

## NATIONAL AND TRADITIONAL FOOD AS A PART OF SLOVENIAN HOTELS MENUS

Tadeja KRAŠNA

***Abstract:** All around the world countries have national dish as a part of country's identity and tradition. Typical local food is an essential experience for visitors. First contact with county traditional food is breakfast in hotel restaurant. The purpose of my paper is to present traditional Slovenian breakfast in hotel breakfast menu and the role of presenting tradition of Slovenian gastronomy to foreign visitors and tourists. With focus groups I will point it out how can Slovenia improve promoting traditional Slovenian food and gastronomy to foreign visitors and tourist? I will compare Slovenian traditional breakfast with top ten traditional breakfast of the world. The paper illuminates the opportunities provided by Slovenian hotels and makes suggestions in order to facilitate its future improvement.*

***Keywords:** tradition, food, breakfast, Slovenian traditional gastronomy.*

### Introduction

Local food is a part of the culture. Experiencing the local culture is a huge part of travelling and trying traditional food is largely connected with that cultural experience. Traditional foods are part of a country's heritage and are strongly rooted within the memories of the local people. Food is important aspect of the traveler's experience. (Sidali at all 2011).

Slovenia is a small country but it can still charm with unforgettable flavors that are the product of the traditional cuisine. This was created as a mixture of the influences of the Alpine, Pannonian and Mediterranean world, which is why you can find a variety of different specialties here. The world famous dishes are also protected with the designation of origin.

Slovenian cuisine has developed 170 recognized and typical dishes. These are a great basis for countless new explorations and for creating a rich range of flavors. The most famous among those are prekmurska gibanica (Prekmurje layered pastry), kranjska medica (Carniolan honey liquor), potica and kranjska klobasa (Carniolan sausage). Potica with tarragon tops Slovenia's gastronomic pyramid as the most distinctly Slovenian specialty. Slovenia is one of the few culinary environments in Europe and worldwide where tarragon is used in sweet pastry dishes (Bogataj, 2009).

In the Primorska region nature gifted the people of Karst with a privilege that they have wittily taken advantage of for producing smoked ham. The secret of its success is the unique smell and taste that are created by adding care and a great deal of patience with its long-lasting maturing. This is the power of tradition that is carried over from generation to generation. It goes excellently with the famous kraški Teran (Karst Terrano), and their combination is a speciality, distinctive of this part of Karst.

By the coast you will find dishes from sea fish and sea fruits that are normally served along with the wines Refošk (Refosco) and Malvazija (Malvasia), which round up the true Mediterranean flavors.

The Prekmurje region is a place for gourmets, since it is the home of potica and a unique dessert that you have never tasted before. Prekmurska gibanica, which also has a very special name, is made of filo pastry and has four kinds of stuffing: poppy seed, ricotta cheese, walnut and apple stuffing.

On the other side of the country, Bled offers yet another sweet surprise, since they are known for making excellent Bled cream cake or kremšnita.

Also dishes made of buckwheat belong to the Slovene cuisine treasures. The buckwheat štruklji are very tasteful and you can try them with nut, tarragon, apple or curd stuffing, and the true specialty are also žganci (buckwheat flour dumplings) that are prepared together with sauerkraut or turnip and krvavice (black pudding, rice and spices).

For the lovers of fresh water fish there is the first-class feast of trout zlatovšica or the freshwater specialty, the Soca trout. A specialty of the Lower Carniola is matevž, a side dish or an independent "puree-like" dish of beans and potatoes (Mydestination.com).

A traditional Slovenian breakfast is a slice of dark bread, butter, honey, an apple and a cup of milk (Pintarič M., 2011).

## Methods

The paper provides content analyses and a literature review, with the gathering of facts and analyses already having been published. The content analysis provided in the paper is a summarising, quantitative analysis of messages that relies on the scientific method and is not limited in terms of the types of variables that may be measured or the context in which the messages are created or presented (Neuendorf K., 2002).

A focus group is a group interview of approximately six to twelve people who share similar characteristics or common interests. A facilitator guides the group based on a predetermined set of topics. The facilitator creates an environment that encourages participants to share their perceptions and points of view. Focus groups are a qualitative data collection method, meaning that the data is descriptive and cannot be measured numerically (Barnett, 2002).

Culinary heritage and culture in Slovenian tourism is a relatively new area of interest for researchers. This is reflected in the lack of scientific articles in the field of gastronomy tourism. Numerous studies are divided among specific topics or segments of gastronomy heritage and culture at the local, regional and national level. Therefore, the need for a comprehensive article focused on Slovenian traditional food as a part of hotels menu is more than evident. The basic research questions are related to the analysis of the interactions between traditional Slovenian breakfast and hotels restaurant menus (Gačnik, 2012).

### **Purpose and Objective**

The objective of the research is to present typical Slovenian national food in Slovenian hotels menus. The paper suggests ways to use traditional Slovenian breakfast in hotels restaurant menus. In particular, it highlights the high importance of presenting Slovenian gastronomy to foreign visitors and tourists. The paper also points out the opportunities of presenting in all hotels menus typical Slovenian breakfast and provides suggestions for its future improvement.

### **Research**

Research includes a focus group of six F&B manager's interviews about presenting Slovenian traditional breakfast in Slovenian hotel restaurant menus. We tested four hypothesis:

H1: In your hotel you already offering traditional Slovenian breakfast (apple, honey, butter and brown bread)

H2. In your hotel present Slovenian traditional breakfast to your guests

H3. Your hotel's menu already include traditional Slovenian breakfast

H4. It is very important to promote the traditional Slovenian breakfast in your hotel restaurant

### **Results**

In all presenting hotels in Slovenia we can find on breakfast menu apple, honey, butter and brown bread, but nowhere isn't presents as a traditional Slovenian breakfast. Local food is part of the culture and it's urgent to presents all hotel guests traditional and local Slovenian food.

Local food is a fundamental component of a destination's attributes, adding to the range of attractions and the overall tourist experience (Symons, 1999).

In an increasingly competitive world of tourism marketing, every region or destination is in a constant search for a unique product to differentiate itself

from other destinations. Local food or cuisines that are unique to an area are one of the distinctive resources that may be used as marketing tools to get more visitors. This is particularly evident from the studies on wine tourism (Charters & Ali-Knight, 2002; Hall & Macionis, 1998; Telfer, 2001), which have demonstrated that tourists travel to destinations that have established a reputation as a location to experience quality local products.

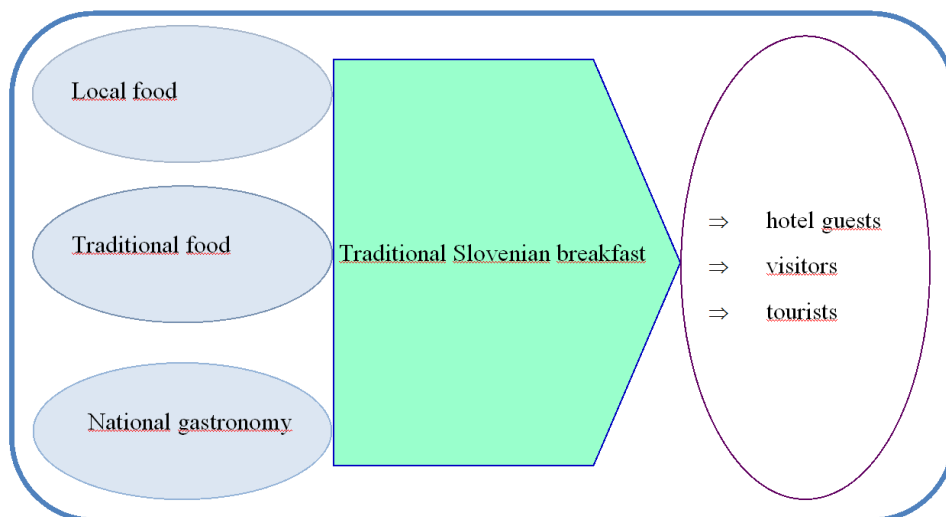


Table 1: Traditional Slovenian breakfast for presenting and promoting Slovenian local and traditional good (Krašna, 2016)

Food and tourism play a major part in the contemporary experience economy. Food is a key part of all cultures, a major element of global intangible heritage and an increasingly important attraction for tourists. The linkages between food and tourism also provide a platform for local economic development, and food experiences help to brand and market destinations, as well as supporting the local culture that is so attractive to tourists (Hjalager and Richards, 2002; OECD, 2009)

Food experiences have become more important in tourism as the ‘Experience Economy’ has developed. Pine and Gilmore (1999) argue that the consumer no longer pays for the basic service, but for the complete experience. In the case of food, people are willing to pay a premium for the added value offered by food experiences, which provide a gateway into local culture, creativity and landscapes. Tourist food experiences in particular are often contrasted with ‘everyday’ or basic eating, as people search for ‘authenticity’ and distinction in local food and gastronomy.

Results of focus group interviews point it out the need to serve traditional Slovenian breakfast and informed guests that apple, honey, butter and brown bread composed traditional Slovenian breakfast. Products are local and produced in Slovenia and they are part of Slovenian gastronomy.

## The World's Breakfast

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day, keeping us healthy and sharp. But breakfast foods vary wildly from place to place. In European countries like Spain, France, and Italy, the first meal of the day is a quick piece of bread or pastry and strong coffee.

China traditional breakfasts vary by region, but the combination of fried dough sticks (or "you tiao") and warm soy milk. Australians love Vegemite (a dark brown Australian food paste made from leftover brewers' yeast extract with various vegetable and spice) enough to eat it every day. They also eat a lot of fruit and sometimes indulge in a full English breakfast. In Brazil a strong coffee and milk is enjoyed with a plate of ham, cheese, and bread. Feijoada, a thick soup made with black beans and different meats, is also served in the morning. Breakfast in Colombia revolves around the arepa, a dense, slightly sweet corn cake that's served simply with butter or topped with eggs, meat, or jam. CUBA: The typical breakfast tostada (grilled, buttered bread) is served alongside or dunked into cafe con leche.

The fortifying English breakfast includes eggs, sausage, bacon, beans, mushrooms, and cooked tomato. A traditional breakfast in France is coffee and either baguette or croissant. Like Cubans, the French often dip their buttered bread into coffee. Germans dig into an assortment of fresh breads, cold meats, local cheeses, butter, and jam. In Italy many Italians begin their day with a cappuccino and brioche slathered with jam or stuffed with chocolate. Pan con tomate, or toast with grated tomato spread, is a popular savory breakfast in Spain. For a treat, many restaurants and vendors sell churros. In Sweden a typical breakfast at home is an open-face sandwich layered with either fish or cold cuts, cheese, mayonnaise, and vegetables like cucumber and tomato.

Breakfasts in India vary by region, but often you'll find a tray like this one, crowded with chutneys, dips, and breads like dosa, roti, or idli. In Mexico the first meal of the day is hearty, with dishes like chilaquiles (below) and huevos rancheros being popular choices. Sweet rolls and coffee are lighter options. Traditional breakfasts in Japan include miso soup, steamed white rice, pickled vegetables, and proteins like fish and Japanese omelet (or "tamagoyaki").

In Russia griddle cakes are huge. There's cheese-stuffed syrniki, crepe-like blini made with kefir, and fluffy oladi, which are about the size of a biscuit. A traditional breakfast in Turkey consists of bread, cheese, butter, olives, eggs, tomatoes, cucumbers, jam, honey, and kaymak. It can also include sucuk, a spicy Turkish sausage, and Turkish tea.

In South Africa hot cereal or porridge, often made with corn and called "putu pap," is a common first meal. A Korean breakfast looks strikingly similar to a Korean dinner. There's rice, soup, the ever-present kimchi, some type of fish or beef, and other leftovers from the previous night's dinner. In Jamaica

ackee, a type of fruit that looks like scrambled eggs when it's cooked is a favourite Jamaican breakfast food. It can be accompanied by fried plantains, salted fish, and fresh fruit. American breakfast foods vary widely from place to place, but eggs, potatoes, and bacon or sausage is the common trinity.

Continental breakfast in hotels normally consists of baked goods (fresh bread, toast, pastries such as croissants or pain au chocolate etc.), slices of cheese and cold meat, cereal, yogurts, fruit and drinks like coffee, tea or fruit juices. Although this is the traditional breakfast in parts of continental Europe, elsewhere these breakfasts are common only in the hospitality sector (particularly in economy and limited service hotels with no restaurant, as they require little preparation) (<http://www.businessdictionary.com>).

### Conclusion and Suggestions

As paper points it out that all around the world countries have national dish as a part of country's identity and tradition. Typical local food is an essential experience for visitors. First contact with county traditional food is breakfast in hotel restaurant. It's very important to present all hotel guest tradition and local food of the country. The paper suggests that all Slovenian hotels present traditional Slovenian breakfast (apple, honey, butter and brown bread) and local region of producing. Guests can be informing with gastronomy regions of Slovenia and with typical food of the region. That will be first step to improve presenting Slovenian national gastronomy and prepare new food and gastronomy tourism products.

### Sources and Literature

- Barnett J. (2002) "Focus Group Tips for Beginners", Texas Center for the Advancement of Literacy and Learning, <http://www-tcall.tamu.edu/orp/orp1.htm>
- Bogataj, J., (2009) "The Food and Cooking of Slovenia: Traditions, ingredients, tastes & techniques in over 60 classic recipes",
- Charters, S., & Ali-Knight, J. (2002) "Who is the Wine Tourist?" *Tourism Management*, 23(3), 311-319
- Gačnik, A. (2012) "Gastronomy heritage as a source of development for gastronomy tourism and as a means of increasing Slovenia's tourism visibility, University of Primorska, Faculty of Tourism Studies – Turistica, Portorož, Slovenia
- Hall, C. M., & Macionis, N. (1998) "Wine Tourism in Australia and New Zealand" In R. W. Butler, M. Hall & J. Jenkins (Eds.), *Tourism and Recreation in Rural Areas*, pp. 197-224, Wiley
- Hjalager, A-M., Richards, G. (2002) "Tourism and Gastronomy", Routledge, London
- Kimberly A. Neuendorf (2002) "The Content Analysis Guidebook", SAGE Publications, Inc., Cleveland state University, USA, 330 pages

Mydestination.com, Slovenia

<http://www.mydestination.com/slovenia/usefulinfo/6175678/traditional-food-and-drinks>

OECD (2009) "The Impact of Culture on Tourism", Paris: OECD

Pine, J., Gilmore, J. (1999) "The Experience Economy", Harvard Business School Press

Pintarič M., (2011) "Traditional Slovene breakfast", Osnovna šola Škofja Loka, Slovenia, <http://www.ossklm.si/2011/11/14/tradicionalni-slovenski-zajtrk/>

Sidali, K.L., Spiller A., Shulze B.(2011) "Food, Agri-Culture and Tourism", Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg, pp 94

Symons, M. (1999) "Gastronomic authenticity and the sense of place" Paper presented at the 9th Australian Tourism and Hospitality Research Conference for Australian University Tourism and Hospitality Education

Telfer, D. J. (2001) "Strategic Alliances along the Niagara Wine Route", Tourism Management, 22, 21-30

<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/continental-breakfast.html>

#### NOTES OF THE AUTHORS

**TADEJA KRAŠNA:** Vocational College for Catering and Tourism Bled, Slovenia, [tadeja.krasna@vs-bled.si](mailto:tadeja.krasna@vs-bled.si)