijo in sodobnostjo)***. Project implementation envisages partners in local action groups of Karst and Brkini, the Soča Valley, Vipava Valley, In the Embrace of the Sun (V objemu sonca), and Between Snežnik and Nanos (Med Snežnikom in Nanosom).

IN ADDITION TO EDUCATION COURSES, EVENTS AND PROMOTIONS, AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE CANDIDATURE WILL BE THE DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGICALLY IMPORTANT MODELS PERTAINING TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF TYPICAL, LOCAL AND INNOVATIVE GASTRONOMY.

Financial framework of the project



SLOVENIA'S CANDIDATURE FOR THE EUROPEAN REGION OF GASTRONOMY AWARD 2021 COMPRISES 47 PROJECTS TO BE IMPLEMENTED BY ALL PARTNERS. THE FINANCIAL BUDGET FOR THE ENTIRE CANDIDATURE IS AS FOLLOWS:

1.

Administrative and organisational costs

730.300,00 EUR

2.

Project implementation costs

2.163.315,00 EUR

3.

Promotional costs pertaining to candidature and projects

1.399.663,00 EUR



Total:

4.293.278,00 EUR

EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION WITH OTHER EUROPEAN REGION OF GASTRONOMY PLATFORM PARTNERS

*Entering the European Region of
Gastronomy Platform stimulates
international collaboration in culture,
education, tourism, the economy,
promotions, events and other areas,
while also contributing to the
preservation of local and regional
food specialities.*

THE POPULARITY OF FOOD IN THE MODERN WORLD GOES BEYOND DISHES, MEALS AND FLAVOURS. IN FACT, THEY HELP US DISCOVER AND LEARN ABOUT OTHER CULTURES, THEIR ECONOMIC EFFORTS, SOCIAL RELATIONS AND SPIRITUAL CREATIVITY. ALL THIS WEALTH IS CONDENSED INTO INDIVIDUAL REGIONAL AND LOCAL ENVIRONMENTS, AND CONSTITUTES AN IMPORTANT MOTIVE FOR TRAVEL AND BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER.

The European Region of Gastronomy Platform therefore enables fruitful culinary and gastronomic cooperation, discoveries and learning, which can enhance mutual understanding and relationships. With its great gastronomic diversity and culinary abundance within a relatively small geographic space, Slovenia offers and helps create various forms of collaboration in a number of areas. In this process, entering the European Region of Gastronomy Platform offers new opportunities in culture, education, the economy, promotions, events, etc.

As a new European Region of Gastronomy Platform member, Slovenia sees the following possibilities of forming European partnerships and collaboration with other European Region of Gastronomy Platform partners in particular:

- After two successful performances of our young chefs at the Young Chef Award, we would like to continue this form of international contact and enhance it with a pre-selection of candidates in Slovenia, in Maribor.
- We also see major opportunities in the European Regions of Gastronomy

project entitled **Local Food Gift Award**, which would enable a joint chain of sales points featuring the best and select products in all European Regions of Gastronomy.

- Another joint European project is entitled **Cultural Routes of the Council of Europe**. Although these already include the **Iter Vitis Route** and the **Routes of the Olive Tree**, the European Regions of Gastronomy Platform opens up the possibilities of linking partner regions with a joint route. There is also a possibility of establishing a route that will connect the most typical culinary events in partnered regions, etc.
- Slovenia has devised a scheme of travelling culinary festivals, the purpose of which is to promote and inform about the special features of gastronomy of Slavic countries under the title **S Slovani za mizo (At the Table with the Slavs)**, in cooperation with the **Forum of Slavic Cultures**.
- We see possible collaboration in the solid exchange system for chefs from European Regions of Gastronomy Platform partners for the purposes of education and promotion.
- Celebration of **World Bee Day** (20 May).
- Slovenia can contribute good experience in organising cookery

competitions for primary school children, which are based on discovery and modern interpretation of local and regional food heritage.

- The Vocational College for Catering and Tourism in Maribor is active internationally as it organises the international competition in cooking and service.
- Various consultations and conferences are international in nature. Especially interesting are conferences on the experience with and possible changes of the HACCP system, healthy eating in hospitality establishments, and green supply chains (kilometre 0).

IN MODERN SOCIETY, KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND JOINT EFFORTS TO PRESERVE LOCAL AND REGIONAL FOOD CULTURES, WHICH ARE BECOMING INCREASINGLY INFLUENCED BY GLOBALISM AND AGGRESSIVE FOOD MULTINATIONALS, ARE ESSENTIAL.



EDUCATION

As an European Region of Gastronomy, Slovenia will systematically deepen and develop the existing and new educational practices at all education levels. Special attention will be directed at learning about food heritage.

A FUNDAMENTAL AREA OF ALL CULINARY AND GASTRONOMIC EFFORTS UNDER WAY IN SLOVENIA IS EDUCATION, WHICH WILL BE THE SUBJECT OF EVEN GREATER FOCUS IN THE FUTURE.

This applies both to the programme content and personnel. Many opportunities can also be found in international exchanges. We therefore believe that Slovenia's partnership in European Region of Gastronomy Platform will contribute to the further development of this area. In terms of cultivating a relationship with food heritage, local and regional dishes and drinks, a modern culinary and gastronomic museum will need to be set up in the future, i.e. a multi-purpose educational, research and communication centre modelled after certain successful set-ups in the EU (e.g. **the Alicia Foundation** in Catalonia).

In the framework of primary school education, children learn about food issues within individual subjects. In this educational age group, two national competitions that involve learning about and cooking local and regional dishes are important, namely **Kuhna pa to** and **Zlata kuhalnica**.

In the system of secondary school education, there are secondary schools of catering and tourism in Ljubljana, Maribor, Celje, Radenci, Slovenj Gradec, Radovljica and Izola. Furthermore, educational programmes in gastronomy are included in seven secondary schools of food processing and nutrition, and biotechnical educational centres and school centres. Here, students train to become bakers, confectioners, butchers, etc. Secondary school students can test their skills in the **Tuševa zvezdica (Tuš Star)** competition.

Vocational colleges for catering and tourism are located in Maribor,

Ljubljana, Bled and Novo Mesto. Slovenian universities and faculties are yet to set up the autonomous study of cuisine and gastronomy. Furthermore, there is no educational content for certain specialist skills, such as food styling and food critique. Certain knowledge of cuisine and gastronomy is available within the established, primarily tourism programmes at faculties in Ljubljana (several faculties), Maribor, Nova Gorica, Novo Mesto, Brežice and Portorož. Culinary and gastronomic content is already part of programmes at private schools (e.g. Gea College, ERUDIO Institute for Education, etc.).

In certain post-secondary programmes at various faculties, master's or doctoral studies of cuisine and gastronomy are offered. The autonomous study of cuisine and gastronomy is not available

as yet, nor is there an independent faculty/department for this area. In addition, there are no suitable educational programmes for food styling or food critique.

Fundamental educational programmes are supplemented by various top-quality educational courses and public forms of culinary education for various age groups. A group of culinary bloggers is experiencing tremendous development, which certainly contributes to education in this field. Changes in education are undoubtedly influenced by the growing number of culinary and gastronomic events.



Master chef Janez Bratovž passing on his knowledge

INVOLVEMENT OF THE POPULATION



The Slovenian population will be included in the projects through innovative communication campaigns, educational content and tourist programmes and events. Special focus will be on including pupils and students.

CITIZENS WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE DEVELOPMENT, ORGANISATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME IN VARIOUS WAYS, AS IS EVIDENT FROM THE ABOVE RANGE OF PROJECTS. THE METHOD OF COMMUNICATION WILL PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THIS PROCESS. THE POPULATION WILL BE INCLUDED AT THE FOLLOWING FUNDAMENTAL LEVELS AND IN CERTAIN CONTENT:

- Organisation of media forms ranging from educational and informative notices to articles and content of a competitive nature, which will attract as much of the population as possible
- Inclusion of the population through educational methods and content. Secondary and vocational catering schools will play an important role in this process. All age groups will be covered.
- Inclusion of the population within various tourist programmes and products. The main emphasis will be on sustainable content and green programmes.
- Various public events of a culinary or gastronomic nature will have great significance in including the population. In this field, Slovenia has already developed certain good practices and gained positive experience (e.g. Open Kitchen in Ljubljana, Sweet Istria in Portorož, visiting wine cellars, festivals of chocolate, Gourmet Ljubljana, Sladolent and Restaurant Week).
- The key target groups to use the project programmes include school youth and students, special groups connected with cuisine and gastronomy (chefs, waiters, sommeliers, bakers, confectioners, farmers, wine growers and merchants, butchers, caterers, hoteliers, tourist and travel agents) as well as other groups of the active population and pensioners.





SUPPORTING SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES

The entrepreneurial opportunities brought by the European Region of Gastronomy Award are directed towards innovation that is based on the local food culture. In strengthening entrepreneurship in gastronomy and cuisine, a special part is played by various associations, in which small and medium-sized companies are involved.

- The main body of support will be provided by sections of the Chamber of Craft and Small Business of Slovenia, as well as by the associations under the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia that operate in the culinary and gastronomic fields.
- The support extended to small and medium-sized enterprises will have to be especially geared towards innovation that is based on the local and regional food culture; it is intended for various forms of education, ways of integrating into the supply chain, preserving and developing family-owned food service traditions, connecting with tourism and its programmes, etc.
- The above institutions will help seek out ways and possibilities of promoting small and medium-sized enterprises, and help them to achieve appropriate economic results, as well as to intensify sustainable forms of their work that pertain to the environment and culture.
- The support extended towards consolidating the **Gostilna Slovenija** brand in terms of personnel and organisation will be especially important, as the brand can become an important national and recognisable culinary system, including abroad.



Gingerbread-making workshop, Radovljica

MARKETING, COMMUNICATION AND PROMOTION

Employing various marketing and communication channels, we will present special features of Slovenian gastronomy, while also building up and highlighting the Taste Slovenia brand. We will use it to establish Slovenia as a boutique destination for exquisite gastronomic experiences.

THE PLAN OF MARKETING, COMMUNICATING AND PROMOTING CUISINE AND GASTRONOMY OF SLOVENIA FROM THE TOURISM ASPECT IS BEING PREPARED BY THE SLOVENIAN TOURIST BOARD, WHICH IS DEVELOPING THIS AREA WITHIN THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR SLOVENIAN TOURISM (2017). THE CONTENT RELATING TO MARKETING, COMMUNICATION AND PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES IS ALSO INCLUDED IN THE GASTRONOMIC STRATEGY OF SLOVENIA (2006). THE TASK OF PROMOTING SLOVENIAN FOOD WAS DELEGATED TO THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FOOD.

Since early 2018, we have been employing a variety of methods (consultations, conferences, culinary events, media, etc.) to highlight the European Region of Gastronomy Platform, the IGCAT Institute and the symbol with a logo. For the area of gastronomy, the development and establishment of the *Okusiti Slovenijo (Taste Slovenia)* brand is especially important in order to present Slovenia as a boutique region for exquisite gastronomic experiences.

The activities will include:

- consistent highlighting of the special features of Slovenian gastronomy by means of all marketing channels and tools customised for individual target groups;
- developing and establishing the Taste Slovenia brand in order to present Slovenia as a boutique destination for exquisite gastronomic experiences;
- presenting Slovenian gastronomy on the www.slovenia.info portal;
- developing new, targeted marketing campaigns on the subject of gastronomy (online and offline), and promoting gastronomy on social networks;
- developing a calendar of gastronomic events for the needs of national and international marketing;
- publishing gastronomic content in monthly e-newsletters;
- PR activities relating to all of the above events;
- promoting gastronomy at major events (tourism fairs and workshops, other business events) in Slovenia and abroad;
- organising study tours for gastronomy journalists and bloggers;
- preparing new gastronomy-related photo and video material;
- presenting Slovenian gastronomy in a printed Taste Slovenia catalogue in the Slovenian, English, German, French and Italian languages;
- providing support to Slovenian chefs who are ambassadors of Slovenian cuisine;
- promoting gastronomy tourism with “bookable packages”;

THE DOCUMENTS AND GUIDELINES CONSISTENTLY INCLUDE LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND PROMOTE A SUSTAINABLE ORIENTATION AND ENVIRONMENTALLY-FRIENDLY DEVELOPMENT.

- communication support for the Gostilna Slovenija project;
- enticing foreign culinary guides to Slovenia (Gault & Millau are preparing a catalogue on Slovenia for 2018, in which they will rate the top 100 restaurants and 100 wines);
- gastronomy as the main communication subject of the Slovenian Tourist Board in 2020–2021.



MONITORING AND EVALUATION

*The programmes of the European Region of
Gastronomy have clearly defined goals that
are connected with sustainable development,
enhancing food diversity and competitiveness,
education, innovation, health, connecting
rural areas with the urban environment, etc.
The achievement of these objectives will be
monitored by means of measurable indicators.*

THE SLOVENIA EUROPEAN REGION OF GASTRONOMY 2018–2022 PROJECT WILL BE MONITORED AND EVALUATED BY THE VOCATIONAL COLLEGE FOR CATERING AND TOURISM IN MARIBOR. THE INSTITUTION WILL ALSO COLLABORATE WITH OTHER PARTNERS AND CERTAIN EXTERNAL ASSOCIATES.

The key European Region of Gastronomy Platform areas include contributing to the feeding of the planet, sustainability, education, innovation, digital operations, connecting rural and urban areas, competitiveness at a global level, health, cultural and nutritional diversity, as well as supporting small and medium-sized enterprises. The Vocational College for Catering and Tourism in Maribor has prepared a range of possible indicators under the above areas. The indicators are set as open and measurable, which makes it possible to transparently monitor the implementation and obtain clear results. The following are suggestions for possible evaluation indicators that are harmonised with the selection of the project's objectives and direction:

Connection between the urban environment and its hinterland

- How many events were carried out in urban centres to present local food producers coming from the areas surrounding the urban centres?
- How many producers took part in these events?
- How many visitors attended the events that connected the urban environment with its hinterland?
- How many local products were included in the regular range offered by shopping centres in urban areas due to activities within the European Region of Gastronomy 2018 -2022 project, or how many PoSs of local

food producers were established in the urban environment? Sustainable development

- How many local foods were presented and promoted in public during the Slovenia European Region of Gastronomy 2018 -2022 project?
- How many local food producers were presented and promoted in public during the Slovenia European Region of Gastronomy 2018 -2022 project?
- Which food items were highlighted as locally most distinct?

- How many long-term connections or collaborations were established between food producers, food processors and various providers of catering services?
- How many local producers and products were included in the regular supply chain of local organisations (kindergartens, schools, companies, institutes, etc.)?
- How did the project involve various social groups and take into account their characteristics (e.g. transfer of knowledge from older generations to younger ones)? How many events were organised for this purpose and how many people took part?



Education

- How many new education and training programmes related to spreading the importance of regional gastronomy and local food were developed/implemented during the European Region of Gastronomy 2018 -2022 project within the formal education system (e.g. natural science days in primary schools, project days in secondary schools, elective modules in tertiary education etc.)?
- How many new education and training programmes related to spreading the importance of regional gastronomy and local food were developed/implemented during the European Region of Gastronomy 2018 -2022 project in the framework of non-formal education (life-long learning)?
- How many pupils were involved in the European Region of Gastronomy 2018 -2022 project activities and events?

- How many secondary school students were involved in the European Region of Gastronomy 2018 -2022 project activities and events?
- How many university school students were involved in the European Region of Gastronomy 2018 -2022 project activities and events (as operators and visitors of organised forms)?
- How many new partnerships or collaborations developed among the professional educational institutions active in the field of gastronomy and local providers?

Innovativeness

- How many new culinary products prepared solely from ingredients found in the local environment were developed/presented at events within the European Region of Gastronomy 2018 -2022 project?

- How many new business partnerships were established as a result?
- How many people took part in the development and innovation of culinary products?
- How many innovative products were successful in the market, i.e. are used as part of the regular gastronomic range of the region?

Support for small and medium-sized enterprises

- How many small and medium-sized enterprises took part or were involved in the project?
- How many people took part in project organisation and implementation?



Encouraging children's interest in cuisine

- How many new marketing projects were developed during European Region of Gastronomy 2018 -2022 project?
- How many new culinary business ideas or companies developed or began operation during the European Region of Gastronomy 2018 -2022 project?

Health

- How many events were implemented on the subject of healthy diet and the importance of including local products to ensure the quality of the food consumed?
- How many partners took part in these events?
- How did healthcare and educational institutions collaborate with local providers and the target public?

Globalisation and food diversity

- How many original local products/ souvenirs were developed during

the European Region of Gastronomy 2018 -2022 project?

- How many local producers create and offer in-house or local foods?
- How many local (indigenous, original) types of food were identified and recorded during the project (inventory of local diversity in food production)?

Diversity

- How many times was the region presented at international fairs and events under the European Region of Gastronomy 2018 -2022 project brand?
- How many new partnerships or projects were formed/developed between various local environments during the European Region of Gastronomy 2018 -2022 project?
- How many projects were based on the subject of diversity and preserving the richness of locally produced food?

Use of new technologies

- How many TV shows and segments focused on the European Region of Gastronomy 2018 -2022 project and the promotion of local gastronomy?
- How many local producers and culinary providers were presented during the European Region of Gastronomy 2018 -2022 project by means of new technologies (ICT)?
- How many press conferences were held to present the European Region of Gastronomy 2018 -2022 project and its objectives?
- How many related articles were published in the national and foreign media?
- How many projects were established to promote local gastronomy and how many resources were used for this purpose?

Cooperation with other European Regions of Gastronomy

- How many connections were established with other European Regions of Gastronomy?
- How many collaborative international events were carried out?
- How many local providers took part in them?
- How many publications were devoted to presenting the connected regions in national and foreign media?

*THE INDICATORS
WILL HELP US MONITOR
THE ACHIEVEMENT OF
OBJECTIVES WITHIN
EACH OF THE 47
PROJECTS.*

AMBASSADORS OF THE PROJECT

Slovenia's candidature is supported by experts with globally established titles for their achievements in gastronomy and cuisine. In addition to the key ambassadors, the various programmes will include young creative types, who thrill strict judges at international competitions.

Ana Roš

Ana Roš was named The World's Best Female Chef by The World's 50 Best Restaurants Academy. Ana Roš is The World's Best Female Chef 2017!

Her cuisine is characterised by innovative twists on traditional recipes from the Soča Valley and the use of local ingredients.

By using local ingredients, Ana Roš contributes to the development of the local environment and preservation of tradition. It is important for farmers and other food producers to know that they can rely on their customers. Ana Roš swears by the “zero kilometre” philosophy, which stands for sustainability, freshness and eco-friendliness.

Mira Šemić

“While water is essential for life, wine is essential for the joy of living.”

A top Slovenian culinary and wine expert, a sommelier with a Level 4 Diploma from the renowned WSET wine education school in London, author of numerous papers on cuisine and wine, Director of the Gault and Millau Slovenia culinary guide and lecturer at her Little Wine School in Ljubljana. She also owned the Monroe restaurant in Ljubljana, which was one of the first to co-create a modern menu in Ljubljana. She presented the abundance of wine along with works of art produced by renowned artists at her Galerija umetnosti in vina (Gallery of Art and Wine) in Ljubljana. Being a great wine connoisseur, who has been awarded the **Weinakademiker** title, she has visited all the important wine-producing areas and numerous superb restaurants on all continents.

Luka Košir

“I work in the hospitality industry because it brings me pleasure, I work with my heart. There's no need to create fairy tales!”

Luka Košir is one of the top 10 chefs in Slovenia. Working in the family-owned Brunarica inn in Šentjošt above Horjul, he has developed a range of products based on the principles of sustainability, environmentally-friendly production and local food. In addition to growing most of their food and having a duck farm, they liaise with other local producers (e.g. with the local cheese dairy). Košir has a distinctly positive public image and excellent cookery knowledge, which he continuously enhances by studying the latest gastronomic literature.

THE AMBASSADORS' ACHIEVEMENTS ARE ALREADY A SOURCE OF RECOGNISABILITY FOR SLOVENIA AS AN INCREASINGLY ATTRACTIVE GASTRONOMIC DESTINATION.

Prof. Janez Bogataj PhD

“We eat to live, but we don't live just to eat.”

A retired university professor, co-creator of the Gastronomic Strategy of Slovenia, gastronomic strategies for Ljubljana and Central Slovenia, Gorenjska, and Dolenjska, and co-author of projects for certain successful gastronomic brands. Author and co-author of over 80 books, numerous dissertations and articles, as well as popular works on cuisine and gastronomy. Five of his books were awarded the title Gourmand World Cookbook. He is also member of the IGCAT (Barcelona) group of experts, ambassador of Slovenia in the European Destination of Excellency network, as well as Conseiller Gastronomique at Chaîne des Rôtisseurs of Slovenia. He lectures and publishes his articles and books in Slovenia and abroad.

From 2016 on, Slovenia has participated in the **Young Chef Award** competition organised by IGCAT. The title of **Young Ambassador** was awarded to:

In 2016, **Leon Pintarič**, Young Ambassador of Prekmurje in Slovenia.

In 2017, **Filip Matjaž**, Young Ambassador of Primorje in Slovenia.

PARTNERS OF THE SLOVENIA EUROPEAN REGION OF GASTRONOMY 2018–2022 PROJECT

*Slovenia is becoming an
European Region of Gastronomy
through interdisciplinary collaboration
of key state ministries, national,
regional and local tourist organisations
and associations, business
organisations, local action groups
and professional
education institutions.*

Ministry of Economic Development and Technology

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ministry of Health

Ministry of Culture

Slovenian Tourist Board

Tourism and Hospitality Chamber of Slovenia

Chamber of Crafts and Small Business of Slovenia

Ljubljana Tourism

Portorož Tourist Association

Maribor – Pohorje Tourist Board

Tourist Association of Slovenia

Vocational College for Catering and Tourism Maribor

University of Primorska

LAS Istre

Slovenian Ethnographic Museum



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