



DEBRECENI EGYETEM

Distinctiveness of Hungarian Gastronomy

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/theoretical textbook/

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Preface

Eating is a universal and basic human need, which can be satisfied in various ways. It is significantly determined by the food available. The way it is accepted as foodstuff, processed, preserved and prepared is culture specific. Meals are single units of the eating culture, which provide a basis of comparison for different spatial, temporal and social conditions; they present foods, which have a given time, participants and eating rules accepted by them.

The significance and diversity of meals is characterized by a number of differences depending on different historical periods. While in times of recession they served merely for survival, in flourishing economic conditions they were approaching artistic heights.

Today there is an increasing need that every single field of human life mediates meaning and message towards the society. Thus people do not only eat to satisfy their physical needs, but also to contribute to the satisfaction of their spiritual needs. In our globalizing world eating has become an unique and fashionable field, and also a means of self-expression. Gastronomy, the culture of eating, therefore, is an ever-changing, live phenomenon, which is influenced by a number of natural, economic and cultural factors.

The lecture notes titled „The Distinctiveness of the Hungarian Gastronomy” committed itself to present an academic level introduction to the history and characteristics of European and particularly Hungarian gastronomy by collecting and systemizing the available sources. This theoretical textbook rather covers the gastronomic features of the territory of Hungary at present. It has been prepared primarily for the English-language training of Hungarian native speaker students, who take part in the Tourism and Hospitality BA programme at the University of Debrecen. The detailed descriptions of the lecture notes are adjusted to their learning needs, however, the footnote explanations facilitate its application in the training of foreign students as well.

The volume intends to define the fields of gastronomy, present the history of Europe's gastronomy from the antiquity to the present day and the characteristics of Hungarian gastronomy in different historical periods, and it also provides an outlook for some regional and religious traditions. At the end of the chapters revising and competence developing questions help learning, while the terminological glossary at the end of the volume provides explanation for terms of outstanding significance mentioned in the lecture notes.

Hopefully this volume will contribute to broaden and deepen students' knowledge in gastronomy; it contains interesting information that is supposed to arouse students' curiosity and thus motivate them to read more about gastronomy.

I wish the readers a pleasant time reading and learning from these lecture notes.

The Author



1. Defining Gastronomy and Its Connections

This chapter provides the definition of gastronomy and highlights its content, the areas it covers and its connections to other parts of everyday life as well as sciences. The chapter also provides the meanings of other, connecting concepts and definitions.

1.1. What is Gastronomy?

Eating is the only basic human need that can take place in the context of a large group and can have a leisure function. Eating as a leisure activity belongs to the fourth main category of leisure activities, i.e. entertainment and social life. The other three are culture, sport and tourism (Deffner, 1999). The meanings of eating and gastronomy are not the same. Eating is about nutrition, so it is rather biology, while gastronomy is about senses, thus the part of our culture.

Gastronomy is not easy to define, as can be seen from the number of authors who have declined to attempt definition. Gastronomy can be often ill defined. There are difficulties in applying the term and consequently there are difficulties in the application of gastronomic values to the alimentary experiences and also to the hospitality industry in general (Gillespie, 2001).

The evolution and history of gastronomy has been clearly influenced by the social and economic background in each period of time. At the beginning of the 19th century, gastronomy was defined as “the reasoned knowledge of all that relates to man feeding himself”. Its aim was to “attend to the preservation of man by means of the best possible food” (Brillat – Savarin, 1825).

Gastronomy has grown from past emphasis on beautifying the ritual of consumption to include, in today’s culture, knowledge of the many avenues of cooking and food production. Knowledge is actually half of the root of “gastronomy”. The etymology of gastronomy originates with the Greek combining forms *gastér*-and-*nómos*. *Gastér*- or *gastro*- is the combining form meaning “stomach”; -*nómos* is the combining form meaning “knowledge”. Thus the foundation of gastronomy is knowledge, and today's culture has expanded upon the knowledge required in gastronomy and by a gastronomist or a gastronome.

Gastronomy is defined as being the art and science of fine eating with an emphasis on gourmet foods and dining experiences (Katz, 2003). In more commonly, gastronomy includes everything that connects to eating (Katz, 2003). We have to clearly understand that gastronomy is not exactly about healthy food or healthy cooking. It is about the art and dining experiences. Some other words related to gastronomy that are at times mentioned when discussing gastronomy in today’s contemporary culture are:

- **gastronome:** one knowledgeable of the art or science of fine eating (i.e. in gastronomy);
- **gastronomist:** one who actively combines theory of gastronomy with the practice of gastronomy (i.e. one who cooks);
- **gourmand:** one who is fond of good eating, sometimes referring to one who enjoy good food to excess; derived from the old French *rootgormant*,





meaning a glutton;

- **gourmet:** a connoisseur of fine food and drink (i.e., no inherent connotation of excess as is possible with “gourmand”, root “gormant”) (Katz, 2003).

While gastronomy originally indicated those who dwelt upon classic and haute cuisine, with interest confined to expensive, lavish meals that required equally expensive silver and china accoutrements, **in today's culture gastronomy has expanded to include complete command of knowledge of the art and science of good food and eating** (Gillespie, 2001), which includes among other things cultural foods, molecular gastronomy, food history and culinary anthropology.

Gastronomy can be subdivided into four major areas (Harrison, 1982). These are

- practical gastronomy,
- theoretical gastronomy,
- technical gastronomy, and
- food gastronomy.

Practical gastronomy is concerned with the practice and study of the preparation, production and service of the various foods and beverages from countries around the world, i. e. the cuisines. Practical gastronomy thus has to do with the techniques and standards involved in the conversion of raw produce into aesthetic, nationally, regionally and culturally specific edible products.

Theoretical gastronomy supports practical gastronomy. It is concerned with a systems and process approach, focused on recipes, cookery books and other writing. It records various procedures that must be carried out in order to maximize success.

Technical gastronomy brings rigour and underpins practical gastronomy. It looks at the systematic evaluation of anything in the gastronomic field that demands appraisal. It is a link between the small-scale operation and mass manufacture.

Food gastronomy is concerned with food and beverages and their genesis. Fundamentally, the role of wine, and other beverages, in relation to food is to harmonize, in order to maximize the enjoyment to be had from both (Gillespie, 2001).

Today gastronomists are rarely knowledgeable about food chemistry and physics, and food ways, however it would be necessary to go further. They usually have a link to the many cultures of the world through sophisticated computer technology, but they should get further understanding in agriculture, aquaculture, and the technology of newer cooking methods and equipments. Gastronomy today must go beyond the sensory experience of food and dining, such as the multisensory approach behind the cooking techniques, to include the serious issues of the impact of eating and diet upon worldwide ecology and health, including foodborne diseases, like E. coli and norovirus infection, which is gastroenteritis from contaminated food or drinks.

On the more pleasurable side, gastronomy in today's culture should promote learning to taste, savor, and fully sensualize the dining experience, whether that experience is a family lunch or dinner, a picnic with friends, or an elegant meal entertaining a collection of friends. An important role of gastronomy in today's culture is that of re-elevating food and cooking beyond appearance and “stylistic architecture” to its primary functions in **aroma and flavour** so that modern food consumers regain a sensibility for the art of taste (taste: taste, smell (olfaction) and trigeminal nerve stimulation determines flavors). Though food fads may come and go, the joy of conversation over good food (the two comprising a good meal) should remain as an acclaimed route to enjoying





the hedonistic pleasures of life. Anatomy and physiology can combine to elevate a boring biological function to one of life's greatest pleasures (Katz, 2003).

1.2. Gastronomy and Food Science

Today, gastronomy is built upon the knowledge of food science. Food science is the applied science devoted to the study of food. The Institute of Food Technologists (IFT)¹ defines **food science as “the discipline in which the engineering, biological, and physical sciences are used to study the nature of foods, the causes of deterioration, the principles underlying food processing, and the improvement of foods for the consuming public”** (Heldman, 2006). The textbook Food Science defines food science in simpler terms as “the application of basic sciences and engineering to study the physical, chemical, and biochemical nature of foods and the principles of food processing” (Potter – Hotchkiss, 1998). According to these definitions, today, food science and gastronomy are often used for similar meanings, however, the activities of food scientists include the development of new food products, design of processes to produce these foods, choice of packaging materials, shelf-life studies and sensory evaluation of products using panels or potential consumers, as well as microbiological and chemical testing. Food scientists may study more fundamental phenomena that are directly linked to the production of food products and its properties. Food science brings together multiple scientific disciplines. It incorporates concepts, such as

- food chemistry, which is basically not about the study of the molecular composition of food, or the involvement of these molecules in chemical reactions, but rather about the basic chemical examination of food in laboratories determined in national and international standards;
- food physical chemistry, the study of both physical and chemical interactions in foods in terms of physical and chemical principles applied to food systems, as well as the application of physicochemical techniques and instrumentation for the study and analysis of foods;
- food engineering, the industrial processes used to manufacture food;
- food microbiology, the positive and negative interactions between micro-organisms and foods;
- food packaging, the study of how packaging is used to preserve food after it has been processed and contain it through distribution;
- food preservation, the causes and prevention of quality degradation;
- food safety, the causes, prevention and communication dealing with food-borne illness;
- food technology, the technological aspects;
- molecular gastronomy, the scientific investigation of processes in cooking, social and artistic gastronomical phenomena;
- new product development, the invention of new food products;
- sensory analysis, the study of how consumers' senses perceive food (Heldman, 2006).

Consequently, food science basically covers activities that occur before the food is getting on the table.

¹ IFT is an international, non-profit scientific society of professionals engaged in food science, food technology, and related areas in academia, government and industry. Its central office is in Chicago, USA. Since its founding in 1939, IFT has been committed to advancing the science of food. It has more than 17,000 members from more than 95 countries.





1.3. The Classification of Cuisines

When we speak about gastronomy, we often indicate the style of the cuisine or the region we would like to describe gastronomically. **A cuisine is a specific set of cooking traditions and practices, often associated with a specific culture or region. Each cuisine involves food preparation in a particular style, of food and drink of particular types, to produce individually consumed items or distinct meals** (Oxford English Dictionary, 2014). A cuisine is frequently named after the region or place where it originated. A cuisine is primarily influenced by the ingredients that are available locally or through trade. Religious food laws can also exercise a strong influence on such culinary practices. These regional effects and even more the religious food laws had the same role centuries ago as the food safety roles have today.

We can make the major groups of cuisines according to history, region, culture (basically religion) and styles.

Global cuisine is a cuisine that is practiced around the world. A cuisine is a characteristic style of cooking practices and traditions, often associated with a specific region, country or culture. To become a global cuisine, a local, regional or national cuisine must spread around the world; its food served world-wide.

Regional cuisine is based upon national, state or local regions. Regional cuisines may vary based upon food availability and trade, varying climates, cooking traditions and practices, and cultural differences. One noteworthy definition is based upon traditional cuisine: **“A traditional cuisine is a coherent tradition of food preparation that rises from the daily lives and kitchens of a people over an extended period in a specific region of a country, or a specific country, and which, when localized, have notable distinctions from the cuisine of the country as a whole”** (Oxford English Dictionary, 2014).

Thinking a little bit more about regional cuisines, we can also consider the continents as regions. In this meaning, Asian, African, European and Oceanian cuisines and cuisine of the Americas are regional cuisines based on the distinctiveness of “local” cooking and eating traditions.

Depending on the style (techniques, use of spices, service) of the cuisines we can make differences among them, such as fusion cuisine, cuisine classique, haute cuisine, nouvelle cuisine, vegan cuisine, vegetarian cuisine or niche by niche cuisine. Most of them will be deeply discussed in the upcoming chapters.

1.4. Summary

The evolution and history of gastronomy has been clearly influenced by the social and economic background in each period of time. Gastronomy is defined as being the art and science of fine eating with an emphasis on gourmet foods and dining experiences. In more commonly, gastronomy includes everything that connects to eating. In today’s culture gastronomy has expanded to include complete command of knowledge of the art and science of good food and eating. Gastronomy today must go beyond the sensory experience of food and dining, such as the multisensory approach behind the cooking techniques, to include the serious issues of the impact of



eating and diet upon worldwide ecology and health. On the more pleasurable side, gastronomy in today's culture should promote learning to taste, savor, and fully sensualize the dining experience.

Today, gastronomy is rather built upon the knowledge of food science. Food science can be defined as “the discipline in which the engineering, biological, and physical sciences are used to study the nature of foods, the causes of deterioration, the principles underlying food processing, and the improvement of foods for the consuming public. Activities of food scientists include the development of new food products, design of processes to produce these foods, choice of packaging materials, shelf-life studies and sensory evaluation of products using panels or potential consumers, as well as microbiological and chemical testing.

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1.5. Control Questions

1. What is the definition of gastronomy?
2. What is the difference between the meanings of expressions “gastronome” and “gastronomist”?
3. What are the meanings of gourmand and gourmet?
4. Why gastronomy is considered to be science and arts at the same time?
5. What is the meaning of food science?
6. What kinds of sub disciplines are involved in food science? Please, provide some examples and their meanings!
7. What is the meaning of the expression “cuisine”?
8. What are the factors cuisines can be specialized on?

1.6. Competence Developing Questions

1. According to your opinion, what are the major social and economic factors that influence the evolution of gastronomy?
2. What can be the connecting points of food science and gastronomy, according to your opinion?



2. The Brief History of the European Gastronomy

In this chapter we present a summary of the history of gastronomy in Europe, which appears very different to the subject of European food. In fact, throughout history, the daily cookery of ordinary people is simpler and less varied than that of the rich. Here, we discuss the cuisine of the upper classes as it appears in the cookbooks of the time. These historical cookbooks present us with a cuisine that is roughly equivalent to that of the three-star Michelin restaurants of today.

We grouped periods accordingly: Ancient Greek and Roman cuisine had a major influence on gastronomy even today. Medieval cuisine and Renaissance cuisine share similar characteristics, specifically in their use of spices; the cuisine of the 17th and 18th centuries shows a clear change from that past, where the French Revolution marks an important separation before the development of the cuisine of the bourgeoisie and the aristocracy of the 19th century.

2.1. Ancient Times

Gastronomy is a major part of our life and culture such as it was thousands of years ago. During the past centuries, from hunters and gathers we have progressed to consumers who view food as more than just fuel for our body. In the development stages from eating merely to survive, to becoming sophisticated consumers, there have been a range of significant stages. Those stages apply across two areas, what Gillespie (2001) refers to as gastro-geography and gastro-history. Initially, people consumed what they found in the nature available to eat. **Gastro-geography concerns the natural conditions for food consumption.** The food available to our ancestors was determined by the type of terrain and the prevailing weather conditions in their locality. This controlled what would grow (wild or cultivated), or what could be caught or reared. So natural resources, climate and catchable / gatherable species around humans were essential to affect eating habits and so the evolution of gastronomy (Fields, 2011).

Gastro-history rather concerns food items, influences and techniques learned through trading with adjacent nations, and brought back by explorers traveling further afield. Migration of people has also been a major factor (Fields, 2011).

2.1.1. The Greek Cuisine

Within Europe, the advent of Greek civilisation brought about much of what we know today about eating habits and ancient societies. The writing of Archestrates, Greek poet and Gastronomer (4th century BC), provides information about early Greek gastronomy, but very little has actually survived (Fields, 2011). **Food played an important part in the Greek mode of thought.** Classicist John Wilkins notes that “in the Odyssey for example, good men are distinguished from bad and Greeks from foreigners partly in terms of how and what they ate. Herodotus identified people partly in terms of food and eating” (Wilkins et al, ed. 1995).



Up to the 3rd century BC, the frugality imposed by the physical and climatic conditions of the country was held as virtuous. **Ancient Greek cuisine was characterized by its frugality, reflecting agricultural hardship. It was founded on the “Mediterranean triad”: wheat, olive oil and wine** (Hood – Renfrew, 1973).

The Greeks had three to four meals a day. Breakfast consisted of barley bread dipped in wine, sometimes complemented by figs or olives. They also ate pancakes called teganites, tagenites or tagenias, all words deriving from tagenon, “frying pan”. Tagenites were made with wheat flour, olive oil, honey and curdled milk, and were served for breakfast. Another kind of pancake was staitites, from staitinos, “of flour or dough of spelt” (Dalby, 1996) derived from stais, “flour of spelt” (Spiller, 1996).

A quick lunch was taken around noon or early afternoon. Dinner, the most important meal of the day, was generally taken at nightfall. An additional light meal was sometimes taken in the late afternoon. Aristodeipnon, literally “lunch-dinner”, was served in the late afternoon instead of dinner (Dalby, 1996).

Men and women took their meals separately (Dalby, 1996). When the house was too small, the men ate first, the women afterwards. Slaves waited at dinners.

The Greeks normally ate while seated on chairs; benches were used for banquets (Dalby, 1996). Loaves of flat bread could be used as plates, but terra cotta bowls were more common (Spiller, 1996) (*Picture 1*).



Source: <https://theinkbrain.wordpress.com/2012/05/31/food-in-history-an-excerpt-by-reay-tannahill/>

Picture 1: A Typical Banquet Scene in the Ancient Greece

Dishes became more refined over time, and by the Roman period plates were sometimes made out of precious metals or glass. **Cutlery was not often used at table.** Use of the fork was unknown, people ate with their fingers. Knives were used to cut the meat. Spoons were used for soups and broths (Dalby, 1996). Pieces of bread could be used to spoon the food or as napkins, to wipe the fingers.

In the ancient Greece, cereals formed the staple diet. The two main grains were wheat and barley (Dalby, 1996). Wheat grains were softened by soaking, then reduced into gruel or ground into flour. After that they were kneaded and formed into loaves or flatbreads, either plain or mixed with cheese or honey (Migeotte, 2002). Dough loaves were baked at home in a

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clay oven set on legs (Sparkes, 1962).

Barley was easier to produce but more difficult to make bread from. It provided a nourishing but very heavy bread (Dalby, 1996). Because of this it was often roasted before milling, producing a coarse flour which was used to make maza, the basic Greek dish. Many recipes for maza are known; it could be served cooked or raw, as a broth, or made into dumplings or flatbreads (Migeotte, 2002). Like wheat breads, it could also be augmented with cheese or honey.

The cereals were often served accompanied by what was generically referred to as opson, "relish" (Dalby, 1996). The word initially meant anything prepared on the fire, and, by extension, anything which accompanied bread. **In the classical period it came to refer to fruit and vegetables**, such as cabbage, onions, lentils, sweet peas, chickpeas, broad beans, garden peas, grass peas, etc.. **Vegetables were eaten as a soup**, boiled or mashed, seasoned with olive oil, vinegar, herbs or gáron, which is a fish sauce similar to Vietnamese mam. **Raw or preserved olives were a common appetizer** (Dalby, 1996).

The consumption of fish and meat varied in accordance with the wealth and location of the household in the country, hunting (primarily trapping) allowed for consumption of birds and hares. Peasants also had farmyards to provide them with chickens and geese. Slightly wealthier landowners could raise goats, pigs, or sheep. **In the city, meat was expensive except for pork. Sausages were common both for the poor and the rich** (Sparkes, 1962).

In the Greek islands and on the coast, fresh fish and seafood (squid, octopus, and shellfish) were common (*Picture 2*). They were eaten locally but more often transported inland. Sardines and anchovies were regular fare for the citizens of Athens. They were sometimes sold fresh, but more frequently salted.



Source: <http://www.cooksinfo.com/food-in-ancient-greece>

Picture 2: Fishmonger in Ancient Greece

Country dwellers drank milk, but it was seldom used in cooking. Butter was known but seldom used either. **Cheese was eaten alone or with honey or vegetables. It was also used as an ingredient in the preparation of many dishes, including fish dishes.**

The Greeks are thought to have made red as well as rosé and white wines. As at the present time, many qualities of production were to be found, **from common table wine to vintage qualities.** The best wines, in general opinion, came from Thásos, Lesbos and Chios.



The Greeks also drank kykeon (shake or mix), which was both a beverage and a meal. It was a barley gruel, to which water and herbs were added (Wilkins, 1995).

2.1.2. Gastronomy in the Roman Empire

The Roman diet evolved over the course of centuries. In the time of Virgil and Cato, frugality was a virtue to **most Romans** and they **often ate placenta** (gruel containing different cereals), fruits, vegetables, olives, and cheese. **Wealthier Romans of during the times of the Empire preferred more luxurious and exotic food.** The colonies of the Roman Empire were heavily-influenced by the diet of their subjugators (Internet1).

The Romans preferred boiling and stewing their meat (methods which symbolized refinement, culture, and wealth) over roasting, since smoke and fat were reserved for the Gods. Roasted meat was nature untransformed, like raw food which was considered barbaric and impoverished. **The Romans had a taste for rich and well-cooked food; sweet-and-sour sauces** made of honey, fruits, vinegar, garum (nuoc mam), seasoned with herbs (cumin, rue, coriander, mint, oregano) and spices and thickened with flour. **They often ate meatballs accompanied with glazed sauces**, which was practical because they dined lying down. Common spices included pepper, ginger, asafoetida, spikenard, saffron, and cardamom. **They only used olive oil in cooking.** Sweet – and - sour sauces were also served with honey, fruits, vinegar and garum (nuoc mam), herbs and spices (cumin, rue, coriander, mint, oregano), thickened with flour (Internet1).

Recipes listed just oil, either pure oil (oleo puro) or virgin oil (olei floris). The Romans designated places of origin for olive oil, as the French now do for wine. The best quality and most expensive olive oils were called oleum viride (first-press green oil).

Roman cuisine is discussed by several philosophers, satirists, novelists (Seneca, Horace, Juvenal, Martial, Petronius, Apuleius). Only one known cookbook has survived: *De Re coquinaria* by Apicius, written around 400AD, with a supplement of the 6th century. Ironically, the **renowned cooks of ancient Rome were often Greeks** (Bober, 2001).

The coqus (cook) prepared the meal in the culina (kitchen) (*Picture 3*), which was usually a narrow, smoky room located near the latrines (for water) and the caldarium, room with a hot plunge bath, (for embers). There was no chimney. The dishes were cooked on a brick work surface covered with coals, predecessor of the traditional stone-built stoves. For the less wealthy, there is only a brazier or a cooking area bounded by stones. The coals were bought from the baker, the blacksmith or taken from the bathhouse.

This setup allowed:

- Frying or high-temperature cooking where pots were put directly on the coals.
- Simmering, braising, or stewing where pots were raised on tripods.
- Grilling using a grill plate or spits.
- When baking was needed, either clay pots (clibanus) were used or dishes were brought to the local bakery. Baking bread at home was rare (Internet2).

The menu was divided into three parts: gustatio or appetizer composed mainly of eggs, salads, and moretum (cheese seasoned with herbs and spices), **prima mensa** composed of vegetables, meat and fish, **secunda mensa** or dessert, composed of fruits, cakes and olives (Gowers, 1997).

The meal was eaten in the dining room (triclinum). **Diners ate lying down** (until the 8th century in France, 10th century in Byzantium) on beds covered with cushions arranged in a U-



shape. **There were no knives, forks and spoons and diners used their hands.** The leftovers were tossed on the ground as an offering to the dead; these were swept up at the end of the meal (Internet1).

In Rome, **wine was drunk at every meal.** Even slaves, slaves who were thought to exist on the same spectrum as mongrel dogs, were allowed to drink wine. A life of servitude, to the Romans, seemed reasonable, but a life without wine was out of the question; it was simply preposterous. Possessing an affinity for wines that could grow old, the Romans often sipped the spirits of wine aged ten or twenty years. Their wines were also, in keeping with the reputation of the excess known to mark their culture, high in alcohol content (Jordan, 2014).



Source: <http://romewiki.wikifoundry.com/page/Food+in+Ancient+Rome>

Picture 3: Ancient Roman Kitchen

2.2. Middle Ages and the Renaissance

Over the next millennium, the art of cooking evolved tremendously. The elites from subjugated colonies ate like the Romans, but the Franks and Germanic people from the time of Clovis brought an appreciation for meat (Internet1). After the fall of the Roman Empire, **the Roman model left its mark on the peoples** of its former colonies. The main vector for this integration was no other than Christianity, the true inheritor of the Roman world and its traditions whose alimentary symbols were familiar: bread, wine and oil. As soon as the Churches and monasteries were built, clergymen turned to plant wheat fields and vineyards in the surrounding areas (Montignac, 2004). **Medieval cuisine started to diverge from Roman principles: vegetables were eaten less and less, bacon and lard replaced olive oil** (but the Church decreed that fasting was required 150 days a year), **spices became more varied. In the 15th century, a taste for sweet and sweet-and-sour took root in Europe and flourished a century later** (Internet1).

In medieval times, meat had the most important role in course of the meal (replaced by fish on days of fasting when meat was prohibited by the Church). Meat and fish were roasted or boiled, served with a light and acidulated sauce. It was also common to cook them in the tart or sweet-and-sour sauces with verjuice or vinegar, sugar or fruits and seasoned with spices.



The meals generally followed dietary requirements of the times as well as social class structures (poultry and fruits for the elite, root vegetables and dark bread for the poor). Spices, a sign of luxury and good nutrition, are preferred to herbs. Common spices included: cinnamon, ginger, galangal, cloves, nutmeg, mace, pepper, long pepper, Cubeb, grains of paradise, cardamom, and saffron (Montignac, 2004).

Over a hundred books on medieval cuisine were written in Europe between the 14th and 16th centuries. We know of a dozen cooks from these times, such as Taillevent, Maestro Martino and Maître Chiquart (Internet1).

During the Renaissance, Italy had the most skilled, well known and creative cooks in Europe. They took **Italian fine dining to new levels of refinement and prestige.** Large, elaborate banquets were served in the dining rooms of the dukes and princes who governed the many small states throughout Italy (Gastronomic Library).

Many of the medieval flavors and preparations were carried over to the Renaissance, like the **generous use of spices, the addition of sugar to savory dishes, the widespread consumption of roasts, stuffed pastas, tarts and pies.** The use of light sauces made of fruit or aromatic plants were mixed or thickened with the soft part of bread, grilled bread, flour, almonds or eggs. Sometimes, these sauces were flavored with acidic juices and mixed spices (Montignac, 2004).

During the Renaissance, people developed a great love for giblets and the innards of butchered animals, poultry and fish. In addition, you could find a large selection of stews, long pasta noodles, stuffed pasta and maccheroni. **Milk and dairy products were used often:** butter became as important as lard, heavy cream became popular and people began cooking all types of cheeses. Fruit and citrus were fundamental flavoring agents and fruit became a prominent part of the dishes served at the beginning of a meal (Gastronomic Library).

The soups were very rich, very expensive, several being served at the same time; and in order to please the eye as well as the taste they were generally **made of various colors, sweetened with sugar,** and sprinkled with pomegranate seeds and aromatic herbs, such as marjoram, sage, thyme, sweet basil, and savoury. The soups were perfect luxuries, and were taken instead of sweets. As a proof of this we must refer to the famous “soupe dorée”, the description of which is given by Taillevent, head cook of Charles VII., in the following words: “Toast slices of bread, throw them into a jelly made of sugar, white wine, yolk of egg, and rosewater; when they are well soaked fry them, then throw them again into the rosewater and sprinkle them with sugar and saffron”. There were also the soups made with mustard, hemp-seed, millet, verjuice, and a number of others much in repute at that period; for we see in Rabelais that the French were the greatest soup-eaters in the world, and boasted to be the inventors of seventy sorts (Internet3).

Characteristic for the Renaissance food were also the broths. In many places the saucepan was put on to the table, on which there was only one other large dish, of beef, mutton, veal, and bacon, garnished with a large bunch of cooked herbs. Wheat made into gruel for a long time was an important ingredient of cooking, being the basis of a famous preparation called fromentée, which was a bouillie obtained by boiling of milk, made creamy by the addition of yolks of eggs, and which was served as a liquor in which to roast meats and fish (Internet3). There were several sorts of fromentée, all equally esteemed.

An important part of the Renaissance food was the roasts, of which the sirloin of beef must have been one of the most common. The modes of preparing roasts, while





resembling the present system, differed by first boiling the strong meats, and then the roast was thoroughly basted with orange juice and rose-water, and covered with sugar and powdered spices. **We must also mention the broiled dishes**, the invention of which was attributed to hunters, and which Rabelais continually refers to as acting as stimulants and irresistibly exciting the thirst for wine at the sumptuous feasts of those voracious heroes (Gastronomic Library).

The custom of introducing salads after roasts was already established in the 15th century. However, a salad, of whatever sort, was never brought to table in its natural state; for, besides the raw herbs, dressed in the same manner as in our days, **it contained several mixtures, such as cooked vegetables, and the crests, livers, or brains of poultry.** After the **salads, fish was served**, sometimes fried, sometimes sliced with eggs or reduced to a sort of pulp, which was called carpée or charpie, and sometimes it was boiled in water or vine, with strong seasoning. Near the salads, in the course of the dinner, **dishes of eggs prepared in various ways** were generally served (Internet3).

In France, the manufacture of sweet and savoury pastry was entrusted as well as the corporation of pastry cooks, who obtained their statutes only in the middle of the 16th Century. So much was this the case that these ingenious productions became a crucial art, worthy of rivaling even cookery itself. Ancient pastries, owing to their shapes, received the name of tourte or tarte, from the Latin torta, a large hunch of bread. This name was afterwards exclusively used for hot pies, whether they contained vegetables, meat, or fish (Sider, 2007).

Some of the condiments saw a huge increase in price during the Renaissance. Food could not be salted easily anymore, as salt, which from the remotest periods was the condiment par excellence, and the trade in which had been free up to the 14th Century, became, from that period, the subject of repeated taxation (Brown, 2010).

The side-dishes added to the luxury of Renaissance food. They consisted mainly in a high variety of pastry (Internet3).

The kitchen was separated from the living quarters for fire safety. Dishes are prepared in the fireplace. The medieval cook was able to roast meat on spits and simmered sauces over dying coals. Nice houses are equipped with ovens, but the baker's oven was often used to bake the pies and tarts of medieval cuisine (Brown, 2010).

Despite popular myth, **during the Middle Ages it was common for most people to eat three or four (sometimes five) meals a day.** Breakfast would be served around nine in the morning, followed by dinner (what we think of as lunch) at either noon or one o'clock in the afternoon, and finally supper at nightfall. During that late 1500s, the very wealthy began eating their supper much later, in order to accommodate nightly entertainment (Flandrin – Montanari, ed., 2013).

During this same time, **service ala Francaise –The French Style of Dining- became fashionable.** This new dining concept included the idea of specific courses. A typical Renaissance dining schedule would go as follows:

- First Course- Soup and appetizers, usually doused in some tangy sauce modern day gourmets would find absolutely repulsive.
- Second Course- Roasted meat- a large bird decked out in its original feathers- accompanied by salads and other side dishes.
- Third Course- Fruit- It isn't called dessert until later on, as that term was deemed vulgar (but apparently putting a dead peacock or swan on display during dinner wasn't) (Brown, 2010).



The ceremonial dinner was comprised of five services with several different dishes per service. Diners ate the dishes placed before them. Through the 1400s, food was served in a long trencher. Wealthy households would have some type of metal trencher, perhaps silver or pewter. Middle class homes would have a metal or wooden trencher. The very poor may have substituted a hollowed out loaf of bread in place of wooden trencher. **People would eat from these trenchers, scooping out food with their fingers, and using bits of bread to sop up juices and broth.**

However, the Renaissance was not entirely without table manners. There were a few rules of etiquette that were expected of diners, dating back to medieval times including:

- No spitting across the table.
- No dipping meat directly into the salt dish.
- No picking ones teeth with a finger or knife (Brown, 2010).

It was not until the mid 1500s that individual plates and forks were introduced to diners. Henceforth, the common trencher, a staple at European tables for nearly a thousand years, slowly disappeared (though it was probably for the better). People still ate in their kitchens, if they were a peasant or merchant. The wealthy took their meals in the main hall of their estates (*Picture 4*). Dining rooms would not become popular until the 1700s.



Source: <http://www.medievalists.net/2015/05/18/>

Picture 4: Medieval Dining Scene

2.3. The 17th and 18th Centuries

During the 17th century there is a population leap and by 1750, there are approximately 150 million Europeans and almost 200 million at the beginning of the 18th century. This unprecedented population growth is at the heart of a renewed practice of deforestation. As in the past, the lands devoted to cultivating cereals were expanded to the loss of the amount of land vowed to cattle farming, hunting



and crop picking. As a result of increased farming activities, **grains became the central ingredient in peoples' diet** and this **reduced the variety of the foods** and the amount of proteins consumed (Montignac, 2004).

Gastronomy evolved slowly. Despite the fact that the cooks of the time of Louis XIV opposed old cuisine and promoted **nouvelle cuisine**, changes were slow and varied from country to country (Internet2). **Medieval and Renaissance tastes remained popular** in Europe. **French cuisine** distinguished itself by **rejecting these tastes**. But this rejection was more in words than actions. The cooks promoted natural flavours, undercooking to respect the product, yet developed standard culinary preparations: stocks, meat juices, and coulis (Flandrin – Montanari, ed., 2013). The French rediscovered the delights of offal and vegetables: artichokes, asparagus, mushrooms, peas, cauliflower. Roux and emulsified sauces (beurre blanc, hollandaise) arrived, along with coffee and cacao (Internet2).

Other foods were also brought from the **New World** (tomatoes, Mexican beans, turkey) however, considering the length of time it took for these foods to be adopted into people's eating habits and agricultural practices, **it is impossible to say that they drastically changed Europe's nutritional landscape** (Montignac, 2004).

One of the **main concerns** of the times, at least in France, was **maintaining constant food supplies**. Although, traditionally, municipal authorities were in charge of keeping up food supplies, the central government constantly feared the risk of popular rioting should there be bread shortages. This is why it was decided to stock grains to cover periods of shortage. This regulatory policy, however, was often seen as an attempt at monopolizing wheat for speculative purposes, to raise prices.

At the end of the 18th century, as the situation started to become more and more critical, public officials became increasingly aware of the **bread issue** (the problem of depending on wheat as the sole crop) and they sought the means of diversifying food crops. Parmentier suggested growing potatoes but, since Europeans had viewed potatoes as "pig feed" ever since this plant was first brought to Europe in the 16th century, his proposal was not well received. It was not until the 19th century that potatoes were fully integrated into European people's eating habits (Montignac, 2004).

Considering the elit, service a la francaise continued throughout Europe. In France, the meal began to be divided between sweet and savoury dishes. The order of dishes became more standard: appetizer or soup, main course, entremets and dessert.

Several cookbooks were published in France. Italy, which was a large source of cookbooks in the 16th century, continued to publish cookbooks, too (Internet2).

Rudimentary stone-built stoves arrived in most kitchens. It is an early version of the furnace and stove. It was made of brick and sometimes covered with earthenware. **The first kitchen brigades** were developed. In the dining room, we began to use a **dining table**, a permanent fixture of the room. Earthenware and porcelain adorn the table because the precious dinnerware (tin and silver) had been given to swell the State coffers between 1689 and 1759 (Internet2).

In England, the first solid bottles were made, which now allowed the preservation of wine and the **creation of Champagne**. The technique of a second, in-bottle fermentation was discovered first in Holland and later in France. In England, the **first restaurants** opened for business.

During the middle of the 18th century, a culinary revolution occurred. The wave of change began in France and spread throughout Europe. The food of the Renaissance courts was replaced by more modern cuisine based on **fresh**





ingredients, vegetables and herbs. Flavors became more precise and more attention was paid to the paring of ingredients, and food with wine. The strong, heavily spiced flavors of the past contrasted with the measured delicacy of the new sauces and arrival of new products from America, including potatoes, tomatoes, peppers, squash and corn (Gastronomic Library).

2.4. 19th and 20th Centuries

2.4.1. Haute Cuisine

Haute cuisine is a French term that more literally translates as "high cooking." It is a cuisine that is usually superbly prepared by high caliber chefs' food and often comes in small portion sizes (Internet4). The 17th century chef and writer **La Varenne** marked a change from cookery known in the Middle Ages, to somewhat **lighter dishes**, and **more modest presentations**. In the following century, **Antonin Careme** born in 1784, also published works on cooking, and although many of his preparations today seem extravagant, he simplified and codified an earlier and even more complex cuisine (Internet5).

The term is most commonly used to refer to **classic French cuisine** which roughly dates back to around 1750 to 1975, when nouvelle cuisine, meaning “the new cuisine,” was developed. Some, however, now use haute cuisine to distinguish any country’s elite cuisine from its ordinary cuisine. This style of food preparation is generally used to refer to food that is prepared with particular attention to appearance, used in large celebrations and especially for high-ranking members of society, and requires extremely complex cooking methods (Internet4).

“Le Viandier” which translates into English as “the preparer of meats” of **Taillevent**, a master cook to Charles V, King of France is an excellence source of the medieval haute cuisine (Trubek, 2000). In this book, three key elements of what would come to be called “haute cuisine” were identified: attention to seasoning and the **plentiful use of spices; separate preparation of protein of the dish from the sauces** with which they were served; and notably **complex preparation instructions** (Internet4).

A mid 17th century book “Le Cuisinier Francais”— which translates into English as “the cuisine of France” provides recipes for some of the elements now viewed as most representative of haute cuisine. Some examples of these recipes include **roux** which is a common base for sauces. Roux is prepared by cooking flour — usually wheat flour — together with a fat — usually butter. The resulting product is used as a base for sauces such as bechamel which is a white sauce. Other recipes detailed common haute cuisine elements including **farces** which is a stuffing of such things as ground chicken, mushrooms and onions; **liaisons**, which is a thickening agent made of egg yolks and heavy cream; and **bouillon** which is a strained broth often made from a mirepoix— or combination of onions, carrots, and celery— and a meat like chicken or beef. Haute cuisine eventually came to be associated with an array of **stocks and sauces**, like béarnaise, coulis, and remoulade sauces (Internet4).

Also key to haute cuisine is the **complex cooking methods, detailed knifework**, and the **use of pastry in main dishes**. The complex cooking methods generally arise from cooking parts of a dish separately and bringing them together in the final





presentation, but it also refers to the layers of flavor and numerous ingredients in each part of the dish, such as the sauce (Internet4).

Today, there are several luxurious restaurants around the world, where the earliest style of haute cuisine is practiced, however, many of the modern techniques are applied.

2.4.2. Cuisine Classique

The 18th and 19th centuries brought forth grand **restaurants and luxury hotels** as well as the **first food writers** (Grimod de la Reynière, Brillat Savarin). First celebrity chefs spread the influence of French cuisine internationally: Antonin Carême codified French cuisine in his four-volume work which culminated in his masterpiece “L'art de la cuisine française au 19^e siècle” (1833). Carême spent two years in London cooking for the prince regent of England and worked also in St Petersburg, Vienna, and Aix-la-Chapelle (Internet1). In the late 19th century and early 20th century there began a modernization of haute cuisine, so the cuisine classique emerged (Yaniga, 2010).

At the beginning of the 20th century in France, nostalgia for the simple country life, fuelled by a growing backlash against decadent city life, led to the rise of **regional cuisine**. This brought a new interest to local foodstuff and traditional regional fare. From an economic perspective, restaurants serving local fare thrived; regional cookbooks flourished (over 500 books were published in the last 20 years of the 20th century); in 1909, food products began to be protected through the creation of a certification system, afterwards called (controlled designation of origin), first for wines then extended to other foods.

In 1935, the French government created the Institut National des Appellations d'Origine (INAO) to regulate all French agricultural products. In 1992, the European Union and its member countries followed suit with the creation of Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) and Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) to safeguard their regional foods.

The influx of food from the New World (potatoes, tomatoes, beans) signalled a silent but widespread culinary revolution. Desserts are transformed by the arrival of cacao, coffee, vanilla, and pineapple. Much of this new cuisine owes its development to **Georges Auguste Escoffier**. Escoffier was chef and an owner of many restaurants, as well as a culinary writer (Yaniga, 2010).

Much of Escoffier's methods in modernizing the cuisine were drawn from the recipes of Carême. By simplifying Carême's recipes as well as adding his own touches, Escoffier was able to develop a **new modern French cuisine**. In his efforts to modernize French cuisine Escoffier also developed a system to organize and manage a professional kitchen. The system was called a “**brigade system**” and separated the kitchen into five sections. In this system, each member of a designated section created a specific part of the dish. The sections included the „garde manger” that prepared cold dishes; the „entremettier” prepared starches and vegetables, the „rôtisseur” prepared roasts, grilled and fried dishes; the „saucier” prepared sauces and soups; and the „pâtissier” prepared all pastry and desserts items (Yaniga, 2010).

By reorganizing the manufacturing of dishes within the kitchen Escoffier was able to cut down on the time that was required to prepare a dish, in turn making professional kitchens more efficient. Escoffier is a legend in the world of French cuisine. He has written many **famous cookbooks**, his most famous being *Le Guide Culinaire* which includes over 5,000 recipes (Yaniga, 2010). Other major





development was to replace service *à la française* with **service à la russe** (serving meals in courses) (Internet5). In these centuries, several techniques **changed cooking methods and methods for food preservation**: cork stoppers (1700), corkscrew (1750), the cast iron stove with ventilation hood, canning (Appert, 1749-1841), the freezer (1845), refrigerator (1933), and pasteurization (1860) (Internet1).

So what we call *cuisine classique* is in fact a mixture of aristocratic and French bourgeois cuisine. **Cuisine classique is the traditional cuisine with which we are familiar. It is a mix of sophisticated recipes and local dishes.** This type of gastronomy became the **culinary standard in Europe during the 19th century up to the 20th century** (Internet1). It was practised in the grand restaurants and hotels of Europe and elsewhere for much of the 20th century (Yaniga, 2010).

Heavily-influenced by the broths invented during the 17th century, *cuisine classique* produced **new basics that are still in use today**: mirepoix (carrots, onions, celery), espagnole (mirepoix + broth), demi-glace (espagnole reduced to a jelly), glace (demi-glace reduced to the consistency of honey), fish stock, veal essences. Béchamel sauce was invented in 1735. Almost all spices disappear from *cuisine* except for pepper, nutmeg and cloves. The tradition of cooking with spices is lost (Yaniga, 2010).

However, French cuisine becomes the standard for great cuisine in Europe, in Italy, despite the strong influence of French cuisine, cookbooks begin to discuss regional cuisine.

2.4.3. Nouvelle Cuisine

It is a cuisine that is still being defined. Do we have enough perspective to discuss it? *Nouvelle cuisine*, eclectic style in international haute cuisine, developed during the 1960s and '70s (Internet6).

The term “*nouvelle cuisine*” was first coined in 1973 in a **Gault Millau article** titled *Nouveau Guide Gault et Millau: Vive la nouvelle cuisine française*. Ten Commandments for *nouvelle cuisine* were declared, the most important of which are: **a rejection of long-cooking times, heavy sauces, spices and marinades that mask the natural flavours of the foodstuff**. New techniques are embraced, food-pairing conventions are challenged (red wine/red meat, white wine/fish, lamb/beans), and new products, cooking techniques, and presentations are welcomed. Gault Millau contributed to the popularization of celebrity chefs, who are often the disciples of Fernand Point (of *La Pyramide* in Vienne, France): Paul Bocuse, Michel Guérard, Paul Haeberlin, and the Troisgros brothers. In 1976, over a hundred chefs are listed in the guide under the school of *nouvelle cuisine* (Internet6).

In general, *nouvelle cuisine* puts an emphasis on natural flavours, so the freshest possible ingredients are used, preparation is simplified, heavy sauces are less common, as are strong marinades for meat, and cooking times are often reduced. **While menus were increasingly short, dishes used more inventive pairings and relied on inspiration from regional dishes** (Internet5). In reaction to some of the richer and more calorie-laden extravagances of classic French haute cuisine, *nouvelle cuisine* sought to emphasize, textures and colours of foodstuffs. Acknowledging the unhealthiness of a diet heavy in fats, sugars, refined starches, and salt, it minimized the use of these ingredients. ***Nouvelle cuisine* was also influenced by the Japanese style of food presentation** (Internet6).





The basic characteristics of nouvelle cuisine included the **use of sauces thickened** not by roux (a cooked mixture of flour and fat) but rather **by purees of vegetables or fruits**; the **servicing of novel combinations of foods in very small quantities that were artistically arranged on large plates**; a return to the importance of purchasing of food; and infinite attention to texture and detail.

Luxury was achieved through meticulous preparation and imaginative presentation and through the liberal use of fresh seasonal fruits and vegetables. Kiwi fruits, raspberries, mangoes, and other fruits were frequently combined with meats and seafood, and fruit-flavoured vinegars were a popular seasoning (Internet6).

Nouvelle cuisine from the years 1970 to 1980 did not break completely from so-called cuisine classique. While **Bocuse** and his contemporaries promoted “la cuisine du marché”, respect for the product, and lightly-cooked sauces, their recipes were still similar to those found in cuisine classique. The discovery of Japanese cuisine by these chefs helps them transform the old cuisine, characterized by fonds de sauce (gravies) into something new: they reduce cooking times, pay more attention to the dietary needs of diners, emphasized artistic dish presentations and describe dishes in their menus with extensive details on the provenance of ingredients (while reducing the portion size, opponents say). **We rediscover spices thanks to the influence of Asian, North African (Maghreb), and Mexican cuisine.** New spices are introduced: peppers, Sichuan pepper, pink peppercorns.

Believers in modern cuisine classique, champions of local food, and promoters of nouvelle cuisine find common ground in their beliefs and join forces to oppose the growth of fast food and junk food, symbols of the changing modern diet and the development of food industry (Internet6).

2.4.4. Fusion Cuisine

The roots of fusion cuisine are probably ancient, since humans have been exchanging culinary heritage for centuries, but the concept became popularized in the 1970s. Several French chefs began to offer foods that combined traditional French food with Asian cuisine, especially foods from Vietnam and China. The concept quickly spread to other major European cities, along with the American coasts (Internet7).

Fusion cuisine is cuisine that combines elements of different culinary traditions. Cuisines of this type are not categorized according to any one particular cuisine style and have played a part in innovations of many contemporary restaurant cuisines since the 1970s (Lindsey, 1985). Fusion food is a general term for the combination of various forms of cookery and comes in several forms. **Regional fusion** combines different cuisines of a region or sub-region into a single eating experience. It blends the culinary traditions of two or more nations to create innovative and sometimes quite interesting dishes. It tends to be more common in culturally diverse and metropolitan areas, where there is a wider audience for such food. Some common examples include Pacific Rim cuisine and Tex-Mex food. Critics of the practice sometimes call it “confusion cuisine,” arguing that chefs rely on novelty to carry the food, rather than flavor, texture, and presentation (Internet7).

Asian fusion restaurants, which combine the various cuisines of different Asian countries, have become popular in many parts of the United States and United Kingdom. Often featured are East-Asian, South-East Asian, and South-Asian dishes alongside



one another and offering dishes that are inspired combinations of such cuisines.

Some of the most well known examples combine European and Asian foods. These cultures have wildly divergent culinary traditions, and combining the centuries of cooking tradition of both continents can sometimes result in astonishing dishes. Vietnamese spring rolls might be found on the menu of a French restaurant, while a wasabi reduction sauce might be used on a pot roast. Sometimes these experiments are wildly successful, while in other cases they are less delightful (Internet7). California cuisine is considered a fusion culture, taking inspiration particularly from Italy, France, Mexico, the idea of the European delicatessen, and eastern Asia, and then creating traditional dishes from these cultures with non-traditional ingredients - such as California pizza. Other examples of this style include Tex-Mex, which combines South-Western United States cuisine and Mexican cuisines, and Pacific rim cuisine, which combines the different cuisines of the various island nations.

In Australia, due to the increasing influx of migrants, fusion cuisine is being reinvented and is becoming increasingly the norm at numerous cafes and restaurants; with Melbourne and Sydney now being considered as some of the best cities in the world with regard to the quality and creativity of Asian-fusion restaurants. Another incarnation of fusion cuisine implements a more eclectic approach, which generally features original dishes that combine varieties of ingredients from various cuisines and regions. Such a restaurant might feature a wide variety of dishes inspired by a combination of various regional cuisines with new ideas.

Foods based on one culture, but prepared using ingredients and flavors inherent to another culture, are also considered forms of fusion cuisine. For instance, pizza made with cheddar and pepper jack cheese, salsa, refried beans or other common taco ingredients is often marketed as “Taco Pizza”. This particular dish is a fusion of Italian and Mexican cuisines.

Similar approaches have been used for fusion – sushi, such as rolling maki with different types of rice and ingredients such as curry and basmati rice, cheese and salsa with Spanish rice, or spiced ground lamb and capers rolled with Greek-style rice and grape leaves, which resembles inside-out dolmades.

2.5. New Waves at the Beginning of the 21st Century

A breakthrough in gastronomy is led by European chefs born in the 1950s and 1960s: Marc Veyrat develops emulsions, replaces gravies with infusions, and introduces wild herbs from the Alps to the world of gastronomy. Michel Bras and Régis Marcon combine local food with innovative culinary techniques. Olivier Roellinger introduces flavours from the Orient. Pierre Gagnaire and Catalan chef Ferran Adria, with the help of findings by scientists such as Hervé This, work to understand the molecular structures that create the unctuous, the rich, and the crispy on the human palette. Their work is named molecular gastronomy.

A silent revolution in cuisine spreads in the 21st century: more humane working conditions in professional kitchens, the rise of women to the rank of great chefs (Hélène Darroze, Anne Sophie Pic, Reine Sammut). The authority of restaurant guides is challenged: Alain Senderens hands back his three Michelin stars at his restaurant Lucas Carton to simplify the menu and reduce the bill. To improve profitability, many chefs branch out from their Michelin-starred restaurants to start inns, bistros, or second restaurants without stars (Internet6).





Gastronomy, literally the study of food, has developed a wide range of subcategories in this age of electronic communication. The two most scientific subsets are **nutritional gastronomy and molecular gastronomy**.

Science-based cooking is closely associated with the design of stimulating and novel dishes that make guests feel an explosion of sensations. Chefs are expected to use high quality foods and thorough preparation techniques. But food science is not only texture and technology, it is also nutrition and health.

Nutritional gastronomy is at the forefront of recent advances in alternate diets, non-bulk approaches to eating, and the backlash to “fast food” obsessions in all countries. From a nutritional point of view, science-based cooking may contribute to providing certain nutrients and other food components, which could confer healthy aspects to the dishes and menus. Chefs may then also consider nutritional aspects when designing dishes and menus (Navarro et al, 2012). Followers of nutritional gastronomy stress such important factors as freshness of food, raw vs. cooked advantages, avoidance of certain foods (fatty, sugary, etc.), and attention to ingredients labels on packaged foods.

The term “**molecular gastronomy**” is commonly used to describe **a style of cuisine in which chefs explore culinary possibilities by borrowing tools from the science lab and ingredients from the food industry. Formally, the term molecular gastronomy refers to the scientific discipline that studies the physical and chemical processes that occur while cooking** (Internet7). The origins of molecular gastronomy as we know it to-day can be traced back to the late physicist Miklós Kürti. He promoted the intellectual and artistic exchange between physicists and chefs through a now-classic speech “The physicist in the kitchen” given at the Royal Institution of London (Kürti, 1969). This, in the end, led to the creation in 1992 of a series of workshops in, originally, “molecular and physical gastronomy” (This, 2004) and to more focused attention within the popular scientific literature (Kürti – This-Benckhard, 1994a, 1994b). A milestone in the scientific understanding of cooking was reached in 1984 with the publication of the book “On Food and Cooking” by Harold McGee (2004), who proposed that “science can make cooking more interesting by connecting it with the basic workings of the natural world”. Because of its breadth, depth and practical relevance, this book provided a new stimulus to the application of food science in cooking, and it has incited many chefs to more systematically explore the way they cook (Vega and Ubbink, 2008).

Many modern chefs do not accept the term molecular gastronomy to describe their style of cooking and prefer other terms like “modern cuisine”, “modernist cuisine”, “experimental cuisine” or “avant-garde cuisine”. Heston Blumenthal says molecular gastronomy makes cuisine sound elitist and inaccessible, as though you need a degree in rocket science to enjoy it. In the end, molecular gastronomy or molecular cuisine - or whatever you want to call this cooking style - refers to experimental restaurant cooking driven by the desire of modern cooks to explore the world's wide variety of ingredients, tools and techniques. Molecular gastronomy research starts in the kitchen where chefs study how food tastes and behaves under different temperatures, pressures and other scientific conditions (Internet8).

Molecular gastronomy seeks to investigate and explain the chemical reasons behind the transformation of ingredients, as well as the social, artistic and technical components of culinary and gastronomic phenomena. In today’s culture (we should say, multiple cultures), where food choice is part of our personal choices each day, we take advantage of the availability of food from many cultures





(Chinese or Indian may be obvious examples), and indirectly become more comfortable with and accepting of those cultures as a whole (Internet8).

Note by Note cuisine is a style of cooking based on molecular gastronomy, created by Hervé This. Dishes are made using pure compounds instead of using animal or plant tissues. Hervé This said the cuisine is like “a painter using primary colours, or a musician composing note by note” (Alain, 2013).

According to Hervé This, Note by Note cuisine began in 1994. In the French edition of Scientific American, This wrote that he dreamt of the day when recipes gave advice like “add to your bouillon two drops of a 0.001 percent solution of benzylmercaptan in pure alcohol”. This said promoting the cuisine was a struggle and he got no direct remuneration out of it. He teamed up with Pierre Gagnaire and they developed Note by Note dishes for between six months and a year. They presented the first Note by Note meal in Hong Kong in 2008. Pierre Gagnaire named the first dish Chick Corea, after the jazz pianist of the same name.

In 2012, This published “La cuisine note à note”, where the concept of Note by Note cuisine is discussed. Every year, This, with the chefs and students at “Le Cordon Bleu” prepare a note by note dinner (Alain, 2013).

Other keywords, concerning gastronomy in developed countries, are **sustainability, local and organic food**. Given the higher proportion of manufactured foods now available which meet current dietary recommendations, the food supply in developed countries could be said to be “healthier”. Yet the “health” of the diet is often achieved at the expense of the “health” of the environment since ecological problems created a current food production and distribution methods remain unaddressed. Further, nutritional modifications which produce foods that are low in fat, sugar, salt and high in fibre do not necessarily address the concerns consumers have about the food supply. An emphasis solely on the physical health of populations, through improved diet, is out of keeping with current views on health which recognise the importance of overall well-being. Through the development of the concept of “sustaining gastronomy”, consumers, food manufacturers and producers, and food regulators can better address the problems inherent in the food system, including those of an environmental nature (Coveney – Santich, 1997).

Highlighting the upcoming culinary trends, The National Restaurant Association’s annual What’s Hot culinary forecast predicts menu trends for the 2014. The NRA surveyed nearly 1,300 professional chefs – members of the American Culinary Federation (ACF) to find out what the hottest menu trends will be.

“Today’s consumers are more interested than ever in what they eat and where their food comes from, and that is reflected in our menu trends research. True trends – as opposed to temporary fads – show the evolution of the wider shifts of our modern society over time, and focus on the provenance of various food and beverage items, unique aspects of how they are prepared and presented, as well as the dietary profiles of those meals.” (Restaurant – Hospitality, 2013).

2.6. Summary

In this chapter we have presented a summary of the history of gastronomy in Europe. In fact, throughout history, the daily cookery of ordinary people is simpler and less varied than that of the rich. We have discussed the cuisine of the upper classes as it appears in the cookbooks of the time. These historical cookbooks





present us with a cuisine that is roughly equivalent to that of the three-star Michelin restaurants of today.

In the development stages from eating merely to survive, to becoming sophisticated consumers, there have been a range of significant stages. Those stages apply across two areas, referring to as gastro-geography and gastro-history. We grouped periods accordingly: Ancient Greek and Roman cuisine had a major influence on gastronomy even today. Medieval cuisine and Renaissance cuisine share similar characteristics, specifically in their use of spices; the cuisine of the 17th and 18th centuries shows a clear change from that past, where the French Revolution marks an important separation before the development of the cuisine of the bourgeoisie and the aristocracy of the 19th century.

Within Europe, the advent of Greek civilisation brought about much of what we know today about eating habits and ancient societies. Food played an important part in the Greek mode of thought. The Greeks did not ignore the pleasures of eating, but valued simplicity. Ancient Greek cuisine was characterized by its frugality, reflecting agricultural hardship. It was founded on the “Mediterranean triad”: wheat, olive oil and wine.

The Roman diet evolved over the course of centuries. In the time of Virgil and Cato, frugality was a virtue to most Romans and they often ate placenta (gruel containing different cereals), fruits, vegetables, olives, and cheese. Wealthier Romans of during the times of the Empire preferred more luxurious and exotic food. The colonies of the Roman Empire were heavily-influenced by the diet of their subjugators. The Romans preferred boiling and stewing their meat. The Romans had a taste for rich and well-cooked food; sweet-and-sour sauces made of honey, fruits, vinegar, garum, seasoned with herbs (cumin, rue, coriander, mint, oregano) and spices and thickened with flour. They often ate meatballs accompanied with glazed sauces, which was practical because they dined lying down. Common spices included pepper, ginger, asafoetida, spikenard, saffron, and cardamom. They only used olive oil in cooking. Ironically, the renowned cooks of ancient Rome were often Greeks. The ancient Roman cuisine used techniques, as it follows:

- Frying or high-temperature cooking where pots were put directly on the coals.
- Simmering, braising, or stewing where pots were raised on tripods.
- Grilling using a grill plate or spits.
- When baking was needed, either clay pots (clibanus) were used or dishes were brought to the local bakery. Baking bread at home was rare.

In medieval times, meat became the central part of the meal (replaced by fish on days of fasting when meat was prohibited by the Church). Meat and fish were roasted or boiled, served with a light and acidulated sauce. It was also common to cook them in the tart or sweet-and-sour sauces with verjuice or vinegar, sugar or fruits and seasoned with spices. The meals generally followed dietary requirements of the times as well as social class structures (poultry and fruits for the elite, root vegetables and dark bread for the poor). Spices, a sign of luxury and good nutrition, are preferred to herbs. Common spices included: cinnamon, ginger, galangal, cloves, nutmeg, mace, pepper, long pepper, cubeb, grains of paradise, cardamom, and saffron.

Through the 1400s, food was served in a long trencher. It was not until the mid 1500s that individual plates and forks were introduced to diners. Despite popular myth, during the middle ages it was common for most people to eat three or four (sometimes five) meals a day. A typical Renaissance dining schedule would go as follows:





- First Course- Soup and appetizers, usually doused in some tangy sauce modern day gourmets would find absolutely repulsive.
- Second Course- Roasted meat- a large bird decked out in its original feathers- accompanied by salads and other side dishes.
- Third Course- Fruit- It isn't called dessert until later on, as that term was deemed vulgar.

In the 17th and 18th centuries medieval and renaissance tastes remained popular in Europe. French cuisine distinguished itself by rejecting these tastes. Some cooks promoted natural flavours, undercooking to respect the product, yet developed standard culinary preparations: stocks, meat juices, and coulis. In the 18th century, the French rediscovered the delights of vegetables: artichokes, asparagus, mushrooms, peas, cauliflower. Roux and emulsified sauces (beurre blanc, hollandaise) arrived, along with coffee and cacao. Many recipe books were published in France and Italy.

Haute cuisine is a French term that more literally translates as “high cooking”. It is a cuisine that is usually superbly prepared by high caliber chefs’ food and often comes in small portion sizes. The term is most commonly used to refer to classic French cuisine which roughly dates back to around 1750 to 1975, when nouvelle cuisine, meaning “the new cuisine” was developed. Characteristics of the haute cuisine are the complex cooking methods, detailed knifework, and the use of pastry in main dishes.

What we call cuisine classique is in fact a mixture of aristocratic and French bourgeois cuisine. This type of gastronomy became the culinary standard in Europe during the 19th century up to the beginning of the 20th century. Cuisine classique is the traditional cuisine with which we are familiar. It is a mix of sophisticated recipes and local dishes. Heavily-influenced by the broths invented during the 17th century, cuisine classique produced new basics that are still in use today. Almost all spices disappear from cuisine except for pepper, nutmeg and cloves. The tradition of cooking with spices is lost.

The 18th and 19th centuries brought forth grand restaurants and luxury hotels as well as the first food writers (Grimod de la Reynière, Brillat Savarin). At the beginning of the 20th century in France, nostalgia for the simple country life, fuelled by a growing backlash against decadent city life, lead to the rise of regional cuisine. This brought a new interest to local foodstuff and traditional regional fare. From an economic perspective, restaurants serving local fare thrived; regional cookbooks flourished (over 500 books were published in the last 20 years of the 20th century); in 1909, food products began to be protected through the creation of a certification system, afterwards called appellation d’origine contrôlée (controlled designation of origin), first for wines then extended to other foods.

Nouvelle cuisine, eclectic style in international haute cuisine developed during the 1960s and '70s that stressed freshness, lightness, and clarity of flavour. In reaction to some of the richer and more calorie-laden extravagances of classic French haute cuisine, nouvelle cuisine sought to emphasize the natural flavours, textures, and colours of foodstuffs. Acknowledging the unhealthiness of a diet heavy in fats, sugars, refined starches, and salt, it minimized the use of these ingredients. Nouvelle cuisine was also influenced by the Japanese style of food presentation.

The basic characteristics of nouvelle cuisine included the use of sauces thickened not by roux (a cooked mixture of flour and fat) but rather by purees of vegetables or fruits; the serving of novel combinations of foods in very small quantities that were artistically arranged on large plates; a return to the importance of purchasing of food; and infinite attention to texture and detail. The most important





characteristics of nouvelle cuisine are: a rejection of long-cooking times, heavy sauces, spices and marinades that mask the natural flavours of the foodstuff. New techniques are embraced, food-pairing conventions are challenged (red wine/red meat, white wine/fish, lamb/beans), and new products, cooking techniques, and presentations are welcomed.

Fusion cuisine is cuisine that combines elements of different culinary traditions. Cuisines of this type are not categorized according to any one particular cuisine style and have played a part in innovations of many contemporary restaurant cuisines since the 1970s. Fusion food is a general term for the combination of various forms of cookery and comes in several forms. Foods based on one culture, but prepared using ingredients and flavors inherent to another culture, are also considered forms of fusion cuisine.

In the 20th century, gastronomy, literally the study of food, has developed a wide range of subcategories. The two most scientific subsets are nutritional gastronomy and molecular gastronomy. Nutritional gastronomy is at the forefront of recent advances in alternate diets, non-bulk approaches to eating, and the backlash to “fast food” obsessions in all countries.

The term molecular gastronomy is commonly used to describe a style of cuisine in which chefs explore culinary possibilities by borrowing tools from the science lab and ingredients from the food industry. Formally, the term molecular gastronomy refers to the scientific discipline that studies the physical and chemical processes that occur while cooking.

Note by Note cuisine is a style of cooking based on molecular gastronomy, created by Hervé This. Dishes are made using pure compounds instead of using animal or plant tissues. Other keywords, concerning gastronomy in developed countries, are sustainability, local and organic food. Yet the “health” of the diet is often achieved at the expense of the “health” of the environment since ecological problems created a current food production and distribution methods remain unaddressed. Further, nutritional modifications which produce foods that are low in fat, sugar, salt and high in fibre do not necessarily address the concerns consumers have about the food supply.

2.7. Control Questions

1. What are gastro-geography and gastro-history?
2. What are the characteristics of ancient Greek cuisine (typical raw materials, preparation techniques and equipments, spices and dishes)?
3. What are the characteristics of ancient Roman cuisine (typical raw materials, preparation techniques and equipments, spices and dishes)?
4. What are the major distinctiveness of gastronomy in the Middle Ages in Europe?
5. What are the gastronomic reforms of the Renaissance?
6. Why was the period of the 17th and the 18th centuries for gastronomy in Europe so important?
7. What are the major characteristics of Haute Cuisine?
8. What are the definition and characteristics of Cuisine Classique?
9. What is the meaning of Cuisine Nouvelle?
10. What are the distinctiveness of gastronomy today? Can you mention the most important trends in gastronomy?
11. What does it mean “nutritional gastronomy”? What are the major characteristics of it?
12. What is the definition of molecular gastronomy? What is the major concept of it?





2.8. Competence Developing Questions

1. According to your opinion, what are the major factors that influence the evolution of gastronomy?
2. Related to the culture of each period, here are four recipes for hare, one each from the Roman Times, the Middle Ages, the 17th century, and the modern times for you to compare and contrast. Please, consider the similarities and differences!

1- Aliter leporem ex suo iure: (Hare cooked in its own juice)

Clean the hare, debone, truss, and place in a large pot, add oil, garum, stock, a bouquet of leek, coriander, and dill. While this cooks, put pepper, lovage, cumin, coriander seeds, root of asafoetida, dried onions, mint, rue, and celery seeds in a mortar-and-pestle and grind, moisten with garum, add honey and cooking juices and work together with defritum (cooked grape must, reduced by half) and vinegar. Boil sauce and thicken with flour. Untruss the hare, cover with sauce, sprinkle with pepper and serve.

2 - Civé de lievre ou de connin:

Start by splitting the chest of the hare, and if it is freshly-slaughtered – one or two days prior – do not wash but place on the grill (or on a spit) and sear over hot coals. Cook the onions and add them to the hare (which has now been cut into pieces) in a greased pot (or cast iron skillet) and fry while stirring constantly. Grill and burn the bread and soak in meat stock with vinegar and wine. Beforehand, crush ginger, grains of paradise, cloves, long pepper, nutmeg and cinnamon; these spices should be crushed and diluted with verjuice and vinegar, or meat stock. Remove and place them aside. Crush the bread, soak with stock, and pass through muslin. Cook the stock, the onions and grease, the spices and the burnt bread with the hare. Ensure that the civet is well-browned, sour like vinegar and moderately salted and spiced.

3 - Lapereaux ou lapin en casserole: (Young rabbit or rabbit in casserole)

Quarter the rabbits, lard with fatty bacon, sear in a skillet with melted lard; place in a terrine with stock and a glass of white wine, a herb bundle, pepper, salt, a little bit of orange and fried flour.

4 - Civet de lièvre:

1 hare, 1dl cognac, 1dl oil, common condiments, 60 g shredded or ground lard / bacon, 30 g lard, 250 g bacon from pork belly cut into large cubes and blanched (lardons), 200 g sliced mushrooms, 30 baby onions, 10 g flour, 16 croûtons, 2 bottle of good red wine, 1 bouquet garni with a lot of thyme and 1 sprig of wild thyme, a few fried buttered croutons as desired. Cut the hare into pieces and marinate for a minimum of 12 hours with salt, pepper, usual herbs and condiments, cognac and oil, turning often during the marinating period.

Drain the pieces on a towel; pat dry. Heat the lard and 5cl of oil in a sauté pan. Add and sear baby onions, mushrooms, and lardons. Remove and reserve in a bowl. Add ground lard





and flour, allow to brown lightly. Add the pieces of hare, and coat well in the roux. Cover with good red wine; bouquet garni, garlic.

When the hare is three-quarters done, transfer the pieces to the bowl containing the onions, mushroom, and lardons. Rinse the pan with a little red wine if necessary. Pass the sauce through a chinois. Bring to a boil once again. Taste it. Thicken with blood and crushed liver. Return the hare pieces to the pan and finish cooking. Season it to taste. The civet should be well-cooked, better to be over-cooked than under-cooked.



3. History of the Hungarian Gastronomy

In the previous chapter we discussed the history of European gastronomy. We went through the different stages and presented the typical raw material, techniques, spices as well as cooking and eating habits.

In this chapter, we go through the history of the Hungarian gastronomy, and trying to find the most important stages of its development. The characteristics of different gastronomy era can be found in the Hungarian cuisine, as well, however, these trends sometimes are in a little late compared to their Western-European appearance.

Hungarian people had a quite challenging history, making contacts with other nations and ethnics. This cultural mixture provided the possibility to evolve a **very single cuisine**. Furthermore, Hungary is situated on a **flat, fertile plain** at the centre of Europe, having a **blooming agriculture**. These two factors are amongst the many which have made it a desirable acquisition for foreigners.

The Tatars, Turks, Germans, and others who have overrun and invaded Hungary throughout the centuries, have left their indelible mark on Hungarian cuisine. These influences have only served to enhance the basic elements and practices of the Hungarian cuisine which have been in place since the seven Magyar tribes settled in their new homeland in 896 A.D. (Lang, 1990).

3.1. Ancient Hungarian Gastronomy

The eating habits and traditions, the evolution of the cuisine of a nation is closely related to the history of the given nation. Before the Hungarian conquest of the Carpathian Basin, ancient Hungarians, **living in the ancient homeland of the Ural, gained their food by fishing, hunting and gathering**. Words originating from that time (e.g.: fish, roe deer, game, hare, bream, perch, partridge, grouse etc.) tell us much about their eating habits, ingredients used, and the ways of preparing their food. **Ancient Hungarians roasted their food on spits or cooked it, however they applied parching, drying and smoking**. In the middle of the first millennium BC, ancient Hungarians wandering along Volga River were engaged in shepherding, however they were already applying the **basic techniques of farming** (Tusor, 2008).

By 500 AD the Hungarians had migrated to the territory around the Don River, where they **learned much about cooking and baking from the Bulgarians and Turks** (Lang, 1990). In the 8th and 9th centuries AD their territory became part of the **Khazar Empire, where they acquired certain handicraft skills and knowledge in agriculture, horticulture and wine making**. Words originating from the time preceding the Hungarian conquest imply highly organized social, military and economic structures in the contemporary context. Words related to gastronomy: bull, ox, steer, pig, goat, camel, hutch, butter, boar, apple, pear, grapes, walnut, wine, knead, trough, jug etc. Around their wintertime settlement ancient Hungarians grew crops e.g.: barley, millet, wheat, however they did not wait for the crop to ripen, but the ears of crops were torrefied and dried (Tusor, 2008).





Wandering lifestyle, constant migration required special eating habits from the ancestors of the Hungarian nation. **For cooking they used cauldrons.** As earthenware spread, they started to cook and roast meat, and the lard gained in this way was also used. Meat preserved in lard remained easily consumable for a long time. Based on a still existing Asian tradition, Hungarian ancestors crushed the roasted and salted meat, which had been removed from the bones, and took the resulting meat powder in leather pouches with themselves for their journeys. They used the so called “kuru”, a predecessor to milk powder, while spoiled milk was dried. They adapted as well to the nomadic lifestyle by making dried pastas. The fact that Hungarians hanged their meat containing pouches on the saddle and the other fact that they cured their horses’ back wounds by putting a slice of raw meat on them gave way for the false and slightly malicious claim that “Hungarians used to tenderize meat by placing it under their saddles” (Tusor, 2008).

Leaving the Khazar Empire behind in the mid-ninth century, Hungarian ancestors travelled to a place known as “Etelköz”, which they soon left for the Carpathian Basin because of hostile attacks on them (Tusor, 2008).

3.2. First Centuries in the Carpathian Basin

Magyars settled in the Carinthian basin in 892 to 896 A.D. having done a deal with Emperor Arnulf, a ruler of a nearby kingdom in Western Europe. He offered them the land in return for helping him to conquer his enemies. **This land which was rich with fish and game and perfect for the rearing of livestock and the production of crops made for a varied diet** (Internet9). We hardly have remaining records on the eating habits and cooking methods from the time of the Hungarian Conquest and following centuries. However foods, cooking habits and linguistic fossil records of the Caucasian peoples related to the ancient Hungarians are suitable for making certain comparisons. In the past century these peoples still led a nomadic lifestyle based on ancient traditions (Tusor, 2008).

With the crowning of King Steven in 1000 AD and subsequent conversion to Western Christianity, Hungary became firmly linked to the Western Christian Church and Western European culture. This did not, however, save Hungary from invasion from the East (Magyar, 1989). These invasions inevitably left indelible imprints on the cuisine of Hungary. **In the early middle ages after the consolidation of the Hungarian State, Hungarian cuisine had influences from both western and eastern nations** (Internet10).

The Hungarian leaders, the grand prince and the chieftains lead a migrating nomadic lifestyle, as this was the way they could provide their livestock with fodder. Contrary to earlier beliefs, by this time Hungarian common people had left nomadic way of life behind, and lived in settlements along rivers as semi-free farmers. Each house was equipped with a clay oven. A characteristic pot of the time of the Hungarian Conquest was the clay cauldron that was either suspended or supported by legs. Domestic animals of higher value, the cattle primarily, was kept in stables during the winters, while the majority of the animals spent the winter in the open-air, at the edge of the land. The land surrounding the village was ploughed in turns, and sowed with barley, wheat, millet. Only the most precious plants - grapes in particular - were surrounded by fence. The Hungarian word “kert” meaning garden derives from the word “kerítés” denoting fence. The word “kert” was already mentioned in the Establishing Charter of the Abbey of Tihany early in 1055 (Tusor, 2008).





Together with the emerge of monasteries with the surrounding villages, land and fruit cultivation and viticulture became widespread. Hungarians learnt the cultivation of several kitchen garden vegetables from the Slavish servants of the monasteries. They gradually domesticated the wild grape-covered areas of Transdanubia. A whole range of villages were engaged in apiary. As early as at the time of King Stephen I, herds of semi-wild swine were bred in large volume. In parallel with changes in the economy, eating forms and habits changed as well. **German and Greek cooking and baking methods became widespread.** German influence infiltrated in through the wife of King Stephen I, Gisela of Bavaria, while Greek influence was bought along by peoples of the Balkans. **Cooking became a separate profession** within monasteries as well. Contemporary records reveal that the dishes eaten by the monks of Pannonhalma consisted of meat, fish and fruits, while they drank well water, wine and barley beer. Besides the kitchen, cauldrons and spits were also used for open-air cooking (Tusor, 2008).

Soup was a very important meal in Hungarian cuisine at that time, as it is today. Ingredients such as sourcream, vinegar, sauerkraut and horseradish would be added to give some varieties of soup a sour taste, while other soups were thickened with a combination of flour and fat, egg yolk, or milk. **The soups were meals in themselves, more like a stew than a soup**, and were **usually served with tarhonya**. A small pellet-shaped pasta, tarhonya, which is Turkish-Ottomanin origin, is a classic accompaniment that is still found on most Hungarian family menus (Jacobs, 1998).

The Chuvash and the Azerbaijani prepared a gulyás-like soup from meal and beef. The bean and corn soup made by the Ostyak also resemble to Hungarian soups. Facts gathered about Hungarian shepherds are also similar or even identical with the characteristics of these small peoples: gulyás meat (peppered meat) made without potato and paprika; dried meat and pasta (lebbencs, tarhonya); the predecessor of the stuffed cabbage; meals; milky dishes; and kumis, a fermented drink made from mare's milk. Hungarian ancestors are likely to have made a kind of pork hurka even before the Hungarian Conquest. Hungarian shepherds and farm people of the 20th century were still applying ancient preserving methods, such as corning, drying, curing and preserving meats in lard. They used the same meat preserving techniques as their relatives in the Caucasus (Tusor, 2008).

The Magyars used bogrács- large cauldrons, as their main cooking utensil which were traditionally used over open fires. These are still used today in the cooking of many Hungarian dishes. They also brought with them tarhonya which they had come across during their wanderings throughout the East (Internet9). Other ancient dishes prepared by ancient Hungarians are still popular today: stuffed cabbage, beef soup, fish soup, and goulash (Magyar, 1989).

Meals and crops were first used for making porridges cooked with milk or water, later they came into use as raw material for round-shaped, stone-baked pies. These pies are considered transitions between bread and pasta. This assumption is supported by the existence of tools from around the time of the Hungarian Conquest, e.g.: kolyü² and by words of the time: meal³, grind. As they arrived at their new homeland, Hungarians became acquainted

² Mortar-like manual instrument used for grinding crops

³ The Hungarian text distinguishes two kinds of grist on the basis of the grain size: "derce" (smaller-sized grains) and "dara" (larger-sized grains)





with oats, rye and buckwheat. The latter is the only plant available in meal format, which does not belong to the family of true grasses (poaceae). One of the oldest Hungarian pastas is galuska⁴. The flour-like grinded cereals and meals were kneaded with water and then cooked in water or occasionally in soups. The Hungarian word for knead derives from the pre-Conquest time.

Of course, one cannot talk about Hungarian cuisine without mentioning pork. However, it wasn't until **after the Hungarian's conquest of the Carpathian Basin in 895-6AD that lamb, beef and fish were supplemented by pork**. Their love for pork emerged once they tamed the local wild boar in the new country, and it has remained as one of the primary elements in Hungarian cooking today (Lang, 1990). We often cook pork dishes today especially in the villages where almost every family raises its own pork and butcher it during winter time within a great feast called "disznótor".

From among foods of vegetal origin ancient Hungarians consumed cabbage, horseradish, peas, onion and different kinds of salads. They used salt, honey and vinegar for seasoning. They drank beer, wine, fermented birch sap, carbonated birch water, and a fermented millet drink called boza. For Hungarian people feasts have always provided opportunity for eating and drinking. Hungarians drink to childbirth, weddings, pig slaughters, harvests, even to funerals. In the world of craftsmen inaugurating an apprentice or a new master of the trade always went hand in hand with inviting a crowd of guests, moreover even a selling and buying process became valid only after the business partners had drunk to the deal (Tusor, 2008).

The Hungarians also used a variety of techniques to preserve meat. A fourteenth century Italian chronicle states how the Hungarians would preserve meat by boiling heavily salted beef in large kettles until cooked, then cut into pieces and dried in the sun or in an oven. The preserved meat was transported in pouches made from sheep gut, and when taken on journeys, the Hungarian would simply remove the necessary amount, place it in his bogracs along with some water, and bring it to a boil. This convenient way of transporting food was most probably an advantage to the Hungarian warrior. The Emperor of Greece, Leo VI, believed that the Hungarian's defeat of the Byzantines was due in part to their method of carrying food. The Hungarians had instant food rations which were easily carried by horses, while the Byzantines food supply consisted of live oxen and cows that traveled with them and ultimately slowed them down. The conquering Hungarians would often celebrate their feat of arms by feasting for an entire week. Although today the occasions have changed, the practice of feasting has remained (Lang, 1990).

Hungarian bread is made much the same way today as it was centuries ago, with a rounded shape and a crust that is neither too hard nor too soft. Robert Townson, an Englishman traveling through Hungary in 1797, remarked: "Lighter, whiter and better flavored bread than made here I never had nor did I ever see elsewhere such large loaves" (Lang, 1990).

⁴ flour dumplings eaten with stew (better known as spaetzle); also called nokedli (thehungarydish.com)





3.3. Hungarian Gastronomy in the Renaissance

Perhaps **Hungary's most influential period of culinary growth was during the reign of King Matthias "The Just" (1458-1490)**, who was instrumental in introducing western culinary sophistication to the Hungarian table (Magyar, 1989). **Some of the first records of Hungarian gastronomy were probably written in this time.** He insisted that everything that happened in his court was recorded in the greatest of detail by his chronicler, Marzio Galeotto including the food they ate and how it was cooked (Internet9). The list of dishes served for the King and the landlords is abundant and diverse. According to the writings of Galeotto Marzio numerous kinds of fish was served in the court of Matthias I, the most popular of which were: pike, ling, eel and trout. The list of different kinds of meat was the following: beef, mutton, wild and domestic pork, goat, deer and roe deer venison, rabbit, goose, duck, partridge, pheasant. Fat peacock meat was considered a delicacy. The chronicles also reveal the secrets of cooking style which states that "every food is served in its own juices - goose, duck, capon, pheasant and quail, which all are plentiful; furthermore, beef, lamb, kid, pork, wild boar and different fishes always are cooked or marinated in their own juices" (Lang, 1990). Leavened bread was prepared with great care (Tusor, 2008). Peacock was the highlight of most banquets (Internet9).

One of the most notable banquets recorded was that of the wedding feast of King Matthias and Beatrice, daughter of Ferrante d'Aragonia, King of Naples: "Several fountains flowed with special wine punches, and 980 golden dishes were used to serve the wedding guests. The guests sat at large square tables and began with stewed meats of all kinds, flavored with ginger, nutmeg, pepper and other spices. Then came roast game, such as pheasant and peacock, all kinds of roast fishes, pates, elaborate desserts and fruit completed the meal. Young noblemen were assigned duties in connection with the dinner, carving and serving - even tasting" (Lang, 1990).

The marriage of Matthias and Beatrice brought the flavors and style of Italy to the Hungarian table. Italian cuisine blended with Hungarian cuisine. Queen Beatrice brought with her **chefs as well as pastry makers from Italy**, who brought with them pasta asciutta, figs, dill and pastries, together with what was probably the **first printed cookbook**. King Matthias requested **turkeys** from Milan and they were bred so well, that today, turkeys in Hungary are considered one of the best in Europe (Lang, 1990).

Upon receiving a gift of **onions and garlic** from her sister, Beatrice wrote to thank her, stating that "the King could not have been more pleased if they had been pearls." It was around this time that onions became one of the single most important vegetables of Hungary (Jacobs, 1998). The use of onions, garlic, **pickled fish, Italian cheeses, chestnut** and pasta became widespread. **Italian walnut, saffron, cinnamon, pepper, ginger, anise and dill was listed among popular spices.** Meat dishes were served in spicy sauces. Breadcrumbs were used to thicken soups and sauces, since roux was not known by the time. Grills and spits were already used for roasting meat. For simmering and cooking cauldrons, vats and casserole pots were used (Tusor, 2008).

King Matthias could often be found in the kitchen, chatting with the chefs and even helping out on occasion. Chefs were appreciated and respected during this era, and were even elevated to the level of the gentry. **Cooking became an exact craft and for many, eating became a formal dining experience.** Cooking,





especially for the gentry, turned into a hobby, and tableware was even produced by artists and artisans (Lang, 1990).

3.4. The Turkish Era and the 18th Century

The rapid decline of Hungary subsequent to the death of King Matthias was due to inner dissension as well as by the attack of the Turks, which ultimately divided the country into three sections. In 1526 part of Hungary fell under Turkish rule and remained so for 150 years. While Transylvania became an independent principality, the central region was occupied by the Turks and the western and northern parts were ruled by Ferdinand of Habsburg. This division impacted on the culture of Hungarian cuisine by introducing new flavors as well as new foreign cooking methods. Turkish imports in particular were incorporated into the kitchen of the common people (Lang, 1990).

After the reign of King Matthias I there was a considerable decline. A few cookbooks remained from the 16th and 17th centuries. Although these are rich in information, the **receipts do not refer to quantities.** There are a number of ingredients and technologies which remained coded. However it is certain that a wide range of ingredients was used with a variety of methods (Tusor, 2008).

A cookbook from the 16th century, originating from the cook of the princess of Transylvania, was preserved for posterity. The ingredients mentioned in this book - except for paprika, tomato and potato - exceed those used today. Besides the diversity of ingredients, preparing methods prove to have been different as well. There are hardly any example for the use of pork lard, the time preferred to cook with oil and butter. Cabbage is mentioned to have been used for fish dishes, rather than for meat dishes. The use of milk, sour cream and vinegar was as frequent as it is today. Onion, however, had less significant role in seasoning than it has these days. Using wine for cooking became widespread. Using roux for thickening was still rare, it was only applied for soups, while other dishes were usually thickened with breadcrumb. Cooked pasta and dumplings were used as garnish for soups or as side dishes. The age was characterized by heavy seasoning and sweetish flavours, which is attributed to the use of crumb, honey, raisins, figs, apple and pear. These ingredients were used for making meat and fish dishes and salads (Tusor, 2008).

The following cooking techniques were already used: abálás, curing, simmering, toasting, baking food wrapped in paper and pasta, piercing, crumbing, crushing, roasting, grating. Jellies, pastes, crisps, hurka, sausages, doughnuts, palacsinta, strudels, soufflés, cakes and wine foam etc. were already present. These dishes were prepared similarly to the way used today. The cookbook mentioned deals with the issue of diet in the appendix (Tusor, 2008).

The 150-year Turkish rule had a lot of impact on Hungarian cuisine. Turks brought **paprika** to Hungary, which became a symbol of Hungarian cooking. Before paprika, ancient Hungarian cooks used dill, horseradish, marjoram, rosemary, sage, and wild mushrooms. Hungary's climate is very favourable for growing paprika; our country is a leading producer of this spice (Intenet10).

First, only peasants cooked with paprika, the privileged grew it in their garden for decoration purposes. The aristocrats did not incorporate it into their cooking until the eighteenth century. One typically associates paprika with Hungarian cuisine,





although in actuality, this “national spice” of Hungary was completely unknown in Europe until the discovery of America. Instead, spices such as dill, horseradish, juniper berries, rosemary, sage, marjoram, and wild mushrooms were used rather than paprika. No one is certain how the paprika plant came to Turkey, but what is known is that paprika became a popular alternative spice to pepper due to the rising cost of pepper. Paprika did in fact replace pepper after Napoleon blocked continental trade in the 18th century. The Hungarians initially referred to paprika as “torok bors” (Turkish pepper) according to a dictionary published in 1684 (Magyar, 1989). In a Hungarian cookbook dated 1826, paprika was referred to as “new spice” (Lang, 1990). This bright red spice was added to chicken, fish and meat stews, creating some of the most unmistakably Hungarian dishes of today, such as paprikas and porkolt (Jacobs, 1998).

As a result of Ottoman influence corn, coffee, paprika and tobacco became widely used. The palette of rice dishes extended. During the time of the Ottoman invasion the town of Kőrös used chestnut and figs to pay its taxes. Walnut, almond, thin-skinned grapes and peach without kernel was grown. Various kinds of spices, game and mushrooms was used. Pork lard was rarely applied. The famous Ottoman Turk traveller Evliya Çelebi travelled across Transylvania and Hungary between 1660-1666. In his travelogue, he made mention of the following foods and drinks: “karak” soup (we do not know anything about this dish), breaded perch, roasted carp, pasta stuffed with chopped meat, polish roast chicken, polish chicken pörkölt, stuffed pumpkin, pilaf, cabbage, strudels with butter and honey, bread pies, loaves of bread, excellent fruits, főzelék, sour cherry water, wines. The term of soup was mentioned for the first time. Pörkölt did not necessarily denote a dish made with paprika (Tusor, 2008).

The Turks took away all domestic animals except for pigs during their raids; they must not eat pork because of their religion. In order to this **pork dishes** have started to become prevalent in Hungarian cuisine since that time (Internet10).

Other culinary advantages of the Turkish rule were **strudel, lángos, rice pilafs, and stuffed vegetables**. Besides paprika the Turks brought into Hungary several other plants such as **tomato, corn, tobacco, cherry, and sour cherry plants**. Hungarian language preserved these culinary contributions, for example the other name we use for corn is Turkish wheat.

Last but not least we should mention **coffee** - the Turks introduced this drink to Hungary as well. The custom of coffee drinking spread during the Ottoman invasion. Hungarians called coffee “black soup” in that era (Internet10).

In the Northern and Western parts of Hungary Austrian influence could be felt almost in parallel with the Ottoman one. The Austrian and primarily Viennese cuisine of the time was significantly influenced by French characteristics. Therefore the Austrian influence brought along a strong French impact as well. The technique of crumbing meat slices is considered to have been an Austrian initiative (Tusor, 2008). **While the aristocrats maintained their French-oriented manner of cooking** (which was also practiced by the Austrian upper class) (Jacobs, 1998), **middle-class Hungarians established Austrian dishes in their everyday meals**, like schnitzel, sausages, potatoes and vegetable stews thickened with flour and lard (today's főzelék) (Internet10).

Cookbooks from the 17th, 18th centuries provide more comprehensive and detailed records, which contain reference to the proportions of the ingredients used. Sugar, vanilla, chocolate and cream are mentioned. One can read about starch, yeast and other spices suitable for curing. This was the time when pork lard became widely used for frying and cooking. Liquors lost their





significance, they were replaced by soups in their modern sense, even though some of them still carried their sweetish character resulting from breadcrumbs used for preparing. Broth, wine soup and beer soup, appeared in this time together with other soups, which may sound strange to modern people: soups with almond, walnut, quince, cheese, sea grapes, shrimp etc. The terms of fried eggs, poached eggs, shrimp, butter and aspic came up as well. Cooked pasta are mentioned in a few cases, while sweets are quite frequently referred to, e.g.: galuska boiled in milk, milk bread, mézeskalács, kifli⁵, sponge cake, floating islands, caramel, toast. The recipe of different kinds of ice creams frozen with salted ice or snow can also be found. Seasoning became lighter, and the use of roux spread. The poor could not afford using expensive foreign spices, therefore they used parsley, cumin, anise and horseradish for seasoning (Tusor, 2008).

In the 18th Century, the nobility had chefs imported from France, whose talents brought the quality of cooking to new heights. According to George Lang, “The new style consolidated the ancient Asiatic heritage, King Matthias I’s introduction of the Italian Renaissance, and the mellowing effect of the French kitchen; and this amalgam should be considered the foundation of the modern Hungarian cuisine” by the 19th Century (Lang, 1990).

3.5. The Modern Hungarian Cuisine

Economic and social changes occurring in the world reached Hungary in the 19th century. After 1945 the effects of these changes were still slightly felt, however the 1980s brought an explosion in this respect. The age of the “Hungarian cookery of paprika”, which had evolved in the reform era of the first half of the 19th century came to an end by opening up a new chapter in Hungarian gastronomy, the first decades of which we are experiencing at the moment (Füreder – Rátz, 2009). In this chapter, we go through this period of time, when the modern Hungarian gastronomy is in progress.

3.5.1. The 19th Century

The roots of modern Hungarian cuisine can be traced back to the beginning of the 19th century. Transformations that started in Western Europe in the first decades of the 1800s (evolution of the modern consumer societies, innovation of food products, birth of factories, urbanization, development of transportation and the birth of commercials) was constantly affecting Hungary, even if it took a really long time for the changes to reach the country. **At the turn of the 19th Century excellent Hungarian chefs laid the foundations of today’s Hungarian cuisine.** They artfully adjusted our gastronomy to the French gastronomy without losing the uniqueness of traditional Hungarian cooking.

Some note worthy people who contributed towards and continued the traditional mode of Hungarian cooking at this time include M. Duchange, whose French style complemented many Hungarian dishes, and Joseph Marchal, whose impressive resume included such positions

⁵ typical crescent-shaped bread roll (thehungarydish.com)



as master cook for the Emperor of France, chef for the Russian Tsar's household, as well as chef for the Habsburg archdukes' kitchens. Two other people of great influence were the Gundels, Janos and his son, Karoly, both of whom were famed restaurateurs as well as culinary artists (Magyar, 1989).

The Hungarian cuisine of the 19th century is described in a number of travelogues. The Budapest audience was as fond of crumbed chicken as the Viennese. More than one traveller recommends gulyás and chicken paprikás. Inns prepared almost each item on the menu with paprika, there were fish paprikás, meat paprikás, bacon with paprika. The French influence was manifested in the menus as well, it was not uncommon to read such words as omlette, mayonnaise, cotelette, escalop, sauté etc. Rhine salmon, Westphalian ham and Pomeranian goose breast were present on the menu besides the smaller proportion of the Hungarian dishes. French effect was hardly felt on the diet of the peasantry. It became necessary to extend the palette of Hungarian dishes and to adjust them to the taste of international gastronomy. A great majority of this task was done by József Marchal and his apprentices. These decades were characterized by cookery of outstanding precision, accuracy and quality. During cooking technological prescriptions were strictly followed, proper ingredients were used, and spices were applied according to prescriptions. By that time Hungarian products, spices – besides those of foreign origin – had already been available (e.g.: flour, vegetables, sugar, fruits). These catering facilities not only offered catering and accommodation, but in many cases they served as the venues for social, literature and arts events (Tusor, 2008).

By the early 1900's, Hungary's cuisine had achieved a reputation of the utmost respect which has been unequalled since (Jacobs, 1998). Coffee society and coffee houses were an integral part of Budapest's cultural and social growth at the turn of the last century (Internet10). The **coffeehouse** became an integral part of the social and cultural growth, a meeting place which would bring together the Hungarian literary poets, journalists and playwrights (Jacobs, 1998).

By the beginning of the 20th century Hungary's cuisine was internationally renowned. Communist rule, however, soon put an end to this era of culinary advancement. Political oppression and nationalization resulted in shortages of fresh produce, so with the availability of seasonal produce and fresh food. There has also been an attempt to rekindle the old charm of the traditional Hungarian restaurant, although the turn of the century intellectual atmosphere has been replaced by an international clientele (Jacobs, 1998).

3.5.2. The 20th Century

By the beginning of the 20th century, the unique character of the Hungarian cuisine – similarly to that of other national cuisines – had been developed by the combined effect of the various ingredients, peculiar spicing and unique practices of culinary technology. Accordingly the principal features of the Hungarian cuisine is as follows:

- combining pork lard, onions and paprika;
- dominant use of pork and lard;
- use of sour cream in a large volume;
- special methods of preparation (pörkölt base, simmering by browning, thickening with roux);
- special spicing methods;





- consumption of side-dishes and főzelék rich in carbohydrates (Tusor, 2008).

However, we already discussed the origin and development of the given characteristics, it is useful to provide a brief explanation on each of the listed features. The explanation for the significant number of **pork and lard dishes can be traced back to the time of the Ottoman invasion**. Being Islamic, the Ottoman tax collectors confiscated the whole livestock except for the swine. Another reason is that geographic features of Hungary benefit swine breeding. The use of lard is one of the special characteristics of the Hungarian cuisine. In Hungary lard is obtained by rendering bacon fat, while other countries use squeezing technique for this purpose. The flavour of the rendered fat give a peculiar taste to Hungarian dishes. Pork lard was first consumed by peoples engaged in agricultural activities, which required demanding physical work. Swine breeds of the Middle Ages – fattened with acorns while grazing in the forests – had been ready for being slaughtered by winter. Lard could be preserved for a long time, it lasted all year. Cooking oil, butter and margarine are used for cold kitchen products, in special diets and for preparing international dishes (Internet11).

Onion, the basic ingredient for many Hungarian dishes, give a special flavour to the food. Browning the onion in lard helps release the volatile oils of the onion. It depends on the character of the food prepared whether the onion is softened or browned in the lard, since the different methods result in different flavours.

Paprika had been unknown for a long time in Hungarian cookery, before it became widely used. **By adding it to onion browned in lard, the flavour and colour formulae of paprika are released optimally.** The resulting substance is the so called “**pörkölt**” base, used in a majority of Hungarian dishes, e.g: in different kinds of pörkölt, gulyás, paprikás, tokány⁶. The dishes mentioned are **seasoned with mashed garlic**. A special technique for preparing pörkölt is to simmer it with a small amount of liquid then to braise it. This technique gives a peculiar zest to pörkölt, thus providing an outstanding culinary experience for the consumers. Other types of Hungarian meat dishes: dishes of the pig slaughtering feast, roasted pork knuckles, roasted porklet with skin, foie gras (Internet12).

A compulsory spice for cabbage dishes, marrow főzelék and stuffed marrow is chopped **fresh dill**. It gives a peculiar flavour and aroma to the food, when sprinkled on it right before serving. As a consequence of lard use, Hungarian cookery is not afraid of applying spices. However seasoning – regardless of the spice – should always be moderate. The key for good seasoning is to make the spices underline and emphasize the original flavours of the food. It is misleading to believe that hot spicing makes a Hungarian dish. Spices are considered to be substances, which provide foods and drinks with pleasant taste and aroma. It is not their nutritional value for which they are applied, but their enhancing effect on enjoyment. Spices soften and refine the natural taste of food. It is the task of the cook to apply proper seasoning which is in harmony with the character of the dish.

Sour cream is used in a much larger amount in Hungarian cuisine than the international average, however the use of cream is also characteristic. Sour cream harmonizes well with the flavours of Chicken paprikás, veal and lamb. Moreover cabbage dishes (stuffed cabbage, layered cabbage⁷ or székelykáposzta⁸), túrós csusza⁹, sonkás kocka¹⁰ and several kinds of sweet dough could not exist without sour cream. It is a

⁶ meat stew cooked in its own juices; vegetables can be added, and it can be thickened with sour cream (thehungarydish.com)

⁷ a dish consisting of layers of sauerkraut, rice, sausage, bacon, and sour cream, baked and served with fried pork chops (thehungarydish.com)



frequent ingredient for numerous kinds of soup, sauce and főzelék, and it is often used as garnish as well.

Some of Hungarian **butchery products** has become world famous. These products - **gyulai kolbász**¹¹, **téli szalámi**¹², **Hungarian ham, smoked bacon** - contribute much to the excellent taste of our dishes. Smoked bacon, when rendered, has a great impact on the flavour of food, however bacon is used for piercing turkey or game. The list of Hungarian soups is diverse in the respect of both preparing methods and ingredients. Some of the soups and főzelék is thickened with roux, which method is almost exclusively characteristic to Hungarian cookery (Tusor, 2008).

Roux is a mixture of warmed lard - or other kind of grease - and the same amount of flour. The flour is browned in the hot lard to an extent depending on the dish for which it is prepared. After the pot is removed from the fireplace, cold water is added to the substance and stirred until smooth. The resulting roux is added to the soft soup or főzelék base.

Among **soups** one can find a number of substantial **one-course-like dishes** (e.g.: Jókai bableves¹³ or Palóc soup¹⁴), which can substitute for the main course. Naturally there are vegetable, puree, cream and fruit soups of a lighter character as well. Hungarian salads are usually made with salty vinegary liquid, which serve as pickles accompanying meat dishes. Several other national cookeries make salads with sugar-free oil dressing, and these are often consumed as an individual meal.

Carbohydrate content of different kinds of főzelék and side-dishes listed on Hungarian menus is high, so is their energy density. We are not able to change galuska, tarhonya and potato side dishes, and we cannot have such aims, however we can make our dishes nutritionally more valuable by reducing the amount of these dishes and serving them with steamed, cooked vegetables (Tusor, 2008).

Hungarian cuisine can boast a great variety of **pastries**. Soup pastas, salty and sweet pastries are made of kneaded pastry. **Consuming salty pasta dishes** (káposztás kocka¹⁵, sonkás kocka) **for last course is typical to the Hungarian eating habits. Potato pastry** is used to make various kinds of **fruit-filled dumplings**. Different kinds of palacsinta, strudel, vargabéles¹⁶ doughnut and aranygaluska¹⁷ - the latter two made of leavened dough - make substantial desserts (Internet11).

We must make mention of **confectionary**, which plays an organic role in Hungarian gastronomy. The best-known products of Hungarian confectionary are Dobostorta¹⁸, Rigó Jancsi¹⁹, somlói galuska²⁰, Gerbaud szelet²¹, a Rákóczi túróslepény²², a Szapáry cake²³.

⁸ a stew made with pork (or beef) and sauerkraut, seasoned with paprika, and flavored with sour cream(thehungarydish.com)

⁹ pasta with túró, sour cream, and bacon (thehungarydish.com)

¹⁰ boiled pasta with ham

¹¹ firm, medium-spicy sausage made from pork and bacon, stuffed into a natural casing, and smoked; has a distinctive paprika and garlic taste (thehungarydish.com)

¹² translation: winter salami. A firm, mildly spiced salami made from finely chopped pork. It is a vibrant pinkish-red color and the skin is coated with a grayish white mould (thehungarydish.com)

¹³ named for writer Mór Jókai; a hearty soup made with fresh or dried shell beans, smoked pork knuckle, vegetables, csipetke, and flavoured with vinegar and sour cream (thehungarydish.com)

¹⁴ soup made with lamb and green beans, and finished with sour cream (thehungarydish.com)

¹⁵ pasta with shredded cabbage sautéed in a bit of bacon fat (thehungarydish.com)

¹⁶ a cake made from a noodle and *túró* filling cooked between layers of strudel dough (thehungarydish.com)

¹⁷ "golden dumplings": yeast-raised buns, brushed with melted butter, flavoured with apricot jam and ground walnuts, and sprinkled with vanilla sugar (thehungarydish.com)

¹⁸ layered vanilla sponge cake smothered with chocolate butter cream, and topped with thin wedges of caramel-glazed cake (thehungarydish.com)



It is inevitable to evaluate **Hungarian dishes** from the aspect of modern and **healthy nutrition**. Although Hungarian dishes are diverse, delicious and taste peculiar for foreigners, they **do not always comply with modern requirements**. This results primarily from the high pork fat and carbohydrate content and the heavy seasoning. A fiery hot dish soaking in grease is improper from both gastronomic and nutritional aspects (Tusor, 2008).

During the recent decades the cuisine defined as Hungarian was still based on lard rendered from bacon, and onion and paprika browned in it (Tusor, 1999). The list of core dishes consisted of gulyás soup, veal and chicken paprikás with sour cream, stuffed cabbage and strudels (Csizmadia, ed. 1993). This list can be completed by adding for instance halászlé, different kinds of tokány, various kinds of Hungarian főzelék, lecsó²⁴, lángos, aranygaluska, Dobostorta, Rigó Jancsi, kovászos uborka²⁵, Debrecener²⁶ and téli szalámi. From among drinks Unicum²⁷, Tokaji wine and fröccs i.e wine spritzer is worth highlighting (Gergely, 2000; Robuchon 1997).

Concerning the traditional Hungarian dishes, they are primarily based on meats, potatoes, seasonal vegetables, fruits, fresh bread, cheeses and honey. Two remarkable elements of Hungarian cuisine that are hardly noticed by locals, but usually conjure up much enthusiasm amongst foreigners, are different forms of **vegetable stews called főzelék, as well as cold fruit soups**, like cold sour cherry soup (Internet10).

Meat stews, casseroles, steaks, roasted pork, beef, poultry, lamb or game and the Hungarian sausages are a major part of Hungarian cuisine. The mixing of different varieties of meat is a traditional feature of the Hungarian cuisine. Goulash, stuffed peppers, stuffed cabbages or Fatányéros (Hungarian mixed grill on wooden platter) can combine beef and pork, and sometimes mutton. In very exclusive dishes, fruits like plums and apricots are cooked with meat or in piquant sauces/stuffings for game, roasts and other cuts. **Hungarian food is often spicy**, due to the common use of hot paprika. Sweet (mild) paprika is also common.

Various kinds of noodles and dumplings, potatoes, and rice are commonly served as a side dish. The Hungarian cuisine uses a **large variety of cheeses**, but the most common are **túró** (a type of cottage cheese), cream cheeses, ewe-cheese, and the Hungarian cheeses, Trappista, Pálpusztai and Pannonia cheese.

Considering the eating habits in Hungary, people usually have a large breakfast. Hungarian breakfast is generally an open sandwich with fresh bread or a toast, butter, cheese

¹⁹ cake named for a Gypsy violinist who ran away with a Belgian baroness: squares of chocolate mousse sandwiched between layers of chocolate cake and glazed with chocolate (thehungarydish.com)

²⁰ chocolate and vanilla sponge cake with vanilla custard, raisins, walnuts, chocolate syrup, and whipped cream (thehungarydish.com)

²¹ invented by Swiss pastry chef Emile Gerbeaud, this cake (sliced into rectangles) is cake layers alternated with apricot jam and ground walnuts and topped with chocolate glaze; sometimes spelled zserbószelet (thehungarydish.com)

²² Rákóczi cheesecake, a layer of short crust topped with a *túró* mixture and a lattice of meringue and apricot jam (thehungarydish.com)

²³ a type of thick Hungarian vegetable stew

²⁴ tomato and pepper stew cooked in a small amount of lard (thehungarydish.com)

²⁵ translation: leavened cucumbers. Cucumbers preserved by the process of lactic acid fermentation

²⁶ a reddish-orange pork sausage of uniform fine texture and reddish-orange colour, named after the Hungarian city of Debrecen, getting its color from paprika, one of the spices used in its preparation. Other seasonings used in Debreceni kolbász are garlic, pepper, and marjoram. It is usually unsmoked or lightly smoked, and sold in pairs joined at one end. (sausage.wikia.com)

²⁷ bitter liquor made from more than 40 herbs and spices, distilled, and aged in oak casks for six months (thehungarydish.com)





or different cream cheeses, túró cheese or körözött (Liptauer cheese spread), cold cuts such as ham, blood sausage, liver pâté, bacon, salami, beef tongue, mortadella, head cheese or sausages. Even eggs, (fried, scrambled or boiled), French toast and vegetables (like peppers, bell peppers, tomatoes, radish and cucumber) are part of the Hungarian breakfast. Sometimes breakfast is a cup of milk, tea or coffee with pastries, a bun with jam or honey, or cereal like muesli and perhaps fruit. Children can have rice pudding or semolina cream for breakfast topped with cocoa powder and sugar or with fruit syrup. Hot drinks are preferred for breakfast. Villásreggeli (literally breakfast with fork) is a more luxurious big breakfast given on special occasions or holidays. Often guests are invited. Deviled eggs, cold steak, cold salads, omelette, pancakes, caviar, foie gras, fruit salads, compote, fruit yoghurts, fruit juices, and pastries, cakes and cookies may be served.

Lunch is the major meal of the day, usually with several courses. Cold or hot appetizers may be served sometimes (for example fish, egg or liver), then soup. Soup is followed by a main dish. The main dish is a dish including meat and salad, which precedes the dessert. Fruit may follow. In Hungary, pancakes are served as a main dish, not for breakfast. Salad is always served with meat dishes, made of lettuce with tomatoes, cucumbers and onions or a simple thin sliced cucumber salad in vinaigrette. Warm salads are made of boiled potatoes, vegetables, hard-boiled eggs, mushrooms, fried or boiled meat or fish, in vinaigrette or mayonnaise. These salads are eaten as appetisers or even as a main course.

Soup is usually followed by some kind of meat dish with potato, pasta or rice garnishing. Pickles or salad made from seasonal vegetables accompany meat dishes. **Pörkölt and paprikás are the most popular meat dishes.** Pörkölt is a ragout made from pork, beef or mutton or chicken with onions and Hungarian paprika powder as the main spice. Paprikás is made in the same way as pörkölt, the only difference is that sour cream is mixed in the red paprika and onion sauce to add a nice creamy texture to the meal. Fried goose liver (Libamáj) and game dishes are also must-try Hungarian delicacies. Stuffed cabbage (Töltött káposzta) is a traditional delicious Hungarian dish that is often made for holidays like Christmas or Easter.

There are a range of pasta dishes that our peculiar to Hungarian cuisine. Túrós csusza (pasta with cottage cheese) káposztás tészta (egg squares with braised cabbage), savoury pastas. Sweet pasta dishes include túrógombóc (cottage cheese dumplings), szilvágombóc (plum dumplings) and palacsinta (pancakes).

Several Főzeléks are consumed as everyday meal in the households. Tökfőzelék (marrow with dill and sour cream) or finomfőzelék (mixed vegetables thickened with white sauce) can be mentioned among many others. In restaurants they are served with stew, pork chop, or fried eggs depending of the type of the Főzelék. Smoked meat or sausage is essential for the cooking of some Főzeléks, like Babfőzelék (made from beans).

It is important to mention the luscious Hungarian cakes, scrumptious pastries. Coffee houses, cafés are the best places to try these sweet delights. Must-try desserts include: Dobos torta (Dobos cake) - sponge layered with rich chocolate cream and coated with crunchy caramel; Eszterházy torta - cake layered with walnut cream; Krémes - light vanilla cream filled between two layers of crunchy puff pastries; Rigó Jancsi - chocolate sponge filled with light chocolate mousse and coated with chocolate; Rákóczi Túrós - cottage cheese cake; Strudels (Rétes), a flaky pastry with various fillings (cottage cheese, apple, poppy-seed and cherries etc.) are all-time favourites among Hungarians.

Kürtös kalács (a hollow, cylinder shaped pastry coated with castor sugar, cinnamon or walnut) is usually sold on





festivals and outdoor events. Gesztenye püré (Chestnut puree) or Somlói galuska (Somló sponge cake: sponge dumplings with chocolate sauce, rum and whipped cream) are typical luscious Hungarian desserts. For quick morning snacks Túrós táska (pastry filled with cottage cheese) or Kakós csiga (cocoa snail: rolled pastry filled with chocolate) pastries from bakeries are consumed. Lángos, a round, deep-fried dough is a savoury snack that you can get at food stalls in vegetable markets. Pogácsa, a kind of salty biscuit with various flavourings (cracklings, cheese, cabbage) is another option for a quick bite.

As the culinary meeting of East and West, Hungarian cooking has a diverse and interesting nature.

3.5.3. The Hungarian Gastronomy Today

Every moment of the life of 21st-century people is permeated by **globalization**. The world has shrunk, cultural differences has faded away. As a result of modern capitalism food is produced in huge amounts, there is a **large emphasis on hygiene**, the shelves of hypermarkets are flooded with **cheap food products**, people in the developed countries consume an increasing amount of calories, while a significant portion of the planet is suffering from famine and poverty (Scholliers, 2007). In rich countries deficiency diseases are gradually replaced by diseases caused by overconsumption (Montanari, 1996). This phenomenon can have unforeseen consequences even on future generations.

A culinary transition, following that of the developed countries, began **early in the 1970s** with the first Hungarian cooking magazine, Magyar Konyha²⁸ (1976) (Sári, 2008). **At the end of the 1980s the first McDonald's restaurant** in Hungary was opened (1988), which marked the beginning of the spread of fast food culture (Fehér et al, 2010).

The 1990s witnessed the presence of several international chains in the Hungarian market, some of which, however, later decided to withdrew from the country. The series of withdrawals was started by the American ice cream franchise Dairy Queen in the mid-1990s, which was followed by the doughnut company Dinkin' Donuts. Twelve Quick hamburger restaurants of the Belgian-French company were closed in 2001. Most of the Quicks was taken over by Wendy's, however a year later they withdrew as well. At the moment one can find McDonald's, Burger King, Pizza Hut, Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) and Subway among the largest ones, however Senor Patata, Belfrit, Yogurtlandia and Nordsee is also aiming to set foot in the Hungarian market (Ábrahám – Batka, 2007). Don Pepe, which has been present since 1990, is considered the most influential among the Hungarian-owned fast food chains. The chain offers the traditional tastes of the Italian and Hungarian cuisines in its 33 restaurants in Budapest and in other cities throughout the country (Fehér et al, 2010). Those focusing on the features of Hungarian cuisine belong to a separate category of Hungarian fast food restaurants. Főzelékfaló, present since 1997, can be considered the forerunner of such restaurants. Lecsó opened its gates in November 2008, and Flekken was started in 2009.

At the end of the 1970s the wind of change already reached the everyday cooks as well. Housewives started to apply **cooking oil for frying meat besides lard** that was still predominant. **The use of spices, which had been limited** (to pepper, cinnamon, clove, vanilla, paprika, cumin, marjoram, bay leaves) in the previous

²⁸ translation: Hungarian Kitchen





decades, broadened, since thyme, summer savoury and tarragon was available again. **In the 1990s Hungary as well launched large gastronomy festivals and competitions** (Sári, 2008), which were distinguished from average fairs by their thematic programmes. The Királyi Szakácsok Versenye²⁹, which has been organized every first weekend in August in Nagyszakácsi since 1993, is worth highlighting (Fehér et al, 2010). Bajai Halfőző Fesztivál³⁰ – organized every second Sunday of June since 1996, – or Csabai Kolbászfesztivál³¹ – traditionally held in the second half of October since 1997 – are also listed among popular events. Apart from visiting festivals, culinary tourists has had the opportunity to explore thematic wine routes established in the 1990s, since on 14th September 1994. the first Hungarian wine route i.e. Villány-Siklós Wine Route Association was established (Szabó, 2000).

The public taste of consumers and those engaged in catering was influenced to a great extent by **cookery programmes present on different TV channels from the 1990s**. Rozi Horváth, a determinative figure in spice business was cooking on and off on three different TV channels from 1993 to 2004 (Nebehaj, 2007). "Juli sulis"³² marked by the name of Júlia Kudlik was broadcast from July 1993 to the end of September 1997 initially every week later every two weeks (Fehér et al, 2010). "Recept Klub"³³ was launched in September 1998, the producers of which had acquired experience during the production of "Konyhashow"³⁴ started on Szív TV in 1996 (Veres, 2001). The programme had an ever-changing profile, partly with the purpose of adjusting it to the guest stars. At the same time (1998-1999) László Benke "Everyone's Uncle Laci" was cooking for the audience on a competitive TV channel. Afterwards different channels acquainted Hungarian viewers with international star chefs and shows besides the Hungarian ones. Jamie Oliver's "The Naked Chef" or "Jamie's Great Italian Escape"; "Floyd Around the Med" or "Floyd Uncorked" by Keith Floyd, who passed away in 2009; and Nigella Lawson's shows brought significant changes into public taste (Csizmadia, 2007); not to mention the Glasgower born multiple Michelin-starred Gordon Ramsey from Hell's Kitchen (Molnár – Bittera 2008). Hungary's first gastronomy channel, TV Paprika, set out for the media market in November 2004 "with the aim of helping to preserve the culinary traditions of East-Central Europe, promoting the traditional values of Hungarian cuisine and the most significant gastronomy events, and presenting the national cuisines of remote countries" (Fehér et al, 2010).

By the first years of the 21st century cooking had come into fashion. Television shows became lively, passionate and authentic. They offer programmes that fit our "fast-paced world," shows that present quick recipes made with healthy ingredients, seasoned with a bit of humour. By the end of the first decade of the 21st century commercial channels had already judged ordinary cookery programmes boring, so they give birth to a new genre: cooking reality show. These programmes present Hungarian celebrities entertaining each other at dinner ("Hal a tortán"³⁵ and "Vacsoracsata"³⁶). The role of gastronomy in this genre is less significant compared to previous cookery shows.

²⁹ translation: Competition of Royal Chefs

³⁰ translation: Fish Cooking Festival of Baja

³¹ translation: Sausage Festival of Csaba

³² translation: Juliette school

³³ translation: Recipe Club

³⁴ translation: Kitchen Show. The Hungarian title rhymes with the Hungarian word for table salt i.e. *konyhasó*

³⁵ translation: Fish on the Cake. It rhymes with the Hungarian equivalent for "icing on the cake" i.e. *"hab a tortán"*

³⁶ translation: Dinner Competition





The role of the internet and printed press is also worth mentioning, since **cooking magazines** (e.g.: Prima Konyha Magazin, Fakanál, Magyar Konyha, Nők Lapja Konyha³⁷ etc.), **various websites** (e.g.: szakacs.lap.hu; gasztronomia.lap.hu; diningguide.hu etc.) and **blogs** (e.g.: buvosszakacs.blog.hu; chiliesvanilia.blogspot.com etc.), besides cookery shows, constantly contribute to the formation of Hungarian food culture (Fehér et al, 2010).

Changes in everyday life, the **appreciation of gastronomy raised** the attention of those engaged in tourism. Magyar Turizmus Zrt. launched a **campaign in 2005 to create an international image for Hungarian tourism**. The campaign, which was contributed by the participation of world famous Hungarian personalities, consisted of 11 topics, two of which **was related to Hungarian gastronomic heritage**. Hungarian gastronomy was represented by Kálmán Kalla, chef of the Gundel Restaurant, while Hungarian wines were promoted by István Szepsy, wine-grower of the year 2001.

The national campaign titled "Nagy Ízutazás 2006"³⁸ was organised around the topic of gastronomy, within the framework of which the programme **"Torkos Csütörtök"**³⁹ was launched. The programme was joined by ca. 500 catering facilities throughout Hungary by offering their dishes on half-price (Füreder – Rátz, 2009; Gondos – Hercz, 2010). The three-day programme series of **"Nyitott Pince Napok"**⁴⁰ was also launched in 2006, to which more than 120 wineries joined with great success on the three-day holiday of Pentecoste in 2008. Apart from the promotion of Hungarian wines and wine-producing regions, the program aimed to facilitate the evolvement of a selective circle of wine-lovers (Halassy, 2008).

Eating out came into fashion once again, bringing about the birth of food critic profession. The "early birds" of the age, a couple who called themselves the Wittman brothers, were visiting Budapest restaurants and providing cheerful moments for their readers with their sometimes sarcastic and humorous criticism. HVG published a new type of restaurant and wine magazine, which turned out to be highly informative and diverse, moreover it covered the whole country, however it did not manage to bring a breakthrough to the authors. In 2007 Népszabadság tried to bring back to life the cult of the long-lost Wittman brothers, then in 2008 "Étterem és borkalauz 2008"⁴¹ – which has been being released annually since then – was first published under the supervision of Tamás Molnár B. At the beginning of 2010 "Superbrands top lista gasztronómia 2010"⁴² was published with reviews on restaurants and with a list of the best butcheries, markets and cooking schools (Mautner, 2010).

The phenomena listed above have made joint contribution to transform previous Hungarian eating habits. **There is not any articulate description and definition fitting Hungary's present gastronomy**. It is not appropriate – as it used to be in the past – to claim that the major Hungarian dishes are made with lard, seasoned with paprika or thickened with roux or sour cream (Fehér et al, 2010).

³⁷ translation: Excellent Kitchen Magazine, Wooden Spoon, Hungarian Kitchen, Women's Magazine Kitchen Edition

³⁸ translation: The Great Journey of Flavours 2006

³⁹ translation: Fat Thursday.

⁴⁰ translation: Days of Open Cellars

⁴¹ translation: Restaurant and Wine Guide 2008

⁴² translation: Superbrands Top List in Gastronomy 2010





3.5.4. Hungarian High Gastronomy - Recent Trends

The political and economic convulsions and tragedies of the 20. Century took their toll on Hungarian cuisine, which was characterized mainly by uniformed monotony in the recent decades. Since the 1990s, however, there has been positive changes, which paved the way for the Hungarian kitchen towards its renaissance and renewal. It has been seeking again for harmony in tastes, and in the use of ingredients and in ensuring healthy nutrition (Csizmadia, ed. 2000). This development is highly contributed by the fact that a new generation of cooks grew up, the members of which already learnt the profession in renowned foreign restaurants, and who are able to keep up with the rapid development of gastronomic trends.

Keeping up with these trends, the Hungarian gastronomy experiences a relatively large scale renewal these days. As a result of a global-level technological development, the achievements of **high gastronomy have gradually appeared in the Hungarian catering on a daily level**. Being a professional cook and confectioner has become fashionable, while an increasing number of “civilians” take a trip into the world of cooking and baking. A wide scale of new restaurants, coffees, bistros, pubs and inns are opening on a global, as well as on a national level. New forms of catering, such as apartment restaurants, have appeared.

From among the gastronomic trends, the results of a survey conducted by the American National Restaurant Association (NRA) are to be highlighted. The organization annually carries out its survey on the members of the American Culinary Federation (ACF). On the basis of their 2014 survey, within which nearly 1,300 chefs were interviewed about the main directions foreseen for 2015, the following culinary trends are expected:

1. Locally sourced meats and seafood;
2. Locally grown produce;
3. environmental sustainability;
4. healthful kid's meals;
5. ingredients of natural origin;
6. Natural ingredients/ minimally processed food;
7. New cuts of meat;
8. Hyper-local sourcing (e.g. restaurant gardens);
9. Sustainable seafood;
10. Food waste reduction/ management;
11. Farm/estate branded items (Csíki, 2015).

Some of these items is not surprising to be listed, since they coincide with the ranking of previous years' surveys. Accordingly in 2015 the emphasis is still on the use of local food products, besides environmental sustainability and healthy children's meals. The rest of the listed items, however, are of an increasingly strengthening character, which means that they ranked lower in the list in the previous years. An intention to use locally sourced food products is present among the trends of the Hungarian high gastronomy, however ensuring proper and constant quality proves to be problematic.

According to experts, the **aims of contemporary Hungarian gastronomy** are characterized by two principle features: on the one hand a number of experiments aim to approach **traditional dishes from new aspects** - in many of these cases the new dish has the ingredients only in common with the original recipe -, on the other hand it is increasingly popular with Hungarian chefs as well to **intercross different European, Asian and other gastronomic traditions, to use**





their ingredients, spices to an increasing extent. (Internet20). Hungarian chefs are at the phase of experimenting, employing creative, but complex methods. It is a trend, which will supposedly become more articulate in the future.

Consequently **Hungarian restaurants has been offering a much more colorful and various palette of dishes.** Restaurants offering the best national cuisines are also present besides those specialized in Hungarian cuisine, however, classical kitchens specialized exclusively in certain national cuisines are becoming obsolete. The Hungarian cuisine is to be interpreted as a set of works by Hungarian chefs, or chefs in Hungary, rather than an articulate gastronomic tradition with well-defined characteristics. **Hungarian chefs have achieved remarkable success in the recent years,** manifested in the rankings at Bocuse d'Or cookery contest, or in the Michelin-starred restaurants throughout Hungary.

Experts claim that the future development of Hungarian gastronomy depends primarily on two criteria:

- 1. Proper raw material production - presence of small producers:** trustworthy small producers are needed, with the capacity to continually provide raw materials of proper quality for the restaurants and cooks. Several Hungarian restaurants of high gastronomy supply their raw materials from foreign sources.
- 2. Quality training programs:** Hungarian cook training standards have not developed for decades, which phenomenon causes difficulties providing a generation of juniors with proper professional skills. Those participating in cook training programs can obtain up-to-date knowledge in gastronomy mainly by auto-training and by working in quality restaurants in Hungary or abroad supported by excellent chefs during the time of their professional practice (Internet20).

Hungarian gastronomy thus experiences an age of transition at the moment. Globalization has profoundly transformed people's approach to eating. Although the Hungarian-type paprika character, which evolved during the past 150 years, is still present in Hungarian kitchens, there are other recipes, ingredients and technologies arriving from a number of different countries throughout the world (Fehér et al, 2010). Restaurant cooks and housewives prepare chicken papkrikás as well as Italian pastas. Hungarians like to have stuffed cabbage on Christmas, however roast turkey with chestnut stuffing can also be found in some households. They also like to buy roasted ribs, hurka and sausage on the markets, while hamburger and gyros is preferred by the youth. **It is impossible to forecast the end of this transition period.** It may become clear - together with the dominant elements of the new era - only after a few decades.

3.6. Summary

Hungarian people had a quite challenging history, making contacts with other nations and ethnics. This cultural mixture provided the possibility to evolve a very single cuisine. Furthermore, Hungary is situated on a flat, fertile plain at the centre of Europe, having a blooming agriculture.

Ancient Hungarians, living in the ancient homeland of the Ural, gained their food by fishing, hunting and gathering. Ancient Hungarians roasted their food on spits or cooked it, however they applied parching, drying and smoking. In the

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middle of the first millennium BC, ancient Hungarians wandering along Volga River were engaged in shepherding, however they were already applying the basic techniques of farming. By 500 AD the Hungarians had migrated to the territory around the Don River, where they learned much about cooking and baking from the Bulgarians and Turks. In the 8th and 9th centuries AD their territory became part of the Khazar Empire, where they acquired certain handicraft skills and knowledge in agriculture, horticulture and wine making. For cooking they used cauldrons.

Magyars settled in the Carinthian basin in 892 to 896 A.D. This land which was rich with fish and game and perfect for the rearing of livestock and the production of crops made for a varied diet. With the crowning of King Steven in 1000 AD and subsequent conversion to Western Christianity, Hungary became firmly linked to the Western Christian Church and Western European culture. In the early middle ages after the consolidation of the Hungarian State, Hungarian cuisine had influences from both western and eastern nations. German and Greek cooking and baking methods became widespread. German influence infiltrated in through the wife of King Stephen I, Gisela of Bavaria, while Greek influence was brought along by peoples of the Balkans. Cooking became a separate profession. Soup was a very important meal in Hungarian cuisine at that time, as it is today. Ingredients such as sourcream, vinegar, sauerkraut and horseradish would be added to give some varieties of soup a sour taste, while other soups were thickened with a combination of flour and fat, egg yolk, or milk. The soups were meals in themselves, more like a stew than a soup, and were usually served with tarhonya. After the Hungarian's conquest of the Carpathian Basin in 895-6AD that lamb, beef and fish were supplemented by pork. From among foods of vegetal origin ancient Hungarians consumed cabbage, horseradish, peas, onion and different kinds of salads. They used salt, honey and vinegar for seasoning. They drank beer, wine, fermented birch sap, carbonated birch water, and a fermented millet drink called boza. The Hungarians used a variety of techniques to preserve meat.

Perhaps Hungary's most influential period of culinary growth was during the reign of King Matthias. Some of the first records of Hungarian gastronomy were probably written in this time. The marriage of Matthias and Beatrice brought the flavors and style of Italy to the Hungarian table. Italian cuisine blended with Hungarian cuisine. Queen Beatrice brought with her chefs as well as pastry makers from Italy, who brought with them pasta asciutta, figs, dill and pastries, together with what was probably the first printed cookbook. King Matthias requested turkeys from Milan and they were bred so well, that today, turkeys in Hungary are considered one of the best in Europe. The use of onions, garlic, pickled fish, Italian cheeses, chestnut and pasta became widespread. Italian walnut, saffron, cinnamon, pepper, ginger, anise and dill was listed among popular spices. Cooking became an exact craft and for many, eating became a formal dining experience.

The rapid decline of Hungary subsequent to the death of King Matthias was due to inner dissension as well as by the attack of the Turks, which ultimately divided the country into three sections. This division impacted on the culture of Hungarian cuisine by introducing new flavors as well as new foreign cooking methods. A few cookbooks remained from the 16th and 17th centuries. Although these are rich in information, the receipts do not refer to quantities. There are a number of ingredients and technologies which remained coded. However it is certain that a wide range of ingredients was used with a variety of methods. The following cooking techniques were already used: abálás, curing, simmering, toasting, baking food wrapped in paper and pasta, piercing, crumbing, crushing, roasting, grating. Jellies, pastes, crisps, hurka, sausages,





doughnuts, palacsinta, strudels, soufflés, cakes and wine foam etc. were already present. These dishes were prepared similarly to the way used today. The 150-year Turkish rule had a lot of impact on Hungarian cuisine. The palette of rice dishes extended. Pork dishes have started to become prevalent in Hungarian cuisine since that time. Other culinary advantages of the Turkish rule were strudel, lángos, rice pilafs, and stuffed vegetables. Besides paprika the Turks brought into Hungary several other plants such as tomato, corn, tobacco, cherry, and sour cherry plants. Last but not least we should mention coffee - the Turks introduced this drink to Hungary as well. The custom of coffee drinking spread during the Ottoman invasion.

In the Northern and Western parts of Hungary Austrian influence could be felt almost in parallel with the Ottoman one. The Austrian and primarily Viennese cuisine of the time was significantly influenced by French characteristics. Therefore the Austrian influence brought along a strong French impact as well. While the aristocrats maintained their French-oriented manner of cooking, middle-class Hungarians established Austrian dishes in their everyday meals. Cookbooks from the 17th, 18th centuries provide more comprehensive and detailed records, which contain reference to the proportions of the ingredients used. In the 18th Century, the nobility had chefs imported from France, whose talents brought the quality of cooking to new heights. This should be considered the foundation of the modern Hungarian cuisine by the 19th Century.

At the turn of the 19th Century excellent Hungarian chefs laid the foundations of today's Hungarian cuisine. They artfully adjusted our gastronomy to the French gastronomy without losing the uniqueness of traditional Hungarian cooking. It became necessary to extend the palette of Hungarian dishes and to adjust them to the taste of international gastronomy. A great majority of this task was done by Snr. József Marchal and his apprentices. These decades were characterized by cookery of outstanding precision, accuracy and quality. During cooking technological prescriptions were strictly followed, proper ingredients were used, and spices were applied according to prescriptions. By that time Hungarian products, spices - besides those of foreign origin - had already been available (e.g.: flour, vegetables, sugar, fruits). These catering facilities not only offered catering and accommodation, but in many cases they served as the venues for social, literature and arts events.

By the early 1900's, Hungary's cuisine had achieved a reputation of the utmost respect which has been unequalled since. Coffee society and coffee houses were an integral part of Budapest's cultural and social growth at the turn of the last century. The principal features of the Hungarian cuisine by that time is as follows:

- combining pork lard, onions and paprika;
- dominant use of pork and lard;
- use of sour cream in a large volume;
- special methods of preparation (pörkölt base, simmering by browning, thickening with roux);
- special spicing methods;
- consumption of side-dishes and főzelék rich in carbohydrates.

Although Hungarian dishes are diverse, delicious and taste peculiar for foreigners, they do not always comply with modern requirements. During the recent decades the cuisine defined as Hungarian was still based on lard rendered from bacon, and onion and paprika browned in it.

Every moment of the life of 21st -century people is permeated by globalization. A culinary transition, following





that of the developed countries, began early in the 1970s. At the end of the 1980s the first McDonald's restaurant in Hungary was opened. The 1990s witnessed the presence of several international chains in the Hungarian market. At the end of the 1970s the wind of change already reached the everyday cooks as well. Housewives started to apply cooking oil for frying meat besides lard that was still predominant. The use of spices, which had been limited. In the 1990s Hungary as well launched large gastronomy festivals and competitions.

The public taste of consumers and those engaged in catering was influenced to a great extent by cookery programmes present on different TV channels from the 1990s. By the first years of the 21st century cooking had come into fashion. The role of the internet and printed press is also worth mentioning, since cooking magazines, various websites and blogs, besides cookery shows, constantly contribute to the formation of Hungarian food culture.

Changes in everyday life, the appreciation of gastronomy raised the attention of those engaged in tourism. Magyar Turizmus Zrt. launched a campaign in 2005 to create an international image for Hungarian tourism. The campaign consisted of 11 topics, two of which was related to Hungarian gastronomic heritage. The national campaign titled "Nagy Ízutazás 2006" was organised around the topic of gastronomy, within the framework of which the programme "Torkos Csütörtök" was launched. The three-day programme series of "Nyitott Pince Napok" was also launched in 2006.

Eating out came into fashion once again, bringing about the birth of food critic profession. The phenomena listed above have made joint contribution to transform previous Hungarian eating habits. There is not any articulate description and definition fitting Hungary's present gastronomy. Hungarian gastronomy experiences an age of transition at the moment.

3.7. Control Questions

1. Please, summarize the gastronomic characteristics of the nomadic Hungarians!
2. What were the reforms on cooking style and eating habits concerning the settlement of the Hungarians?
3. Please, provide some examples on ancient Hungarian raw materials and techniques!
4. Please, provide the details on the meeting of the Hungarian and Renaissance Italian cuisines!
5. Please, summarize the effects of the Turkish role on the Hungarian gastronomy!
6. What is the history of paprika?
7. When and how affected the French gastronomy the Hungarian one?
8. Please, summarize the characteristics of Hungarian gastronomy in the 19th Century!
9. What are the characteristics of modern Hungarian cuisine?
10. What type of factors were influencing the transition of Hungarian gastronomy at the end of the 20th century?

3.8. Competence Developing Questions

1. What are the most important factors for influencing a nation's gastronomy?





2. What is the connection between history, culture and gastronomy?
3. Please, specify the positive and negative effects of globalization on Hungarian gastronomy!
4. In your opinion, what is the international reputation of the Hungarian gastronomy today? Why?



4. Regions and Religion in the Hungarian Gastronomy

In this chapter we provide the details of the regions' cuisines in Hungary, concerning Northern Hungary, the Great Plain and the Trans-Danubian regions. The second part of this chapter summarizes the effects of religion on the Hungarian cuisine.

4.1. Culinary Traditions of the Different Hungarian Regions

The eating habits of the peasantry showed significantly different regional patterns. The diet of the poor was primarily based on food of vegetal origin, such as different kinds of porridge, corn, millet, buckwheat, potato dishes, dough and pasta. **Pork was the prevailing meat,** however mutton or poultry was also consumed on Sundays and feast days, depending on regional differences. Beef or veal was primarily served at weddings. Cake baking as well was related to special events. Different religious protocols as well had an influence on the dishes served. Traditional peasant dishes represent the distinctive taste of the specific region, and they are present on restaurant and inn menus in an altered, sophisticated and modernized form (Tusor, 2008).

In the following we provide – making no claim to be exhaustive – an overview on the gastronomic characteristics of the major regions of Hungary.

4.1.1. Gastronomic Characteristics of Northern Hungary

This region is inhabited among others by the Palóc. Unfortunately people hardly have the opportunity to taste traditional Palóc cuisine, although it has a great deal of tasty surprise to offer for visitors to Hungary.

The typical flavour of the Palóc is a savoury sour taste, which is characteristic to the majority of their dishes. **Potato, cabbage and beans are dominant ingredients.** Cheese, túró⁴³ and other dairy products of Nógrád are also popular.

Potato became an element of nutrition in this region earlier than in other parts of the Great Hungarian Plain. Potato dishes are still popular with the people of this region, the most renowned of which is mashed potatoes, so called **krumpliganca**: cooked and mashed potatoes, mixed with flour and milk, heated. Other versions are made with cracklings or túró.

Different kinds of porridge made common, but popular and healthy food for the poor Palóc. Among the various porridge ingredients, one can find barley flour, corn flour and potato in some later cases. Túró, sour cream, grease with fried onions, buttermilk, curdling milk, poppy seed, cabbage and marmalade was and still is used for seasoning (Internet13). One of their popular dishes is baked mash, known as **görhe or málé**. It is made from corn flour mixed with scalded milk. The mash is baked in a greased pan and served sliced (Tusor, 2008).

Soups have an outstanding role in the Palóc diet. As the proverb goes in Palóc region for expressing fabulous prosperity: “soups alone count seven kinds.”⁴⁴ Palóc soups were generally made with or

⁴³ curd cheese-like dairy product; often translated as cottage cheese, but bears no relation to the more liquidy cottage cheese found elsewhere (thehungarydish.com)

⁴⁴ Original version: Csak léféle volt hétféle.



without meat, often enriched with pasta, thickened with milk or sour cream. **Maga levi** used to be one of the simplest soups (onions were browned in grease, to which cooking liquid of pasta was added. The soup was seasoned with paprika and some browned carrots and parsley. It was enriched by adding the previously cooked pasta or some potatoes.) **Cibere** soup, another common dish, was considered to be extremely healthy, it was even consumed instead of water. Its sour taste resembles that of cabbage soup, however it was made with leaven by fermentation. It was popular with those suffering from stomach ache. **Milk soup**, together with various kinds of **roux-based soups** were also cooked on a daily basis (Internet13).

Bean-based soups are listed among substantial soups even today. Bean soup thickened with milk viz. sour bean soup is made from mixed dried beans with bay leaf seasoning; while sweet bean soup is made from white beans and other vegetables, thickened with onion-based roux. Bean soups can be enriched by adding some smoked meat or sausage to them.

From among **mushroom soups** sour ones, roux-based ones and those with vegetables are worth mentioning. **Cabbage soup with mushroom** is widely consumed during the fasting period of Christmas.

Meat soups for feasts – similarly to other regions of Hungary – are usually made from poultry with substantial amount of vegetables. Besides poultry soups, pork, beef or mutton soups are also popular.

A characteristic ingredient of the Palóc diet is cabbage, which is prepared in several ways, however sauerkraut is preferred. For instance roasted cabbage, or cabbage cooked in grease is best when made from sauerkraut, optionally by adding some meat or sausage. **Stuffed cabbage** is a prevailing taste of feasts. The stuffed cabbage of Nógrád is distinguished by its peculiar way of preparing: in some cases minced meat stuffing is wrapped in tenderized slices of meat, as well as in cabbage leaves, and it is seasoned with dill (Internet1).

Pork was and still is of outstanding importance among different kinds of meat. Sheep are slaughtered for Easter and wedding feasts. Some characteristic dishes: corn rolls stuffed with meat or juhtúró⁴⁵, legényfogó krumplitalpas⁴⁶, lábatlan chicken soup⁴⁷, Mátra-style stuffed leg of pork (Tusor, 2008).

The Slovak ethnic group acquainted sztrapacska with the local Hungarian population. This is a kind of dumplings made from a mixture of grated potatoes and flour, which is boiled in water in small pieces. Its diversity is provided by its special flavouring: it can be prepared with juhtúró, túró, cabbage or sauerkraut, boiled potatoes, fried onions, marmalade etc. This can be topped according to taste with fried bacon, cracklings, or even fried foie gras (Internet14). **Haluska (potato dumplings) and tócsni⁴⁸ are also characteristic items of the Palóc cuisine.** Various kinds of dumplings, such as nudli⁴⁹ or derelye⁵⁰ are also appealing to the Palóc (Internet13).

Strudel is one of the most popular festive cakes of the region. Strudel making requires great experience from housewives. Strudels are prepared with various kinds of filling: braised shredded carrots, pumpkin, boiled and mashed potatoes in the past - nowadays they are filled rather with apple, plum, walnut, poppy seeds or túró (Internet13).

⁴⁵ túró made from ewes' milk

⁴⁶ potato stuffed with miced pork meet

⁴⁷ chicken soup-like dish without meat

⁴⁸ grated potatoes mixed with flour and egg yolk then fried or browned in the oven

⁴⁹ potato-based small dumplings. Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shlishkes>

⁵⁰ stuffed pasta similar to ravioli, often filled with jam, túró, or meat (thehungarydish.com)



Matyóföld, home to the Matyó population, belongs to the region known as Northern Hungary. This area, with the Matyó capital of Mezőkövesd, used to be inhabited by poor people for centuries, who were able to make gastronomic masterpieces from simple ingredients available for them. **Onion is an essential element of their dishes.** They used various ways to cut, slice, chop or grate onions depending on the dish prepared (Tusor, 2008). **Matyó cuisine is generally characterized by an abundance of pasta, and a variety of bean, cabbage, potato and corn dishes.** Főzelék⁵¹ is thickened with milk in order to make a substantial meal.

Their soups can be divided into three groups: (1) meat soups, (2) soups thickened with milk and flour and (3) soups thickened with roux. Cibere soup, which is believed to have ancient origins, is a widely cooked dish in this region too. Preparing sauerkraut soup with European weather loach was almost compulsory on Holy Wednesday. Csóré soup was also prepared (from whey and it was thickened with milk and flour). They tried to avoid the monotony of soups by adding pasta to them. Such pastas are: **gombóta** (tiny pinches of dried pasta), **lebbencs**, **laska**, **restasszony csíkja**, **nagy haluska** (a thicker version of úri nokedli), or **csombókos haluska**. However almost each Matyó soup has a peculiar, pleasant taste, which was provided by their essential ingredient, fried onion grease (Nagyváthy, 1999).

Paprikás krumpli⁵² was prepared as frequently as twice or three times a week, since it was fast to cook and had several varieties. It could be made soup-like by adding some extra liquid, roasted with thick gravy, it could be prepared with or without sausage, with fresh pepper and tomato, with extra seasoning, with slow heating so that the potato pieces are not ruined, or even by slightly mashing the potatoes with a fork. **Öhöm** was a similar one-course meal made from gombóta. It was a dish which was quick to prepare after arriving home from the fields. Chopped onions were browned in a small amount of grease, then gombóta was added and browned. Water was added to it so that it covered the mixture and it was boiled together with diced potatoes. At boiling point, another handful of gombóta was added to it (Tusor, 2008).

Thanks to soil and climatic conditions, **cabbage dishes** are of outstanding popularity in this region. Cabbage was served steamed, or with a small amount of vinegar as a substitution for pickles, as a companion to roasted meat dishes; while sauerkraut was served in stuffed form, or as káposztástészta⁵³, hajdúkáposzta⁵⁴, korhelyleves⁵⁵. **Beans** are also worth mentioning: in many cases poor households could not even afford preparing it with roux, however this food could still make a meal when cooked in salty water. Lenten soup of the Advent season was prepared from beans cooked soft with carrots. It was made ready by adding warm milk to it. Another version of bean soup is cooked with porkling trotters, moreover beans were prepared in főzelék and rissole formats as well. **Kukoricamálé** is a dish made by pouring scalded milk on corn flour, sweetened with some sugar. The resulting substance was covered and allowed to stand in a cool place in order for its sugar content to accumulate on the top of the dollop. Thereafter it was poured into a greased pan and baked in a hot oven.

⁵¹ boiled vegetables mixed with sour cream and roux, eaten as a main course

⁵² potatoes slowly braised in paprika sauce with spicy sausage

⁵³ pasta with shredded sauerkraut fried in fat

⁵⁴ „hajdú” cabbage with knuckle

⁵⁵“hangover soup”, made from sauerkraut, smoked sausage, paprika, and sour cream (thehungarydish.com)



Small domestic animals viz. poultry was the main meat in this region. Pork was rarely served, since when the pig was slaughtered and smoked, the meat was divided up in order to be enough for the entire year. Pig slaughter was a significant winter event, which provided the whole family with smoked, corned pork and bacon for almost an entire year. A list of some Matyó dishes characterizing the pig slaughter event - making no claim to be exhaustive: pörkölt⁵⁶ made from the pig's ears and tail, metélt⁵⁷ pasta with pork and marjoram, pork lungs with tarhonya⁵⁸, sour pork kidney (Tusor, 2008). Beef or mutton dishes were usually limited to traditional feasts or weddings. Pearl barley or cornmeal was mixed with minced meat to make a filling which was wrapped in grape leaves or horseradish leaves (Nagyváthy, 1999).

The Matyó tradition has a few peculiar dishes, which are prepared, and even known exclusively in this region. Sweet and thick chicken paprikás⁵⁹ soup with milk is one of these dishes. Stuffed chicken with stuffed eggs belong to the list of authentic Matyó peasant recipes. The original practices of the preparation of the filling is worth learning. "Home-made bread crumbs were browned in a handful of grease. A large bunch of chopped parsley and salt was added to it, and finally sweet cream was poured on it in order to soften the filling" (Pető, 1987).

The region is rich in fruits, which used to be preserved by drying. Sun-dried apples are called "susinka", while oven-dried plums got the name "bagolytüdő"⁶⁰. In the winter, dried fruits were used to make nutritious soups thickened with milk and flour, while in the summer they served ingredients for substantial sauces to be consumed with cooked meat. Yeast dough was originally filled with marrow, potato, kohlrabi and cabbage. From among **open fire fried doughs**, doughnut and csöröge⁶¹ are still popular. Palacsinta⁶² is still known as "kövön sült"⁶³ in a number of places (Nagyváthy, 1999).

4.1.2. Gastronomic Features of the Great Hungarian Plain

The ancestors of the majority of the Great Plain population -- including Cumanians and Jazygians -- were engaged in shepherding and cultivating the farm fields. Fishing was flourishing along the rivers Danube, Tisza and Kőrös. The lifestyle and the raw materials available determined the eating habits and cooking methods. It is not by accident that **open-fire cooking in cauldron** - which is still popular - spread quickly, as the only way for shepherds grazing the livestock on the meadows to consume warm meal was to cook it for themselves. Fishermen or farmers as well, who often spent the nights on the field during the summer agricultural season, often prepared their meals in cauldron over open fire (Tusor, 2008). **Thick, semi-solid dishes played significant role in shepherds' lives.** Such dishes, as **slambuc, öreglebbencs, öregtarhonya** were prepared according to special rules: the cauldron was to be shaken 32 times during cooking, without stirring the food (Pető 2010).

⁵⁶ spicy meat stew with onions and paprika

⁵⁷ long, thin strips of pasta (thehungarydish.com)

⁵⁸ dried pasta (which looks like barley) made from a kneaded flour and egg dough. A.k.a. egg barley. (thehungarydish.com)

⁵⁹ A feature characterizing dishes slowly braised in paprika sauce. Source: <http://www.thehungarydish.com>

⁶⁰ translation: owl lungs

⁶¹ doughnut prepared in a special elongated and twisted format

⁶² thin pancake

⁶³ translation: stone-baked





People of the Transtisza region are primarily soup eaters. There are three kinds of soup characterizing the region: clear soups, meat soups and fruit or milk-based soups. Clear soups are one-course meals, which are simple and fast to prepare. Onions were browned in lard of smoked bacon in a cauldron, then water, potatoes and dry pasta was added to the onions and cooked. Dry pasta was also an ingredient for milk soup, which was ready in a few minutes in a cauldron (Tusor, 2008). From among soups kukó soup, which is an exclusive characteristic of the Great Hungarian Plain area, is worth mentioning. “Kukó” refers to a blown out eggshell, which is filled with a spicy filling made from bacon and veal lungs (Pető 2010). As it takes a long time to prepare, these days this dish is rare enough to cook.

Besides soups, **meat-based dishes had key role in the eating habits of the past,** however it was only in rich households that meat was served on a daily basis. Being easily available, beef was the most common kind of meat at the beginning of the 20th century. Each family farmed 2-3 pigs in general. Mutton was consumed in a small amount, while poultry was sold on the marketplace. There is a diverse naming of beef in the butchers' language of Debrecen, which are different from the mainstream expressions used today. **Characteristic dishes of the region: stuffed upper thigh, gulyás⁶⁴ meat, pörkölt,** which used to be referred to as pecsenye i.e. roast, or aprópecsenye i.e. meat casserole (Pető, 2010).

The poor used to eat millet porridge, spelt porridge and sweet potatoes, which are not consumed any more, however "szárma", stuffed cabbage filled with pearl barley is still cooked. Karimakása which is millet porridge made with milk, or thick "hajdúkása", which is porridge made with mutton, are also worth mentioning in the list of the porridges of the Hajdúság region.

Kiskunság as well belongs to the Great Hungarian Plain. Cumanians settling in this region preferred to cook **potatoes**, potato porridge with smoked sausage and potato palacsinta. **Cabbage** is prepared in various ways: sauerkraut is made for the wintertime, or it is stored in pits in order to avoid freezing (Tusor, 2008).

The traditions of centuries are still preserved in Szeged. The name of **Szeged** make people think of **halpaprikás⁶⁵** made by the fishermen of the River Tisza. They cooked halpaprikás with river water in cauldrons on the riverbank. It was referred to as halászlé by strangers. Fish is an important ingredient of the characteristic dishes of the region, there are various ways to prepare it. **Tarhonya**, which is of Turkish origin, is widely used in the entire area of the Great Hungarian plain, particularly around Szeged. Sailors, carters, travelling workers and shepherds often spent long periods of time away from home, in which cases they took with themselves dry tarhonya wrapped in linen cloth. Tarhonya made an excellent ingredient for various fast and tasty cauldron dishes (e.g.: tarhonya soup, tarhonya with potato, thick tarhonya, tarhonya with mutton paprikás) (Tusor, 2008).

Debrecen-style bread, Debrecen-style pretzel and different kinds of mézeskalács⁶⁶, which were popular products of fairs, are worth highlighting. **Cooked pasta could be prepared in various ways, such as galuska⁶⁷, csusza, nyújtott derelye, bobályka with poppy seeds and poured pretzel.** After being purchased and taken home from the fair, the dried pretzel was poured with milk and seasoned with sour cream, túró and cracklings.

⁶⁴ goulash, also called gulyásleves (goulash soup); originally the word gulyás referred to a shepherd. Source: <http://www.thehungarydish.com>

⁶⁵ fisherman's soup; heavily seasoned with paprika and prepared differently in different regions. *Alk.: halászlé* (thehungarydish.com)

⁶⁶ translation: honey bread. Similar to ginger bread (thehungarydish.com)

⁶⁷ flour dumplings eaten with stew (better known as spaetzle); also called nokedli (thehungarydish.com)





Bread dough was used to make **lángos**⁶⁸ and different kinds of **folded dough, such as biblia**⁶⁹, **bika**⁷⁰, **dübbencs**. Dough was greased with lard or in some cases with butter and dill. Fat fried dough dishes are characteristic rather for feasts. In this region **kürtőskalács**⁷¹ is called "fánsült" i.e. baked on a piece of wood. Fonatos⁷² a.k.a. karingó was made of a kind of dough, by braiding two strings of it (Pető, 2010).

The peasantry living in the Upper Tisza Valley or in the Nyírség area had similar cuisine to that of the Great Hungarian Plain, Transdanubian, and Palóc region, however there are differences as well, deriving from the different climatic and topographic features and different traditions. Fishermen, hunters, shepherds, and woodsmen of this region as well opted for the simplest dishes by preparing paprikás, gulyás and pörkölt in cauldrons.

4.1.3. The Culinary Traditions of the Transdanubium

Studying the Transdanubian region we get a diversified image concerning eating and cooking habits. In this region **the influence of German and especially that of Austrian cuisine is stronger** (Tusor, 2008).

The various delicious fish in the Balaton apparently have an impact on the eating habits of the nearby living population. The savoury halászlé of Balaton deserves its reputation, but the different grilled fishes and fishes roasted on skewer also enjoy popularity. The most well known is the **pike perch from Lake Balaton**, which became world famous with its snow white and really tasty meat.

Órség, located at the western part of the Transdanubium, is primarily a historical-ethnographic notion consisting of 18 villages next to the Kerka and the Szála. In the past, the inhabitants of Órség were engaged in animal husbandry. The soil of the region is rocky, meagre, hard to cultivate. In these hidden small villages of Vas and Zala counties the inhabitants had to settle in for a self-sufficient lifestyle. Their customs and culinary traditions greatly depended on what the family did for a living. The peasants, the lumberjacks, the shepherds all ate different types of foods and, of course, the seasons, animal slaughters, festivities, and the larger summer works also influenced their diet.

On weekdays simple, frugal meals were made. Breakfast was often a cheap, but **filling soup** (e.g. cabbage soup, roux soup, sour soup) **or potatoes** prepared in different ways (e.g. braised in paprika sauce, boiled potatoes, baked potatoes). Mostly the poorer population ate **porridge, pulp, gánica**⁷³ made from corn. At noon two courses were put on the table. There always was some kind of soup (bean soup, goulash soup, carrot soup with sour cream, prune soup with sour cream). The other course was **some kind of pasta**, e.g. boiled pasta, which is called "mácsik" here, **strudel from yeast dough, pogácsa**⁷⁴, **búzagánica**⁷⁵, etc. Dinner consisted of the leftovers from lunch or some kind of soup was prepared. In summer, dinner was finished with **curdling milk**, in the winters they ate boiled or **dried fruit**. The use

⁶⁸ a fried piece of dough (often with potatoes added), commonly topped with sour cream and grated cheese (thehungarydish.com)

⁶⁹ translation: Bible.

⁷⁰ translation: bull

⁷¹ this dessert (which originated in Transylvania) is a long thin strip of dough wrapped around a metal spit, glazed with sugar, and rotated until it's cooked and the glaze has caramelized (thehungarydish.com)

⁷² translation: braided dough

⁷³ dumpling

⁷⁴ savory, buttery scones/biscuits in a variety of flavors. Source: <http://www.thehungarydish.com/>

⁷⁵ dumpling made of wheat flour





of dried fruit was very extensive, they were not only eaten boiled or independently, but also as soups and as fillings in pasta.

Winter was time for pig slaughters, though even in winter people usually ate meat only on Sundays, the rest was kept in store for the time of larger summer works. The meat was cooked slowly in lard or smoked, and it was a tradition to keep one foot of the pig for next year's pig slaughter. **Poultry was usually slaughtered only for feasts or when somebody became sick in the household. The peasants of Vas County drank a lot of milk and ate many dairy products, while in Zala County people rather ate mushrooms, foods containing mushroom** (Tusor, 2008).

The harvest, grain carrying, grape picking, corn picking were the largest summer works, every one of them had its own traditional diet. For harvest they had to prepare quite early because it was crucial for the mature grain to get to the granary as soon as possible. The breakfast was substantial, lunch was eaten at noon on the fields, it usually consisted of meat soup or bean soup with pork knuckle, and pörkölt with salad. Uzsonna⁷⁶ was also taken to the fields by the husbandman's wife or daughter, which was usually roasted meat, smoked ham or cracklings. The late dinner only consisted of simple foods, like **túró seasoned with paprika**, curdling milk, **paprikás krumpli**. Some of the foods in this region were prepared with pumpkin-seed oil, which was squeezed at home.

An interesting tradition was in the western part of the country the paszita, which meant the christening feast. Catholic families tried to christen the newborn baby as soon as possible. The paszita lasted from the afternoon until the next morning and a traditional diet evolved around it:

- Tikleves (chicken soup)
- Cooked chicken meat with tomato sauce or zsemlemártás⁷⁷
- Strudel (with poppy seeds, with walnut, with túró, with cabbage, with marrow and poppy seeds.)
- Roasted meat (pork, poultry or lamb)
- Side dishes (buckwheat porridge, potato, nowadays rice)
- Pastries
- Fumu

Fumu is a decorated challah bread with the shape of a baby, which was given as present by the godparents. It is made of yeast dough, resembles the shape of a baby, and varies in size. If the baby was a girl, the family received a boy-shaped fumu, while a boy received a girl-shaped one.

In Vas County the komapár⁷⁸ gave a komakosár⁷⁹ every day to the mother and her family through seven days from the birth of the baby, which consisted of a filling soup, some kind of meat, and pasta.

The other large region, which has significant folk, culinary traditions, is Somogy. The **main dishes of the people of Somogy were made from cereals. The basic ingredient of bread was rye flour**, which was kneaded only with a little amount of wheat flour or cornstarch. Only the poorest people made bread from cornstarch alone. The challah bread,

⁷⁶ afternoon snack

⁷⁷ a sauce made from *zsemle*, chicken soup, and grease with some garlic. Source: <http://www.mimi.hu/gasztro/zsemlemartas.html>

⁷⁸ g a traditional name for godparents, signifying a strong bond not only with the child, but with the parents too. source: <http://mek.oszk.hu/02100/02115/html/3-651.html>

⁷⁹ a basket full of food taken by the godparents to the mother





which was served at large feasts (e.g. wedding, Easter, Christening, Christmas), was made of more finely ground flour. The remaining bread, challah bread or other yeast dough was used to prepare the **bubuta**, which was made from the chopped leftover scalded with milk and stuffed with some kind of filling (túró, poppy seeds).

Krumpligánica is made of boiled potatoes mixed with flour and roasted on grease with onions. Milk porridge is a watery food from buckwheat, millet or corn. It was served after cabbage soup during harvest to quench the thirst of reapers.

The most prevalent domestic animal was pig. It was conserved with salt and through smoking and put away for feasts and for the main working period. Mostly soups were made, and the **boiled meat was served with some kind of sauce.** They did not make főzelék, they did not know it at the time, and instead they ate meat with sauce. **They often prepared fish**, the poorer made weather loach, which was cooked in cabbage soup or in **kocsonya**⁸⁰. **Game also had a significant role.** Rabbits, deer, fallow deer were eaten pierced, boiled in wine, or with vadas⁸¹ sauce. A lot of delicious fruits grow on the sandy soil of Somogy. During summer and autumn the breakfast and the afternoon snack was bread and grease with some kind of fruit. Shrunken apples and stewed prunes were put away for the winter.

For some peculiarity, here is the menu of a wedding in Somogy:

- Meat soup with saffron
- Boiled chicken with horseradish sauce
- Stuffed cabbage
- Beef with garlic and vinegar
- Roasted pork with pickled vegetables
- Pretzel, kuglóf⁸², strudel, pastries (Tusor, 2008).

4.2. The Influence of Christian Religion on Hungarian Gastronomy

Christianity, the Christian religion and culture is 2000 years old. Its first congregations were founded around the middle of 1st century A.D. in Palestine. The term etymologically derives from the word Christos – Christianos – referring to the followers of Christ.

Hungarians got acquainted with both western (Roman) and eastern (Byzantine) Christianity before their settlement in Hungary. Hungarians had been the followers of a shamanism-like religion – Hungarian old religion – which was not suitable to represent the new circumstances after the disintegration of the tribal-gentilial system and the foundation of the state. Our founding monarch **Saint Stephen (997-1038)** brought western priests to the country, and during the formation of the state system he simultaneously **organized the Church and made Christianity a compulsory religion.** The arriving bishops, priests, and monks helped in consolidating the new social order. They taught Hungarians the cultivation of the land, viticulture, planting of fruit trees. The adoption of Christianity helped strengthen a more developed social structure. As a matter of fact, the Hungarian people owe their survival and existence to Christianity, because it is hard to imagine that the surrounding states based on strong feudal systems would have tolerated a wandering pagan people leading a nomadic, raiding lifestyle in their vicinity. This way we could escape the fate of Huns, Avars, Goths and other peoples, who were blown off from the stage of history by the wind of

⁸⁰ pork jelly with a mix of pig parts like feet, ears, and snouts, and extras like hard-boiled eggs, set into aspic made from rich meat consommé that congeals when chilled. Source: <http://www.thehungarydish.com/>;

⁸¹ “hunter’s style” meat is served with game sauce or brown sauce; often with bread dumplings. source: <http://www.thehungarydish.com/>

⁸² coffee cake baked in a Bundt/Gugelhupf pan. source: <http://www.thehungarydish.com/>





migration (Tusor, 2008).

Since the rule of Saint Stephen Catholic religion had basically **become the state religion up until the 19th century**. At last, Hungarian civilization became Christian, European to the core, and not only on the surface, like it happened to some surrounding nations, for instance to Serbs, and the Oláh people (Szekfű, 2003).

The legislation of 1848 abolished the previous state of Catholicism as state religion, and enacted religious equality. Nevertheless, this equality only applied to the so called established religions: thus to the Roman Catholic, Calvinistic, Evangelical, Orthodox, Unitarian religions, and from 1895 also to the Israelite religion.

The liturgical year contains the religious holidays of the given year. The Catholic liturgical year starts on the first Sunday of Advent, and ends with next year's last Sunday before the first Sunday of Advent, with the feast of Christ the King. The dates of celebration, naturally, correspond to the so called Gregorian calendar which is named after Pope Gregory XIII. The Gregorian calendar was introduced on 4th October, 1582, replacing the previously used Roman, Julian calendar (Internet15).

The liturgical year can be divided into different seasons based on the religious holidays: the liturgical year starts with Advent, which is followed by Christmas season, some mid-season Sundays, the so called Carnival season, then comes Lent, followed by Easter, and finally Ordinary Time encompassing a major part of the year, ending with the Sunday of Christ the King.

Religious holidays can be separated into two groups. The first group contains the so called **fixed feasts**, which are on the same calendar day in every year. The **feasts of the second group are celebrated on different calendar days** in every year. These are the so called movable feasts (Internet15).

According to the Magyar Katolikus Lexikon⁸³ (2015) every day is a commanded feast which is to be celebrated with holy mass in the Catholic Church or with a bank holiday. Failure to do so because of neglect is a deadly sin. Their compulsory celebration differentiates them from the public holidays and from the adopted holidays of smaller congregations. Commanded feasts usually include Sundays and the major holidays, but their number varies according to different historical eras and different places. One fulfils the obligation to be present on the holy mass if he is present at a holy mass held according to Catholic rite, anywhere, either on the day of the feast, or the evening before. At the moment, there are five commanded feast days besides Sundays: 1st January (Feast of the Virgin Mary) and 6th January (Epiphany), 15th August (Feast of the Assumption of Mary), 1st November (All Saints' Day), and 25th December (Christmas Day).

The movable feasts are always held on the same day of a week in every year. The dates of these holidays are usually related to Easter, consequently they are celebrated before or after Easter on the day counted from Easter (for example: Ash Wednesday, Pentecost). Easter Sunday always falls on the first Sunday following the first full moon after the vernal equinox (Internet13). Naturally, there are exceptions here, too: feasts interconnected with some other feasts. The dates of these feasts are not defined on the basis of Easter (for example: the first Sunday of Advent).

4.2.1. Gastronomic Traditions Related to Religious Feasts and Special Days

⁸³ Hungarian Catholic Lexicon
TÁMOP-4.1.1.C-12/1/KONV-2012-0014



The following summary of culinary culture and traditions of religious feasts and important days are based on the work of Tusor (2008).

Religious feasts have their peculiar atmosphere, a set of festive traditions and dishes evolved, and some feasts also have traditional menu. The offer of the white-covered table plays an important role among the festive joys. This does not simply mean the abundance of courses. Hungarian language has a special expression for describing abundant festive courses: “nagykanállal enni”⁸⁴. The festive mood was affected by the characteristic courses, dishes, which are “dictated by tradition” for the special feast days.

The liturgical year starts with Advent, then comes Christmas and the other feasts (the term comes from the word adventus – Latin origin meaning coming). Its current form was instituted by Pope Gregory VII in the 11th century. It starts on the nearest Sunday to St. Andrew’s Day – 30th November – and lasts until 24th December. The time of Advent is a period of expectation of Christmas and Christmas preparations. Various folk traditions are also attached to this period. Hence, “the Holy Family seeking for accommodation” is known in several parts of Hungary. The Holy Family’s picture is taken from house to house and small religious ceremonies are held before the picture. The Advent wreath is a suspended horizontal wreath from evergreens, with four candles on it. One subsequent candle is lit on every Sunday of Advent. Another nice custom is the Nativity play.

The period before Christmas was the time of poor fasting foods, while the feasts were characterized by rich multi-course meals. Nativity Fast ended on Christmas Eve. Today, from religious aspect, it is not a fasting period any more. The origins of the tradition of eating Lenten bean soup (without meat), egg soup, mákosguba⁸⁵, metélt with poppy seeds and meatless foods in general for lunch on 24th December can be traced back to this. Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ and the feast of love. Even today in numerous families the **festive menu on Christmas Eve consists of halászlé, fish soup or wine soup, fried fish, or other fish dishes. Traditions are different, in many places roast turkey or stuffed cabbage is also served on this evening.**

Christmas Eve and the upcoming days are made more colorful by the decorated Christmas tree. In Hungarian families the table was a well-respected piece of furniture. In rural homes it was covered with tablecloth only on feast days, with red-patterned during Christmas. Red is the colour of happiness. Straw was put under the table in memory of the Bethlehem manger. A basket full of cereal and some agricultural tools were also placed here to ensure a good harvest. Almost all Christmas foods had symbolic, magical importance. Poppy, marrow and peas ensured abundance, honey made life sweeter, garlic protected health. Apple was usually the symbol of unity, health, beauty and love. The straw beneath the table was fed to the livestock to prevent animal plague.

On the first feast of Christmas, on Christmas Day, lunch is started by the heavenly, powerful, golden **meat soup**. This soup can be made of chicken, turkey, turkey giblets, with vegetables, mushroom, slices of liver and finommetélt⁸⁶ in it. Nevertheless, the highlight of lunch is usually **roast turkey, quilted with chestnuts, stuffed with almonds, garnished with prunes marinated in red wine**. In the old times the Christmas turkey was fattened up with walnuts because this way its meat became more delicious. Primarily its breast is the real treat. In the villages this is the time of **pig slaughters**, when orjaleves and toroskáposzta are served on the festive table.

⁸⁴ translation: eating with a big spoon

⁸⁵ poppy seed bread pudding. source: <http://www.thehungarydish.com/>

⁸⁶ long, thin strips of pasta. source: <http://www.thehungarydish.com/>





In the order of Christmas dishes an important role is played by the glossy, **marbled challah bread roulades richly filled with walnut or poppy-seeds**, which is also called bájgli or bejgli. It can be made of shortbread or yeast dough, the filling can be enriched with raisins, apple, sultanas, chocolate, honey or quince jelly. Wine cannot be missing from the festive table either.

Sylvester's Day, 31st December, is the last day of the year, on the eve of this day it is customary to make a cheerful farewell to the past year, in churches end-of-the-year thanksgivings are held. Three Roman popes were named Sylvester. From the aspects of the Hungarian people Pope Sylvester II is the most significant, who was pope between 999 and 1003. He was an educated man of his time, who was engaged in philosophy, mathematics, and literature. He sent the Holy Crown to our state founding king, Saint Stephen. **According to the old traditions of Hungarian cuisine, rabbit, fish, deer or poultry should be eaten on New Year's eve** because – as they used to say – the fish swims away, the fleet-footed rabbit or deer runs away, the poultry flies away with all the worries and problems of the past year. **A bottle of champagne is opened at midnight, and korbélyes⁸⁷, frankfurter, stuffed cabbage is put on the table.**

Old cook books also mention the preparation of Sylvester **krampampuli⁸⁸** as another tradition. The following can be read about it in Magyar Elek's book titled *Az Ínyesmester szakácskönyve⁸⁹* (2000): "Looking into the blue fire of krampampuli on New Year's Eve is a pleasant and interesting thing. The smell of burning rum, melting sugar, and that of the many spices fills the room. In the exalted mood of the end of the year the company sitting around the table is trying to see the future in the tottering flames at the centre of the table. (...) As midnight approaches, a large fireproof bowl is set on the centre of the table, the bottom of which is filled with chopped tropical fruits: figs, sultanas without seeds, raisins, candied orange peels, possibly chopped carob, prunes stuffed with walnut and (probably for substitution of other missing materials) some home-grown fruits. The grate put on the bowl is filled with lump sugar (can be rubbed with orange peel previously), then half a liter of rum is poured on it. (...) It is lighted (the lights are turned off at this time), and we watch patiently while the flaming rum melts the sugar and it leaks into the bowl. After this process is done two liters of spicy (cinnamon, lemon peel, clove) white wine, 1 liter of hot tea, and the juice of 2 oranges or other fruits are poured into the bowl. We allow it to rest for a few minutes, but do not let it cool down. It is stirred well and tasted to see if something is missing from the mixture. Is it strong enough, sweet enough, or on the contrary, is it too sweet or too strong? If it is needed we supplement the mixture and then we pour the steaming drink into punch glasses. Everybody get one or two pieces of the delicious fruits".

New Year's Day is the first day of the year. 1st January was established as the first day of the year by Pope Gregory XIII's reformed Julian calendar in 1582.

The beginning of the year is connected with various traditional folk customs to dispel evil spirits and to bring good luck for peoples all around the world. It is general belief that New Year's deeds have significant impact on the whole year. People woke up early to become early birds in the whole year, in villagers had a bath at a well to be fresh all year.

⁸⁷ "hangover soup", made from sauerkraut, smoked sausage, paprika, and sour cream. source:

<http://www.thehungarydish.com/>

⁸⁸ spices pálinka, mixed with sugar and fruits, which is lighted for a short time before drinking. source:

<http://idegen-szavak.hu/krampampuli>

⁸⁹ translation: The Tastemaster's Cookbook





Fruit trees were threatened to frighten them to grow more fruit, hens were fed from a hoop to have larger eggs, but there were also noisy “turning the herd”⁹⁰ rituals for healthy animals, and another New Year’s custom was lead casting.

On New Year’s Day **soup from pig giblets, cabbage soup with its sour**, savory taste helped a little in curing hangover from last night, but it was customary to prepare **lens, beans, or chicken soup**. Nevertheless, the main course on New Year’s Day was **porklet**, which roots good luck with its snout toward us. The suckling pig prepared well, roasted ‘til red and crispy is a food filled with the harmony of good flavors, a famous dish of Hungarian cuisine since old times. The symbol of luck can also be prepared as **pörkölt**. This, too, can only be prepared from a suckling pig, which has tender meat free of any excess fat, so that the pörkölt won’t be hard to digest for those suffering from hangover. Its perfect side dish is home-made tarhonya made with édes-nemes, mild, or red hot paprika. For dessert people usually prepared **csörögefánk**, but, especially in rural areas, the forerunner of carnivals, the **carnival doughnut** could also be found.

The celebration of Epiphany – 6th January – is a complex Christian feast. Its main theme is the commemoration of the visit of the Three Kings (the Three Wise Men) from the East coming to Bethlehem to worship the newborn Jesus, its second theme is the day of baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River, the third is the commemoration of the miracle at the wedding at Cana when water was turned into wine. Originally, Epiphany was the feast of the birth of Christ, and it preceded the 24th December Christmas celebration. Today, this aspect of the feast is only present in its liturgical name, Epiphany or Theophany. In the cults of the Hellenistic religion it meant the appearing of gods. In Alexandria, on 6th January, which was the time of the enjoyment of new wine, pagans also celebrated the birthday of Dionysus, who - identified with the sun - was the god of grape production and wine. Belief said that on this day Dionysus turned the water of springs into wine.

Carnival is held from 6th January until Ash Wednesday. There are differences between countries in this respect, because in Venice Carnival starts early on Saint Stephen’s Day – 26th December –, in Spain it starts on Saint Sebastian’s Day – 20th January –, in Rome only the day before Ash Wednesday is called Carnival. The word “carnival” is said to come from the Italian carne-vale, but it is more likely that it derives from the decorated carts demonstrated on the Carnival, which usually pictured naval ships – carrus navalis – the word from which the name “Carnival” originates.

The Hungarian word for Carnival i.e. farsang comes from the German fausen, faseln words meaning “to tell a story”, “to frolick”. The homeland of Carnival is Italy, where the feast developed from the old Roman Saturnalia celebrations. In Italy Carnivals are like folk festivities. The Carnival of Venice was especially famous, while the Carnival of Rome was famous for its horse races. In Paris, people wearing masks lead the boeuf gras (fat ox) around the city, but Germany and in Spain also hold great costume parades.

In Hungary there is a rich variety of traditional customs connected to Carnival. This is the time of masquerade balls, batyusbálok⁹¹, but it is also related to various beliefs and rituals of harvest magic and dispelling evil spirits. Meat soup was eaten with long pasta, so that the hemp would grow high. In many places, the corn kernels for sowing were removed on Shrove Tuesday, the four corners of the vine were pruned, etc. Among the Carnival costume parades the most well-known is the costume parade of

⁹⁰ a ritual where people made noise to wake the animals and make them turn to their other side. Source: <http://www.kavas.hu/idegenforgalom/goecsej/goecseji-nepszokasok.html?start=5>

⁹¹ balls where the attendants take their own food with themselves. source: http://wikiszotar.hu/wiki/magyar_ertelmezo_szotar/Batyusb%C3%A1llok





the South Slavic people around Mohács, called busójárás. This feast is the celebration of spring defeating winter, cold and darkness. Some Fat Tuesday customs symbolize the passing of Carnival and that of winter, e.g. burying the Carnival, dispelling winter, burying a double bass.

During Carnival and the festivities people ate plenty, consuming abundant meat dishes. The preparation of kocsonya⁹² from pig trotters and pig meat became prevalent, and the Carnival doughnut became widespread as a characteristic pastry of the feast. In every region different varieties of doughnut were prepared, like doughnut with túró, doughnut with apple, kubikosfánk, csörögefánk, etc.

The revelries ended on Shrove Tuesday at midnight and the Lent began. The comic play of the battle between Voivod Cibere and King Koncz representing Carnival and Lent, which was a widely known tradition throughout Europe, was present in Hungary as well. King Koncz wins at Epiphany, thus giving way to Carnival, then on Shrove Tuesday Voivod Cibere wins and Lent overcomes Carnival.

Lent in the Christian tradition is a 40-day period of fasting and atonement preceding Easter. According to the Gospels Jesus Christ spent 40 days fasting in the wilderness. **Initially the fast preceding Easter was extremely strict.** People abstained from meat, they ate only once a day. As time went by the discipline of Lent softened - especially in Western Christianity - meat was banned to consume only on Fridays, and the rule that allowed only one meal a day was replaced by another rule that allowed one substantial meal.

On Thursday following Ash Wednesday, fasting was suspended after one day in order to consume the leftover of the Carnival food. This day is called Fat Thursday. The first day of Lent is **Ash Wednesday**. In Hungarian this day is also referred to as "száraz szerda" i.e. "dry Wednesday". Lent is strict for the Catholics: they are not allowed to eat meat, they can eat substantial meal once, and small amount twice a day. In 1091 Pope Urban II ordered that on this day each believer's head was to be smeared with ash thus reminding them of their sins and passing. **The typical lenten dishes of this day were egg soup, roux soup, pasta dishes, sauerkraut that may have been accompanied by herring.** In former times frequenters in pubs, who were treating their stomach ache by drinking beer, were offered sauerkraut for free.

In Hungary it was a custom to wash up the greasy dishes on Ash Wednesday, and they were not taken out until Easter. Meat and greasy food was not consumed during Lent, the meals were prepared with oil or butter in pots reserved for this purpose. **Sour cibere soup made from bran, milksoup, bean soup, pasta dishes, beans boiled in salted water, cabbage with oil, different kinds of főzelék, dried fruits, egg and fish dishes were widespread lenten dishes.**

The week preceding the Christian Easter is the last stage of Lent. It starts with Palm Sunday. On this day processions are held with catkin to commemorate Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Holy Thursday has been the commemoration of the Last Supper and of Christ's suffering since the 4th-5th century. Green Thursday was another name for **Holy Thursday, the typical dish of this day was spinach főzelék with bundás zsemle⁹³.**

Good Friday is a strict fasting day commemorating the sufferings and the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. **Characteristic lenten foods** - fish, eggs, sauerkraut with oil, dried fruits, popcorn - **were consumed.** A large number of folk beliefs are related to this day, such as bathing in brooks or rivers in order to stay

⁹² pork jelly with a mix of pig parts like feet, ears, and snouts, and extras like hard-boiled eggs, set into aspic made from rich meat consommé that congeals when chilled. source: <http://www.thehungarydish.com/>

⁹³ Hungarian round bread rolls soaked in beaten eggs then fried.



healthy; poultry was not slaughtered in order to prevent the spread of plague among the animals; the soil was not ploughed as Jesus was lying in it.

Holy Saturday marked the beginning of the feast of joy. In the evening the ceremony of the blessing of fire and water, the Easter Vigil and the Resurrection Procession is held. This is the time when the bells start to toll signalling the Resurrection and the end of Lent. In the evening before leaving for the procession, people lit candles in their windows, symbolizing Christ's Resurrection. In Eastern Christianity the Resurrection Procession is held on Sunday, while in Western Christianity it is on Saturday afternoon or evening.

Holy Saturday is spent in the kitchen with Easter preparations: cooking ham, baking challah bread. Ham is a compulsory element of Easter. It was a custom that having returned from the church the Easter ham was cut. It is good to serve warm with mashed peas, lentil, potato or even spinach. Sliced cold ham can be served with smoked sausage cooked in its own juice, sliced boiled eggs and grated horseradish, accompanied by radish, spring onion and beetroot. The cooking liquid of the smoked ham was used to make the so called *kaszásleves*⁹⁴. Challah bread filled with walnut or poppy seeds was served for dessert. Challah bread has been a prestigious festive pastry for centuries in Hungarian cuisine - among the peasantry in particular. It is prepared in various forms, and it is present on Easter, Christmas and wedding tables.

Easter, or Easter Sunday in fact, is the celebration of Christ's Resurrection in Christian denominations. The Hungarian of Easter i.e. "húsvét"⁹⁵ refers to the tradition that this was the day when people started to eat meat again after Lent. Initially the day of the Easter celebration was different depending on local traditions. It was unified in 325 by the First Council of Nicaea, who ordered that Easter was to be celebrated on the first Sunday after the first full moon occurring after the vernal equinox. If the full moon occurs on Sunday then Easter is to be held the next Sunday. In this way Easter is always held between 22nd March and 25th April. It is important to determine the date of Easter, because this is the date according to which other moveable feasts are arranged in the rest of the year.

Lamb is a characteristic Easter food. Easter lamb symbolizes Jesus Christ, who was prefigured in the form of lamb, which was eaten by the Jewish at the time of the Exodus from Egypt. **There are a great variety of lamb foods**, e.g.: rich lamb head soup, Transylvanian-style hot or savoury lamb with tarragon, lamb pörkölt, lamb paprikás with sour cream. Golden brown crumbed lamb cutlets, or crispy roast lamb spine pierced with bacon. It is of utmost importance that the lamb that serves ingredient is to be a suckling lamb with soft and delicate flesh, the roasted meat of which can be perfectly accompanied by different kinds of *főzelék* and salads made from spring's primeurs and oven-roasted potato. The festive lamb can be preceded and followed by various dishes. The leftover cold smoked ham of the previous night, as well as chicken soup with liver dumplings or Transylvanian stuffed cabbage with dill can make starters for the lamb. Different kinds of cakes can make the palette more colourful, however poppy seed or walnut-filled challah bread roulades are compulsory.

The traditional dish of Easter Monday is spring fried chicken. This day the joy of eating is overshadowed by different folk customs. The tradition of Easter *locsolkodás*⁹⁶

⁹⁴ translation: reapers' soup. The basic variety of this soup is made from the cooking liquid of smoked ham thickened with sour cream, seasoned with vinegar.

⁹⁵ Word *húsvét* can be divided into two subparts: "*hús*" i.e. meat, "*vét*" i.e. taking. In this way the Hungarian name of the feast refers to the tradition that Easter Sunday was the first day for the people to take meat to themselves again after Lent.

⁹⁶ translation: sprinkling. On Easter Monday boys and men visit their female relatives, friends and neighbours. Boys in small groups, fathers with their sons, or single men leave early in the morning for their all-day "tour". They greet girls and women with short poems (mostly with a funny poem about "Eastern sprinkling") and





(sprinkling) is well-known throughout Hungary. According to the folk belief sprinkling provides girls with youth, beauty and popularity among men. In return for sprinkling boys were given red-painted or decorated eggs as treats, and they were offered foods and drinks.

Certain countries' Easter customs include lighting bonfires, whipping, sprinkling and Easter bunny. The Easter bunny is a symbol deriving from old Germanic mythology. Egg is the symbol of spring, the rebirth of nature, which has been an element of spring feasts since ancient times. Exchanging egg treats was already a tradition for Persians, Egyptians, Chinese, old Slavonic and old Germanic people. The Christian Church took over this tradition, however in Christian culture Christ's Resurrection and his rising from the grave is also attached to the egg symbol.

Easter enriched literature as well. In medieval churches the clergy presented the Biblical event related to the certain feast in the form of Latin language dramatic plays. These are considered the roots of Christian drama. Having expanded, these plays were moved to the Churchyard, believers were given roles and Latin was replaced by the language of the nation, which led to secularization and the employment of comic elements. Passion plays, which are known in Hungary as well, were adopted from German-speaking area.

1st May is the feast day of Saint Joseph, International Worker's Day, and the complete victory of spring has also been celebrated on this day for a long time. The tradition of maypole erecting, which is widespread throughout Europe, is well-known in Hungary as well. Young men cut down a tree with long trunk, nice leaves and branches in order to erect it in front of the window of the girl, who they fancied and thus express their courting purpose. The girls and their mothers were in charge of the decoration. On this day town dwellers went to the forest to have fun and relax. This is how the custom of May Day picnics and open-air balls was born. **The atmosphere of the May Day picnics is contributed by open-air cooking. Mutton pörkölt, guyás, or halászlé is cooked in the ancient way, over an open fire in a cauldron.**

Pentecost, the fiftieth day following Holy Saturday, is one of the major feasts of the Catholic church. This day commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit and the establishment of the Church. An interesting spectacle of Hungarian villages was the election of a Pentecostal king. The village population gathered at the village frontier, where young men competed to prove to be the most skilful, to have the fastest horse. The winner was crowned "Royal Pentecost" with a floral wreath and the celebration began, which culminated in the ox roasting. Throughout a year the Royal Pentecost was invited to every wedding, he could drink free in pubs and became the girls' favourite. Some regions' customs included the election of a Pentecostal queen, i.e. picking the most beautiful girl. On the day of the feast, moreover on the following day, dances were organized. The natural symbol of Pentecost is peony. **The traditional dishes served on Pentecost are as follows: roasted young goose, crumbed chicken with cucumber salad, - sheep owners slaughtered lambs, - pastry made with fresh fruits, such as strawberry or cherry pie.**

The feast of Corpus Christi is held on the second Thursday after Pentecost. In the past tents were built from green twigs all around the village, today they appear only around churches. On the day of Corpus Christi the Church celebrates the body of Christ, the Eucharist. The Blessed Sacrament is taken to the altars of the ornamented tents by a procession, then it is returned to the church. There are several folk beliefs related to the blessed plants used as ornamentation for the tents. The twigs of the tents were stabbed into the soil among

sprinkle them with water or cologne. Women must be well-prepared, they treat men with dessert and beverages - and with hand-painted eggs. (<http://www.hungarotips.com/customs/locsol.html>)

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vegetables in order to protect them from worms. The grass taken from the tents was placed under the roof in order to prevent lightning strikes. The udders of cows were smoked over the fire of "tent grass".

This season is characterized by **a variety of primeurs, and summer foods, such as stuffed kohlrabi, stuffed pepper -- among which there are different varieties made with dill, paprika or tomato -- and fruit pies.**

29th June is the feast day of Saint Peter and Saint Paul. According to the folk belief this is the day when "the stem of crop rives"⁹⁷ and it is ready for harvest. Farmers went to have a look at the wheat, but made some test scythe slashes only, as they did not work on feast days. The harvest was done at the village frontier or at the homestead. Harvesters spent the nights there as well in order to get the work done as soon as possible and to spare grains. **At the time of the harvest rich, substantial foods were cooked -- pörkölt, paprikás, gulyás -- usually in cauldron over open fire, and so called ordinary paprikás dishes, such as lebbencs, tarhonya, or paprikás krumpli were also prepared.**

Fishermen honoured Saint Peter as their patron saint. Fishing guilds used to hold their assembly on this day, and this was the time of the inauguration of masters and apprentices. There were some regions where fishermen were walking through the village with a carps bound to a stick, greeting their customers, who treated them to challah bread and wine. On the following day the fishermen in return organized a feast with halpaprikás and túrós csusza. Another belief related to the feast of Saint Peter and Saint Paul is that the young man or girl, who is the first to notice the toll at dawn, will get married in the same year.

The feast day of Saint Anne on 26th July marks the culmination of summer, when celebrations in honour of Saint Anne are held. Anna Ball, which was organized first in the 1860s in Balatonfüred, has since become a tradition. It is organized annually not only in Balatonfüred, however this is the best-known, but in the Transdanubian region, in Somogy, Zala and Veszprém counties.

The celebration, the so called búcsú⁹⁸ were held on Saturday following the feast of Saint Anne. Búcsú refers to a celebration in honour of the patron saint of the village church. On these occasions various vendors, mézeskalács merchants, merry-go-rounds, shooting galleries etc. turned up in the village. Relatives and friends were visiting each other, and a wide range of festive foods was during substantial meals.

As an illustration, here we provide the menu of **a festive lunch of an Transdanubian búcsú of Saint Anne day:**

- Chicken soup with finommetélt
- Ludaskása with small slices of foie gras, garnished with fried goose blood and goose cracklings
- Green bean főzelék with steamed upper thigh
- Chicken paprikás with galuska and rice with mushroom
- Carnival doughnuts

No one should think, however, that the lunch was finished here, it continued after a proper break:

- Goose and duck pecsenye with leavened cucumber and steamed cabbage
- Strudel filled with túró and dill, cabbage or apple
- Hazelnut cream cake

⁹⁷ The phrase refers to a stage in crop cultivation, when the plant stops growing. From that time on the plant ripens, but not grows.

⁹⁸ translation: indulgence



- Apricot ice cream
- Miscellaneous cookies
- Fruits, cheese, black coffee

Naturally, matching red and white wines as well were served and according to the description the lunch was not finished until late at night.

Saint Martin's Day on 11th November commemorates the Pannonian-born Bishop Perpetuus of Tours. Saint Martin was one of the most popular Medieval saints, whose cult was flourishing in Hungary as well, there are a number of place names and churches named after him. Feasts were organized throughout the country on Saint Martin's Day, in order to ensure substantial amount of drink and food for the entire year. As the folk saying goes, those who do not eat goose on Saint Martin's day will starve in the entire year. Goose bones were used to predict the weather: white and long bone meant snowy winter, while brown short bone was the sign of sloppy winter. According to the saying the wine is judged by Saint Martin, which means that on Saint Martin's Day the young wine is already ready to drink.

What is the connection between Saint Martin and geese? According to the Medieval legend, when Martin learnt that he had been appointed bishop, his humility made him hide in the goose hut from the sight of the delegation sent for him. The geese, however, revealed his hiding place by flapping their wings and gagging, as they had once revealed the Barbarians attacking Rome during the night.

Another important reason for organizing **Saint Martin's Day goose feasts** is that goose meat of outstanding quality is available on low price at this time of the year. The bony parts are used for cooking soup, while the offal is suitable for making offal soup or goose porridge. **Stuffed goose neck, crispy goose pecsenye and last but not least foie gras dishes** make foods of wonderful taste.

30th November is the day commemorating Saint Andrew, who was an apostle and martyr. According to folk belief this is a day for predicting marriages and practicing magic. Girls were to make these practices all alone in secret. Saint Andrew's Day marked the beginning of pig slaughters and the related feasts, which did not end until the end of Carnival. The Sunday closest to Saint Andrew's Day is the first Sunday of Advent, the time of awaiting and preparing for Christmas, and the beginning of the liturgical year.

4.3. Summary

The eating habits of the peasantry showed significantly different regional patterns. The diet of the poor was primarily based on food of vegetal origin. Pork was the prevailing meat. The North part of Hungary is the home of palóc people. The typical flavour of the Palóc is a savoury sour taste. Potato, cabbage and beans are dominant ingredients. Potato became an element of nutrition in this region earlier than in other parts of the Great Hungarian Plain. Potato dishes are still popular with the people of this region. Different kinds of porridge made common, but popular and healthy food for the poor Palóc. Soups have an outstanding role in the Palóc diet. A characteristic ingredient of the Palóc diet is cabbage, which is prepared in several ways, however sauerkraut is preferred. Pork was and still is of outstanding importance among different kinds of



meat. The Slovak ethnic group acquainted sztrapacska with the local Hungarian population. Haluska (potato dumplings) and tócsni are also characteristic items of the Palóc cuisine. Various kinds of dumplings, such as nudli or derelye are also appealing to the Palóc. Strudel is one of the most popular festive cakes of the region.

Matyóföld, home to the Matyó population, belongs to the region known as Northern Hungary. Onion is an essential element of their dishes. Matyó cuisine is generally characterized by an abundance of pasta, and a variety of bean, cabbage, potato and corn dishes. Their soups can be divided into three groups: (1) meat soups, (2) soups thickened with milk and flour and (3) soups thickened with roux. They tried to avoid the monotony of soups by adding pasta to them. Such pastas are: gombóta, lebbencs, laska, restasszony csíkja, nagy haluska or csombókos haluska. However almost each Matyó soup has a peculiar, pleasant taste, which was provided by their essential ingredient, fried onion grease. Paprikás krumpli was prepared as frequently as twice or three times a week, since it was fast to cook and had several varieties. Öhöm was a similar one-course meal made from gombóta. Cabbage dishes are of outstanding popularity in this region. Beans are also worth mentioning. Small domestic animals viz. poultry was the main meat in this region. Pork was rarely served. The Matyó tradition has a few peculiar dishes, which are prepared, and even known exclusively in this region. Sweet and thick chicken paprikás soup with milk is one of these dishes. Stuffed chicken with stuffed eggs belong to the list of authentic Matyó peasant recipes.

The ancestors of the majority of the Great Plain population often prepared their dishes by open-fire cooking in cauldron. Thick, semi-solid dishes played significant role in shepherds' lives. Such dishes, as slambuc, öreglebbencs, öregtarhonya were prepared. People of the Transisza region are primarily soup eaters. There are three kinds of soup characterizing the region: clear soups, meat soups and fruit or milk-based soups. Besides soups, meat-based dishes had key role in the eating habits of the past. Characteristic dishes of the region: stuffed upper thigh, gulyás meat, pörkölt. The poor used to eat millet porridge, spelt porridge and sweet potatoes. Fish is an important ingredient of the characteristic dishes of the Szeged region, there are various ways to prepare it. Tarhonya, which is of Turkish origin, is widely used in the entire area of the Great Hungarian plain, particularly around Szeged. Debrecen-style bread, Debrecen-style pretzel and different kinds of mézeskalács which were popular products of fairs, are worth highlighting. Cooked pasta could be prepared in various ways, such as galuska, csusza, nyújtott derelye, bobályka with poppy seeds and poured pretzel. Bread dough was used to make lángos and different kinds of folded dough.

In the Transdanubian region the influence of German and especially that of Austrian cuisine is stronger. The savoury halászlé of Balaton deserves its reputation, but the different grilled fishes and fishes roasted on skewer also enjoy popularity. The most well known is the pike perch from Lake Balaton, which became world famous with its snow white and really tasty meat. In the Órség, simple, frugal meals were made. Breakfast was often a cheap, but filling soup or potatoes prepared in different ways. Mostly the poorer population ate porridge, pulp, gánica made from corn. At noon two courses were put on the table. There always was some kind of soup, the other course was some kind of pasta. Dinner consisted of the leftovers from lunch or some kind of soup was prepared. The peasants of Vas County drank a lot of milk and ate many dairy products, while in Zala County people rather ate mushrooms, foods containing mushroom.

An interesting tradition was in the western part of the country the paszita, which meant the christening feast. The paszita lasted from the afternoon until the next morning and a traditional diet evolved around it.





The other large region, which has significant folk, culinary traditions, is Somogy. The main dishes of the people of Somogy were made from cereals. The basic ingredient of bread was rye flour. The most prevalent domestic animal was pig. Mostly soups were made, and the boiled meat was served with some kind of sauce. They often prepared fish, game also had a significant role.

Hungarians got acquainted with both western (Roman) and eastern (Byzantine) Christianity before their settlement in Hungary. Our founding monarch Saint Stephen (997-1038) brought western priests to the country, and during the formation of the state system he simultaneously organized the Church and made Christianity a compulsory religion. Since the rule of Saint Stephen Catholic religion had basically become the state religion up until the 19th century. The liturgical year contains the religious holidays of the given year. The liturgical year can be divided into different seasons based on the religious holidays: the liturgical year starts with Advent, which is followed by Christmas season, some mid-season Sundays, the so called Carnival season, then comes Lent, followed by Easter, and finally Ordinary Time encompassing a major part of the year, ending with the Sunday of Christ the King. Religious holidays can be separated into two groups. The first group contains the so called fixed feasts, which are on the same calendar day in every year. The feasts of the second group are celebrated on different calendar days in every year. These are the so called movable feasts.

Religious feasts have their peculiar atmosphere, a set of festive traditions and dishes evolved, and some feasts also have traditional menu. The festive mood was affected by the characteristic courses, dishes, which are “dictated by tradition” for the special feast days.

4.4. Control Questions

1. What are the similarities and differences of culinary traditions of the regions in Hungary?
2. Please, summarize the culinary traditions of the Paloc.
3. What is the main point in the Matyó cuisine?
4. Please, characterize the traditional cuisine in the Great Hungarian Plain!
5. What are the special raw materials and dishes in the Transdanubian region?
6. What type of religious seasons can be distinguish concerning the Christianity?
7. What are the main points in the culinary traditions concerning feasts?

4.5. Competence Developing Questions

1. What can be the reasons for different raw materials in cookery of people living in different regions in Hungary?
2. What is your opinion about traditional eating habits of Hungarian people concerning health?

5.



5. Traditional Alcoholic Beverages in Hungary and Their Role in the Gastronomy

5.1. The Brief History of Hungarian Wines

Only three European languages have words for wine that are not derived from Latin: Greek, Turkish and Hungarian (Molnár, 2001). Records carved in a Runic alphabet used by ancient Hungarians have words for wine derived from Turkic. There are two hundred Hungarian words (wine as well) that are of Bulgar-Turkic origin (Molnár, 2001) suggesting that the Magyars had contact with the first winemakers in the South Caucasus.

The Romans brought vines to Pannonia, and by the 5th century AD, there are records of extensive vineyards in Hungary. Following the Magyar invasion of 896, Árpád rewarded his followers with vineyards in Tokaj. Over the following centuries, new grape varieties were brought in from Italy and France. Most of the production was of white wine (Internet16).

During the invasion of Suleiman the Magnificent in the early 16th century, displaced Serbs brought the red Kadarka grape to Eger. This ancient variety was used to make the robust red wine blend later known as Bull's Blood, after the supposed secret ingredient in the wine that fortified the defenders of Eger in 1552 (Internet17). It was also during the Turkish occupation that the Tokaj region became known for dessert wines, harvested late to encourage noble rot.

Hungary has always been famous for its wine production. In 1571, the famous French monarch Louis XIV loved to drink Tokaji Aszú, a sweet, late harvest wine from the Tokaj region that, in his words, "is the king of wines and the wine of kings" (Internet16). After the Ottoman Empire ceded Hungary to the Austrians in 1699, the Germanic influence was felt with the introduction of grape varieties such as Blauer Portugieser. That influence also showed in the start in 1730 of the world's first vineyard classification in Tokaj, based on soil, aspect and propensity to noble rot (Internet17).

From 1882, the phylloxera epidemic hit Hungary hard, with the traditional field blends of Eger and the many grapes of Tokaj being replaced with monocultures, often of Blaufränkisch (Kékfrankos) and the Bordeaux varieties in red wine districts, and of Furmint, Muscat and Hárslevelű in Tokaj (Internet18).

The twentieth century saw the introduction of modern grapes such as Zweigelt, which were easier to grow and to vinify than Kadarka, and under Communism quality was neglected in favour of overcropping, pasteurisation, and industrial production (Internet18).

The communist era saw wine-making that was seldom inspired, but all this changed in the early 1990s, with the opening up of vineyards to foreign investment and expertise. Since then, there has been renewed interest in the traditional varieties and a lot of new investment, particularly in Tokaj-Hegyalja. Today great wines are once again being made not only in Tokaj but in the other 21 wine regions of the country (Internet19).

Today, Hungary's vine-growers and wine-makers are trying to grapple with a completely new system. The Russian market has evaporated, the domestic market is embryonic, and export markets have never been so competitive. All things considered, Hungarian wine is not doing too badly (Internet22).

Today, the official list of wine regions is defined by a ministerial decree. The current list includes 22 wine regions,



which are usually grouped into five to seven larger regions (*Figure 1*) (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, 2009).

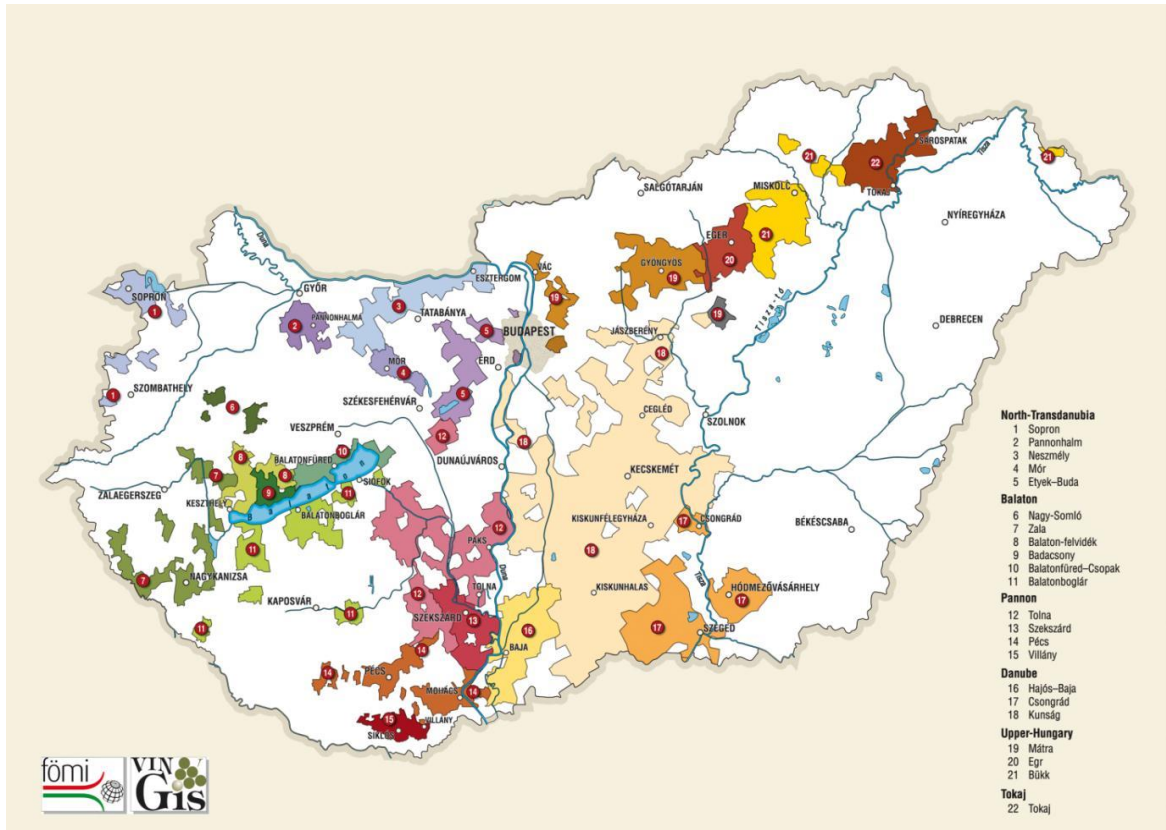


Figure 1: Wine Regions in Hungary

Source: Internet21

The larger regions are Balaton, Duna, Eger, Northern-Transdanubian, Pannon, Sopron and Tokaj (Internet21). Wines from Nagy-Somló and Mór tend to be aromatic whites, while nearby Etyek-Buda and Neszemly have established a reputation for exportable varieties of both colours. On the shores of Lake Balaton are many important and increasingly modernised vineyards, with Badacsony on the westernmost part of the northern shore and Balatonfüred-Csupak at the north-eastern end.

On the right bank of the Danube (Duna) in the south of the country are Szekszárd, Villány and Pécs in the Mecsek hills, once famous for its Olaszrizling. Many fine, concentrated red wines are made here by the likes of Attila Gere, Ede Tiffán, Vylan, Ferenc Takler, Malatinszky and Péter Vida. Across the Danube is Hungary's famous Great Plain, or Alföld, a flat, sandy expanse populated largely by itinerants and horses. Vines joined them in quantity soon after phylloxera invaded the country (phylloxera cannot thrive in sand). This is the source of Hungary's bulk of basic blending wine although it can produce some good-value international varieties, Hajós-Baja, Kunság and Csongrád.

The rest of Hungary's vineyards are in the north west of the country. In the Mátra foothills, vines are protected from cold winds by the Northern Massif. To the east is the historic town of Eger, whose most famous wine, Egri Bikavér, was sold for years on export markets as red, sometimes powerful but often not,



Bull's Blood (Internet23).

But Hungary's most famous wine by far is made in the north-east corner of the country in a strange region known as Tokaj (which historically extended over the border into Slovakia - except that the Slovaks exchanged the right to use the name Tokay for a large contract for another, more lucrative drink). Tokaji, the wine named after the town of Tokaj (and once called Tokay outside Hungary), was in its time the world's greatest sweet white wine, made from nobly rotten grapes as early as 1650 according to local history - long before botrytised wines were recorded in Sauternes and the Rheingau, the birthplace of such wines in Germany.

The main ingredients are Hárslevelű and, especially, Furmint, with some Muscat Blanc à Petits Grains (Sárgamuskotály) grapes. The local conditions around the 27 Tokaj villages in this very protected corner of middle Europe are such that in a good year the best are affected by noble rot, here called aszú, and can reach exceptional sugar levels. They range from dry to quite extraordinarily sweet with the following descriptions: Szamorodni (in which there is no selective picking of grapes affected by noble rot), dry or sweet; then Aszú 3, 4, 5 or 6 Puttonyos, 6 being the sweetest. (A puttony is the traditional hod used as a measure for the sweet grape paste, made from pulverised botrytised grapes, added to wine made from unaffected grapes before a slow second fermentation, though the timing of this addition may vary.) (Internet23).

Eszencia is very rare grape sugar essence - a grape syrup really - made from the tiny amount of free-run juice from the botrytised grapes that are used to make Aszú paste. Because its sugar content is so high, yeasts can work only at a snail's pace and these wines continue to ferment in cask for many a year. These were the sort of wines which made Tokaji's reputation as an elixir of life and love. The final ingredient in Tokaji's extraordinary character is that in its traditional guise, it is aged rather like sherry, under a film of local yeast, in barrels partly filled, in strange underground caverns lined with mould like black felt and signalled only by the low doorways hollowed out of the small hills of the Tokaj region. Some producers now make their wines in a less oxidative, more modern, style and there is much debate as to which style or exact method of winemaking is more traditional or desirable.

5.2. The History and Presence of Palinka

While Europe became familiar with the distillation process in the 11th century, alcohol-production in Hungary included only wine-distillation and grain-spirit production. The history of „aqua vitae”, attributed to Queen Elizabeth, originates from the 14th century, „spirits” were regarded as medicine until the 16th century. The production of Pálinka (in the current sense) began in the middle of the 18th century, and the variety of the fruits used was expanding. On 29 September 1850, a Pálinka-tax was introduced in Hungary, and from this year on we can talk about reliable records and data in the field of Pálinka production. Based on these data, in 1913 Hungary had 860 working alcohol factories, 30 of which were of industrial scale. That year Hungarian alcohol-production became acknowledged all over the world. The Alcohol Bill of 1921 imposed restrictions on production: in the following year only 240,000 hectolitres of domestic consumption was allowed by the state. Excess production was permitted only in case of foreign orders. In spite of this, however, in 1934 apricot Pálinka was referred to as a „world-famous Hungarian drink” (MTZRT, 2010).

The Act 30 of 1938 fundamentally changed the situation of Pálinka production in Hungary. From this time on, „alcohol





production, rectification, importation and sale” were solely commanded by the state. The regulations on Pálinka production did not change significantly until 1951, when distilleries were managed collectively as wine and fruit-spirit distilleries, production quantity was restricted, and in May 1952 „shot production” was initiated.

After 1980 it was the state itself that abolished its alcohol monopoly, as the law-decree no. 36 of 1982 stated: „Individuals are also allowed to produce Pálinka from fruit”. Another regulation stated: „... Individuals are allowed to set up distilleries with a maximum capacity of 500-litre pots, and alcohol-producing economic organizations can hire out or pass over to individuals by contract management.” The most significant change, however, was that after such a long time, expertise became a requirement at last. That is to say, the current law required as the condition for issuing the operation certificate a qualification accredited by the competent ministry, or the accomplishment of an organized course.

In 1965, there were 1141 distilleries in operation, a number which dropped to 880 by the time of the regime change, from which time on only 200 distilleries were privately owned. Due to insufficient technical equipment, lack of experts and the poor quality of raw materials it was impossible to produce high-quality Pálinka. Consequently, fruit Pálinka disappeared from domestic as well as foreign markets, and was substituted by a different alcoholic drink made from fine spirit, water and essences with the cold process, which was, of course, sold as Pálinka. However, when this wonderful drink was just about to disappear from the scene, some geniuses came out of nowhere, the ones who have been producing the top-quality Pálinka ever since. They fought for a long time to restore the old reputation of Pálinka, and now we can dream about world-fame again (MTZRT, 2010).

The production of Pálinka follows four different phases. The first is the careful selection of the fruits, then comes mashing, or fermentation. The next step is the fermentation of the fruit mash, which may involve a double-phase or singlephase, column method. Finally, Pálinka is gentled, which involves resting and maturation.

Pálinka may only be prepared using ripe, high quality fruits that are rich in flavour. The stony seed is removed from those fruits that contain it, pomiferous fruits are ground, thus the fruits are opened for the yeast to act efficiently and the alcoholic fermentation may begin in a deoxidized environment. This is done strictly without the addition of sugar. It is important to ferment the mash at a stable - 18-20 C - temperature in an anaerobic environment. The generated carbon-dioxide must be released. Higher temperature is harmful because of intensive gas-formation and the sensitivity of the yeasts; the sun literally kills the Pálinka, as well as the oxygen that enters the mash during mixing. Under ideal circumstances, fermentation is completed in 10-12 days and the secondary flavor components of the future Pálinka emerge. An excellent mash is the basis of an excellent Pálinka. Although it is possible to make poor Pálinka out of good mash, it is impossible to make good Pálinka out of poor mash (MTZRT, 2010).

The purpose of distillation is to extract the alcohol from the fruit, while keeping its flavours. However, distillation is a complicated process of separation, graduation and concentration. The boiling-points of the different components of the mash vary; therefore they can be separated from each other. The boiling point of ethyl alcohol is 78.3 degrees Celsius, while that of water is 100, so the alcohol starts to evaporate first, the steam migrates to the cooler where they condensate and the distillate appears as a liquid. The alcohol-content of the first distillate leaving as alcohol may even reach 90 V/V %. As the mash becomes warmer, the resulting mixture contains an increasing amount of water and a decreasing amount of alcohol. In earlier days (unfortunately





sometimes even today) Pálinka was distilled until the distillate reached 50% volume. This meant that postdistillate got into the Pálinka, resulting in a sour taste.

Hungarian distilleries use two methods of distillation. One is the traditional „kisüsti” (in a small pot still), double-distillation technology. This technology is not only „kisüsti” because the capacity of the pot stills is limited – maximum 1000 litres - but the point is that the final product is gained from two separate distillations. In everyday language: first the mash is boiled to obtain the alcohol and other volatile components through distillation. The steam is cooled, and the alcoholic liquid obtained (low alcohol or „alszesz”) is refined in a separate phase. In this phase, the pre-distillate and post-distillate is separated from the middle-distillate to avoid unpleasant tastes and odours. The pre-distillate contains the most volatile parts, some of which may spoil the pleasure of Pálinka.

The extraction is continued until pungent aldehydes disappear and the Pálinka has a fruity taste. It is difficult to draw the line of separation. The aim is to produce Pálinka with enough taste and flavour but with no unpleasant odour. This requires great expertise. The middle-distillate contains the most valuable components: ethyl alcohol and flavour components. This is Pálinka: pure distillate with a pleasant fruity flavour and smell.

There are devices which are capable of boiling and refining at the same time in a single process. It is unnecessary to interrupt the process of distillation to separate the pre-distillate and perform refining separately. This technology is called booster or column-procedure. In this equipment the still is combined with a 2-3-4-plate aroma- and alcohol-booster column with a built-in precooler (deflegmator), where rectification takes place after the mash vaporizes. The point of the column is that the steam from the mash warmed up in the still flow in an upward direction toward the column and the plates located in the column refine the distillate by condensing the steam that reaches the liquid on the plate. The pre- and post-distillates must of course be separated from the middle-distillate in this process as well.

Whichever method is chosen, the emphasis is on the middle-distillate, the alcohol content of which is usually set using flavour-free, pure deionised water.

Pálinka must be rested for at least three months. During this time the distillate “organizes itself,” its original values do not change, but the Pálinka becomes more harmonious. In the course of resting, the internal balance of the distillate is established and its asperity and crudity is resolved: it becomes clear and „round”. The rested Pálinka may then be bottled. Pálinka is not just rested, it is also matured for a standard time in wooden barrels with adequate capacity, as set out in the regulations. Matured Pálinka is different from rested Pálinka in all respects. First, it can be distinguished by the colour gained in the barrel and the values added during maturation: the harmonious fragrance of flowers, the pleasantly soft, spicy and sweet fruity background.

The „Ágyas” Pálinka (Pálinka on a fruit bed) is matured on a bed of fruits – which may be fresh or dried fruits, in the course of which the colour and the flavour of the fruits is released, which changes the Pálinka: its flavour becomes more characteristic due to the fructose.

As of November, 2008, the concept of Pálinka and the use of the name „Pálinka” are regulated by Act LXXIII of 2008 - as harmonized with the legal regulations of the European Union. These same regulations pertaining to the production and name „Pálinka” shall be applied to the products intended for export outside of the European Union member states. According to this legal regulation: A fruit distillate may only bear the name Pálinka if it is made exclusively from fruits or wild fruits, grape pomace or „aszú” grape pomace grown or indigenous to Hungary, and





the mashing, distillation and bottling are done in Hungary.

No beet sugar, cane sugar, corn sugar or grape pomace and wine-lees with fructose additive may be used in the production of Pálinka. No diluted or nondiluted alcohol or flavouring may be added; not even elderflower, for example; it may not be flavoured, coloured or sweetened even if this is done to achieve a „rounder” taste of the final product.

After having complied with the strict requirements, the Hungarian Pálinka was granted exclusive use of the name in 2004. Namely, within the territory of the European Union only the distillates produced within Hungary, from the aforesaid fruits and in accordance with the aforesaid procedure may be called Pálinka. Authentic pálinka must be distilled to a minimum alcohol content of 37.5 percent.

With regard to apricot Pálinka, four provinces of Austria are also entitled to the use of the name. Furthermore, the regulations pertaining to the production and name „Pálinka” shall be applied to the products intended for export outside of the European Union member states as well (MTZRT, 2010).

„Kisüsti Pálinka” („small-pot” Pálinka): fruit and pomace Pálinkas produced in pot stills with copper surfaces of maximum 1000 litre capacity and using at least a double-phase distillation method.

„Aszú törkölypálinka” („Aszú” pomace Pálinka): a pomace Pálinka that is verifiably prepared 100% from the pomace of the grape used to produce the „Aszú” wine in the closed, historical „Tokaj-hegyalja” wine region within Hungary.

„Érelt” (Aged) Pálinka: fruit and pomace Pálinka that is aged in a wooden barrel for at least 3 months. Aged Pálinkas may only be mixed if they are of the same type, however the time of aging shown on the label may only be that of the youngest aged Pálinka within the mix.

„Ó” (Old) Pálinka: a fruit or pomace Pálinka aged for at least 1 year in a wooden barrel smaller than 1000 litres, or for at least 2 years in a wooden cask of 1000 litres or above.

Mixed fruit Pálinka: Pálinka prepared by the distillation of different types of fruit mashes or by the mixing of different types of Pálinkas later on, regardless of the proportion of the different components.

Pálinka matured on a fruit bed or „Ágyas” (fruit-bed) Pálinka: fruit Pálinka that is aged together with the fruit for at least 3 months. If the Pálinka is referred to with the name of one single fruit, the fruit bed must be of the same fruit as the Pálinka itself. It may also include different types of fruits, however in this case it may only be referred to as mixed „Ágyas” (fruit bed) Pálinka. To 100 litres of Pálinka at least 10 kg of ripe or 5 kg of dried fruits of high quality must be added.

Some regions of Hungary are especially suitable for the production of certain fruits, and Pálinka of excellent quality has been produced in those regions for centuries. In the event that it meets the relevant criteria, the region may receive the distinguishing label of „protected designation of origin”. This means that only Pálinka made from fruit grown within the designated region and mashed, distilled and bottled in the same region may be assigned the name. These Pálinkas are the following: „Békési szilvapálinka” (Békés plum Pálinka), „Göcseji körtepálinka” (Göcsej pear Pálinka), „Gönci barackpálinka” (Göncapricot Pálinka), „Kecskeméti barackpálinka” (Kecskemét apricot Pálinka), „Szabolcsi almepálinka” (Szabolcs apple Pálinka), „Szatmári szilvapálinka” (Szatmár plum Pálinka), „Újfehértói meggypálinka” (Újfehértó sour cherry Pálinka), „Pannonhalmi törkölypálinka” (Pannonhalma grape pomace Pálinka).





Pálinka is part of Hungarian culture and one of the greatest values of Hungarian gastronomy. The key rule to proper Pálinka consumption is that it is meant to be consumed at room temperature, between 18-20 degrees Celsius. Cooling of the Pálinka causes serious damage to the Pálinka and the consumer, as it loses the essence we drink it for: its scent and fruitiness. The sense of alcohol is reinforced; the neutral character of the ethyl-alcohol dominates, suppressing the unrivaled values of the real Pálinka. Pálinka is best enjoyed if tasted slowly, sipping. It is not quantity that matters, but quality and the feeling that surrounds Pálinka. Pálinka signifies pleasure, whether consumed during a friendly chat, before or after a festive dinner, as it is also a consummation to gastronomic delights. Pálinka may both be consumed before meals as aperitif or after meals as digestive. The glass used to drink Pálinka should be wide at the bottom and narrow at the rim to lead the scents to the nose. Pálinka does not need to be swirled in the glass to release aromas, slightly tilting and moving the glass will reveal the scent. Pálinka may also be used to prepare dishes, shakes, cocktails and cakes, giving a special, pleasant flavour and aroma to the specialties of the Hungarian cuisine.

The label of the Pálinka must include:

- the word „Pálinka” following the name of the fruit;
- or the word „Törkölypálinka” (pomace Pálinka) „Aszú törkölypálinka” can only be made from grapes of „Tokaji aszú”;
- the alcohol content of the product - at least 37.5% volume;
- the filling volume, e.g.: 0.5 litres;
- the composition: may only be fruit or pomace Pálinka and water. In case of „ágyaspálinka” (Pálinka on fruit bed), the name of the fruit;
- the date of bottling or product identification number;
- the name and address of the producer or distributor (MTZRT, 2010).

5.3. Summary

Hungary has always been famous for its wine production. Today, the official list of wine regions is defined by a ministerial decree. The current list includes 22 wine regions, which are usually grouped into five to seven larger regions. The larger regions are Balaton, Duna, Eger, Northern-Transdanubian, Pannon, Sopron and Tokaj.

Authentic pálinka must be produced from fruits grown in Hungary and distilled to a minimum alcohol content of 37.5 percent. The production of Pálinka (in the current sense) began in the middle of the 18th century, and the variety of the fruits used was expanding. The production of Pálinka follows four different phases. The first is the careful selection of the fruits, then comes mashing, or fermentation. The next step is the fermentation of the fruit mash, which may involve a double-phase or single-phase, column method. Finally, Pálinka is gentled, which involves resting and maturation.

As of November, 2008, the concept of Pálinka and the use of the name „Pálinka” are regulated by Act LXXIII of 2008 - as harmonized with the legal regulations of the European Union. These same regulations pertaining to the production and name „Pálinka” shall be applied to the products intended for export outside of the European Union member states. According to this legal regulation: A fruit distillate may only bear the name Pálinka if it is made exclusively from fruits or wild fruits, grape pomace or „aszú” grape pomace grown or indigenous to Hungary, and the mashing, distillation and bottling are done in Hungary.

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Élelmiszerbiztonság és gasztronómia vonatkozású
egyetemi együttműködés,

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5.4. Control Questions

1. Please, summarize the history of wine making in Hungary!
2. Please, briefly characterized the Hungarian wine regions!
3. What are the typical and famous Hungarian wines?
4. When and how started the history of Palinka?
5. What does the term “Palinka” can be used for?
6. Please, provide some examples for famous palinkas!

5.5. Competence Developing Questions

1. What is the connection between the geography and the grape-production of Hungary?



6. Cultivation of the National Gastronomic Traditions

In this chapter we shortly summarize the possibilities and solutions for cultivating the national – sometimes internationally known – gastronomic values. The first part of this chapter details the possibilities for regional values, the other part will provide information of EU and national programmes for maintaining our culinary traditions.

6.1. Maintenance of the Regional Culinary Traditions

Nowadays it is typical of our hospitality and gastronomy that they strongly cultivate the traditions of Hungarian folk culture. These traditions also fit well into the increasingly broadening tourist programs.

There are regional differences in the presentation of the rural wedding, the related events and the folk play-like customs. The send-off of the bride, putting the bride's belongings on a cart, the wedding feast, the money dance with the bride⁹⁹, the kontyolás¹⁰⁰, the money dance with the wife¹⁰¹, etc. can be found almost everywhere. These events are coordinated and announced by the first best man, who is present at every moment of the wedding. With his poems, short poems he makes the audience laugh or cry.

The wedding usually starts at Saturday noon and ends at Sunday morning or noon. The most important parts are the wedding lunch and the wedding dinner, which are characterized by the culinary traditions of the specific region. Lunch is usually more “moderate”, a soup is made from poultry offal, the next course is pörkölt – in the Great Plain it is mutton pörkölt -- which is succeeded by strudel. Dinner consists of chicken soup with csigatészta¹⁰², stuffed cabbage, pörkölt, roasted chicken and other roasted meats. Eventually cakes and pastries follow after. In most regions the tidbit of the wedding feast, as well as its emblematic pastry, is the wedding challah bread. Between lunch and dinner, as well as after dinner fried and roasted meats are always on the table. The serving of the different courses, the wine tasting is also accompanied by the best man's short poems.

Hungarians got acquainted with the word kemence¹⁰³, i.e. oven, and with the edifice in the South Russian steppe. Composed of open and closed stoves, they appeared in different forms. The Palóc oven was short, oblong, and rectangular, while in the Great Plain beehive ovens or stack ovens became prevalent. In the Transdanubium and in Transylvania a tile or stone baking bell was placed over the open stove. The oven was heated with sticks, reed, and peat. Its size depended on the amount of bread they wanted to bake in it. For festivities the meat and the challah bread were also prepared in the oven. The attached open chimney was used for smoking meats, ham, sausage, and bacon. Besides baking and cooking, the oven also

⁹⁹ at the wedding feast, starting exactly at midnight, male guests pay to dance briefly with the bride, and sometimes female guests pay to dance with the groom. Source: <http://elso-vofely.hu/>

¹⁰⁰ the tradition of putting the bride's hair in a bun, which symbolizes that she is not a maiden anymore. Source: <http://lexikon.katolikus.hu/>

¹⁰¹ the same as the money dance with the bride, but it starts a little later, after midnight, when the bride is not in her wedding dress anymore. There is always one money dance on a wedding, but the type depends on regional traditions. Source: <http://elso-vofely.hu/>

¹⁰² tiny pieces of pasta, curled with a stick into the shape of snails. Source: <http://www.thehungarydish.com/>

¹⁰³ traditional brick or earthenware oven. Source: <http://www.thehungarydish.com/>





provided heating and lighting for the room. A wall-seat run around its sides for sitting, its inner corner (sut, kuckó)¹⁰⁴ was the resting place – in the evening, sleeping-quarters – of children and the elderly.

The hospitality industry uses the oven more and more frequently. The pristine csárda¹⁰⁵ uses the traditional oven, the newer hotels use a modern variety for the making of home-made bread, baked goods, kemencés¹⁰⁶ foie gras, pig, poultry, whole roasted meats, and fish.

Roasting on a spit can be an independent program, but it can be connected to horse shows, to grape picking, to waterfront activities or to other outdoor programs. The young lamb, porkling, chicken is seasoned and put on the spit which is rotated over the fire, while the meat is greased with lard or unprocessed fatback several times. Slow and even roasting is important, therefore nowadays the meat is often covered in tinfoil so that its surface does not burn. According to folk belief the best spits are made from sloe or osier. Smaller fish, “robber’s meat”¹⁰⁷, or clod can be roasted individually by anybody.

Szalonnasütés¹⁰⁸ is worth a special emphasis. The unprocessed fatback on a skewer roasted over embers, its lard dropped over a slice of bread with onions on it, with its smell and taste, fits perfectly the mood of wine tastings or grape picking.

Ox roasting used to occur when a great crowd came together. Today it is still present in cities on great celebrations, festivals. The huge spit on which the ox is skewered is put on two large two-pronged branches pitched into the ground at a suitable distance from each other. It is roasted for at least twenty-four hours over wood char, while it is greased or sprinkled with salty, spicy water. Even in this way only the top layer of the meat is done properly, and after removing this layer the ox is roasted further, until all of it is done. The big slice of meat which was cut off from the top is served on fresh home-made bread.

Clay pots are suitable for cooking pheasant, wild duck, poultry, or bigger squamous fish. Cooking in a cauldron is an essential ingredient of the so called pince party¹⁰⁹ or gulyás party. Gulyás, pincepörkölt¹¹⁰, spicy beef pörkölt with red wine, boiled together with potatoes, halászlé, mutton pörkölt, etc. are foods which are typically cooked in a cauldron over open fire.

The so called discus bowl is a metal bowl consisting of two reduced hemispheres. It is also called nomad bowl, which refers to the fact that it can be taken to a trip, it is easy to “wander” with. It can be prepared anywhere, over an open fire, put in embers, or even in the oven. We can put various slices of meat, lecsó¹¹¹, sausage, and potatoes in it, closing in the savours and scents. The above mentioned cooking methods are also interesting sights. They give a partly smoky, sautéed, special, but very good taste and flavour to the food.

The pig slaughter was regarded as a ceremony, a delightful feast full of enjoyment at the traditional country homes. On the frosty, dark mornings the agonized shriek of the pig, then the high-reaching flame of the straw used for scorching provided a kind of exotic feeling to it and some similarity with the pagan sacrificial stakes used thousands of years ago. Nevertheless, it was simply a pig slaughter. The famous Hungarian writer, Gyula Krúdy, the

¹⁰⁴ chimney corner, snug (own translation)

¹⁰⁵ restaurant, traditional folksy roadside inn. Source: <http://www.thehungarydish.com/>

¹⁰⁶ cooked in the oven. Source: <http://www.thehungarydish.com/>

¹⁰⁷ meat roasted on a skewer often mixed with various vegetables and some sausage. Source:

<http://www.thehungarydish.com/>

¹⁰⁸ roasting unprocessed fatback on a skewer over embers. Source: <http://www.thehungarydish.com/>

¹⁰⁹ cellar party. Source: <http://www.thehungarydish.com/>

¹¹⁰ cellar stew: stew cooked in red wine. Source: <http://www.thehungarydish.com/>

¹¹¹ tomato and pepper stew cooked in a small amount of lard. Source: <http://www.thehungarydish.com/>





literary appreciator of fine chores said the following about this: “It is easier to shape opinion about a play during a theatrical premier, than to decide on the sufficiency of spices during the processing of a pig. It is a shame that we do not have a pig slaughter every day, when men can prove women that, due to fate’s mercy, at this, at this one thing they are more adept than women” (translation mine). The home-made fried sausage is made of fat pork, spiced and stuffed into small intestine. Traditionally it was roasted in a kemence, nowadays it is made in the oven. It also has a variety with garlic and another one with lemon. For the májashurka¹¹² the lung and the jowl is prepared with abálás¹¹³, and then it is ground together with the liver. The rice is cooked in the cooking liquid that remained from the abálás. The ingredients are mixed together and seasoned, then stuffed in large intestine. The fresh blood gathered during the slaughter is used for the véreshurka¹¹⁴. The diced dry zsemle¹¹⁵, the dagadó prepared with abálás, the clod, and the jowl are ground and mixed with spices and blood, then it is stuffed in large intestine. Both májashurka and véreshurka are prepared through abálás and then roasted in the oven.

From the meat of the freshly butchered pig an abundant pig-slaughtering dinner is made. A rural pig-slaughtering dinner starts with orjaleves¹¹⁶, which is a meat soup made from the pig’s backbone with vegetables and csigatészta. This is followed by cooked meat with freshly grated horseradish. In toroskáposzta¹¹⁷ almost every part of a pig can be found, hock, trotters, tail, dagadó, ribs, which are crowned by the freshly roasted pork chop put on top of it. Of course, the freshly roasted hurka and sausage cannot be left out either.

The sliced roasted hurka and sausage is served with mashed potatoes and steamed cabbage. In restaurants, according to today’s practice, they place rib-roast on top of it. At the end of dinner fresh hájas pogácsa¹¹⁸ is put on the table, which is eaten during wine drinking.

One of the most important fields of cultivating the gastronomic traditions are the gastronomic programs held across the whole country. The gastronomic festivals connected to our national dishes and beverages are the most popular ones among all types of festivals. The wine, beer, and pálinka¹¹⁹ festivals are really popular, while among the thematic programs presenting Hungarian dishes the vegetable and fruit festivals were the most popular in the last years (marrow festivals, chestnut festival) (MTZrt, 2015).

6.2. National and European Union Programmes Providing Protection for Hungarian Gastronomic Values

Agricultural products and foodstuffs that are registered as national values can be safeguarded on both national and European Union level. The national level protection applies to the collection of Traditions – Flavours – Regions on the one hand and to the Hungarian Repository of Values and the related list of hungaricums on the other hand. Food quality

¹¹² sausage that contains liver, as well as some innards and fillers. Source: <http://www.thehungarydish.com/>

¹¹³ boiling the ingredients together on low temperature in water with bay leaf, black whole pepper, and salt, for preservation and mixing of flavors. Source: <http://gasztroabc.hu>

¹¹⁴ blood sausage/ black pudding. Source: <http://www.thehungarydish.com/>

¹¹⁵ typical Hungarian round bread roll. Source: <http://www.thehungarydish.com/>

¹¹⁶ soup traditionally made on pig-butcher day with the pig’s backbone. Source: <http://www.thehungarydish.com/>

¹¹⁷ pork spare ribs with sauerkraut, usually served with fresh home-made bread

¹¹⁸ savory, buttery scones/biscuits made from pastry similar to puff pastry but with pig’s lard between the layers

¹¹⁹ brandy distilled from fruit with no added sugar or alcohol. Source: <http://www.thehungarydish.com/>





systems established by the European Commission provide protection from the European Union. In the following we provide an overview on the national and European Union programmes ensuring safeguard.

6.2.1. Traditions – Flavours – Regions Programme (HÍR¹²⁰ Programme)

The Hungarian Ministry of Rural Development launched its Traditions – Flavours – Regions (hereinafter: HÍR) Programme by joining the European Union's Euroterroirs Programme with the aim of establishing a collection of Hungary's traditional and regional agricultural products and facilitating their economic utility. HÍR Programme introduced the concept of traditional and regional products in Hungary.

As a result of a two-year collecting work (1999 - 2000) the professional-historical description of 300 characteristically Hungarian and unique regional products (butchery, confectionary, bakery and milling industry products, confectionary and dairy products, vegetables, fruits, drinks, spices, dry pastas), animal and plant species was edited by classifying the items according to regions and branches within that. The products were classified into seven planning-statistical regions.

The collection laid excellent foundations and it still provides source for the EU recognition of the agricultural products and foodstuffs. This collection was the first to determine the five kinds of *pálinka* which have been under community protection in each state of the European Union since Hungary's accession. The collection contains products, the EU protection of which is being recognized by the European Commission at the moment.

The HÍR collection has been published in both printed and electronic format, the content of which can be accessed on the website of Agrármarketing Centrum (AMC) (www.amc.hu). The printed collection of HÍR product descriptions, which has been edited into a book illustrated by a number of photos, has already been published three times since 2002. The CD edition of the book was also released in Hungarian and later at the time of Hungary's EU-accession in English and German as well. The HÍR collection containing the description of 300 traditional and regional agricultural products served excellent bases and still provides sources for the EU recognition of the agricultural products and foodstuffs (FATOSZ, 2010).

The collection contains such food products as *Pannonhalmi Tönkölypálinka*, *Dobostorta* or *Szatmári Szilvalekvár*, and *Szikkvíz* among others.

Organizing the products into a collection not only provides for their preservation, but the marketing activity attached to them has also gained more emphasis since 2009. For this sake Agrármarketing Centrum organizes events and provides subsidies available through tendering.

6.2.2. The Hungarian Repository of Values and the Hungaricums

¹²⁰ The acronym derives from the Hungarian title of the programme: Hagyományok – Ízek – Régiók Program

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A hungaricum is a special, unique thing, specific only to Hungary, which can be a Hungarian work of art, a Hungarian product, native animal, cultural features, but the marker is occasionally applied to social or public phenomena. Hungaricum is not a Hungarian invention, since it has an abundant amount of foreign – in many times low quality – alternatives. The majority of nations collect materials related to their national identity, which are called patrioticum. Accordingly we can talk about polonicum, germanicum, italicum depending on the relevant country (Magyar Nemzeti Gasztronómiai Szövetség, 2010).

In the 2000s a unique initiative was started in Hungary. Setting up from several directions a movement to summarize and systematize the values of Hungary started with the aim of collecting the values of the Hungarian nation and setting a framework for them. The objective of the movement is the proper safeguarding and maintenance of these values, and their preservation for the upcoming generations. This endeavor led to the birth of the 2012 Act No. XXX about Hungarian national values and hungaricums, which was accepted by the Parliament on 2nd April, 2012. The objectives of this law are the following:

- to identify and document our national values
- the research has to be as expansive as possible
- to ensure that the documented national values are cognizable
- to select the hungaricums from the documented national values
- to presentation of these national values and hungaricums on a wide national and international scale
- to ensure the survival and protection of hungaricums (internet23)

The Act defines – among others – the concepts of national value, outstanding national value, and hungaricum. The Hungarian national value – all intellectual, material, natural community values or products related the Hungarian people. National values can be recognized municipally, on a county level, nationally, beyond the border, or on an international level.

The outstanding national values are of key significance, accepted as typical of the Hungarian people and commonly known. They enhance Hungary's reputation and increase the country's recognition in the European Union and throughout the whole world. Moreover they contribute to the formation and strengthening of the sense of national belonging and the awareness of Hungarian culture in new generations.

The Act defines the concept of hungaricum according to the following: “a national value worth of highlighting which with its specific attribute, uniqueness, specialty and quality represent the high performance of the Hungarian people within the country and abroad” (MK, 2012).

According to the definition, besides products, all values are considered to be hungaricum, which are classified as hungaricum by the Committee for Hungaricums. Thus, the definition has two important points. On the one hand, the interpretation of the act draws up softer criteria than previous hungaricum interpretations, since “value” is a quite broad notion, which can contain – besides the named products – various other, even intangible things. On the other hand, the act grants special authority to the Committee for Hungaricums (hereinafter: HB) created by it. From the fourteen members of the HB six are delegated by the different ministries, two members by Parliament, 3 members are sent by the Hungarian Permanent Conference, and the National Office of Intellectual Property, the Hungarian Academy of

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Sciences, and the Hungarian Academy of Arts also delegate one member. Although, the law strongly goes against simple product-based approach, the presidential and secretarial duties of the HB are covered by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (Török, 2012).

The system established by the law allows both regional and branch-based differentiation, and consists of so called Repositories. Branch-based approach is covered by the Branch Repository of Values, to which those national values belong, which were identified by the ministers in charge of each branch. The system of repositories based on region is more sophisticated, since according to the law we can differentiate between municipal, regional, county repositories, and a repository of values of Hungarians abroad, and in addition the Hungarian Repository. As stated by law, the regional repositories organized from under collect the values in their own regional scope, which are then forwarded to the next level. The values collected in this way constitute the Hungarian Repository, from which – based on the decision of the HB – the worthy ones are classified as hungaricums. The values classified as hungaricums by the HB are added to the Collection of Hungaricums, and will receive a “hungaricum certification mark”. According to the 2012 Act No. XXX, the Committee for Hungaricums has various other duties, which can be summarized as follows:

- decides on the admission of values to the Hungarian Repository of Values
- operates the Hungarian Repository of Values Hungarian and English language website
- ensures that the Hungarian Repository of Values constitute an integral part of the country image strategy
- select the hungaricums from the Hungarian Repository of Values, or in justified cases, decides on the revoking of the classification
- compiles the Collection of Hungaricums
- comment on the draft legislation concerning hungaricums
- in every year it publishes the Collection of Hungaricums both in the Official Bulletin, appearing as an annex of the Hungarian Gazette and on a website
- submit recommendations to the government on the sustainability and utilization of hungaricums
- publishes tenders for the preservation, maintenance, development, awareness campaign, and protection of hungaricums, and for the introduction of the products to the domestic and international market
- organizes a conference series on a yearly basis with the engagement of the branches and target domains concerned (Gyaraky, 2013).

The national values and, specifically, the hungaricums are unique values which should be preserved. In order to reinforce the sense of belonging, unity and national awareness our national values should be collected and documented, the documentation underlying the preservation of values must be safeguarded according to the rules of rigorous registry and researchability, and such values must be cultivated, protected, and fostered.

Our heritage, the millennium-old values of Hungarian culture, the intellectual and material works of the Hungarian people, the manmade and natural values should be compiled in a comprehensive repository. The protection of our national values contributes to the formation and strengthening of our





national awareness. The presentation of our national values on a wide national and foreign scale, as well as the achievement of recognition of our linguistic, intellectual, cultural, and economic performance, and natural and handmade values, along with the reinforcement of our country image, are all of key importance.

The Hungarian Parliament declares that it considers our national values a part of universal values which represent a dynamically growing repository of the past, present, and future of Hungarian people and the basis of value-based national cooperation. The repository of national values is enriched by the values of the people living together in Hungary, the ethnicities forming the Hungarian nation, as well as the individuals and communities living beyond the borders and throughout the whole world who consider themselves Hungarian (Internet23).

According to the status in January, 2015, the Collection of Hungaricums already consists of 45 hungaricums, while the Hungarian National Repository of Values has 115 items. Both national values and hungaricums are categorized into eight topics, which are the following:

- agricultural and food economy,
- health and living,
- manmade environment,
- industrial and technical solutions,
- cultural heritage,
- sport,
- natural environment,
- tourism and hospitality.

Gastronomical products can be found in the agricultural and food industry, as well as in the field of tourism and hospitality. According to the status in April, 2015, the following belong here:

Products in the agricultural and food economy topic:

1. Pálinka 2. Törkölypálinka 3. Csabai sausage or Csabai thick sausage 4. Tokaji aszú produced in the Tokaj wine region of Hungary 5. Food products from fattened geese 6. Gyulai sausage or Gyulai double sausage 7. Szikvíz 8. Kalocsai ground paprika 9. Pick téliszalámi 10. Hungarian akacia 11. Hungarian akacia honey 12. HERZ Classic téliszalámi 13. Makói onions 14. Szegedi ground paprika 15. Hungarian grey cattle 16. Unicum sour liqueur

Products in the tourism and hospitality topic:

1. Karcagi mutton pörkölt 2. Gundel heritage – the Gastronomic and catering heritage of Gundel Károly and the Gundel Restaurant (Internet23)

The identification

Those visiting the hungarikum.hu website operated by the Committee for Hungaricums can receive up-to-date information about the issues of regulation of national values and hungaricums, as well as concerning the values recorded in the Hungarian Repository of Values and in the Collection of Hungaricums.

The hungaricums connected to our gastronomy not only help to preserve our customs, but play an integral part in preserving our national awareness, as well as in the

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formation of Hungary's image and brand towards the outside world.

6.2.3. Hungary's Gastonomic Values within the European Union Programmes

Agriculture and food industry has a key role in Hungary's economy. The same applies to wine production which is closely related to the industries mentioned, however Hungary boasts a number of traditional quality products apart from the branch of agriculture. Identifications, such as *Szegedi* paprika, *Gyulai* sausage, *Makói* onions, *Tokaji* wine or *Egri Bikavér* (red wine), which have earned an international recognition, not only contribute to making Hungary's image more colourful, but – apart from sustaining the quality requirements of the products – they also represent significant market value added presented in the form of collective rights.

The sustainable development of rural areas has had great emphasis in the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy. Quality systems and the related subsidies of rural development and promotion are corner stones of the EU's quality policy. According to the Commission Communication on the CAP towards 2020 the primary objective of the EU's future common agricultural policy is sustainable food production. In this respect the document mentions among the major challenges the preservation of the diversity of rural activities and the development of their competitiveness. The EU intends to facilitate the fulfilment of these objectives through the consolidation of its quality policy toolkit.

On the basis of the European Union regulations, there are four quality systems present in the field of agriculture that facilitate the EU recognition of agricultural products, foodstuffs, wines, alcoholic beverages, and traditional and unique products. The common objective of the four systems is to stimulate the agricultural production to become more diverse. It is a means of making farmers' products distinctive on the market and of increasing their market value, a means of protecting the traditional products and those with geographical indication of the member states and third countries from abuse thus ensuring their preservation and constant quality (FATOSZ, 2010).

Products classified into the categories above can be safeguarded by geographical indication, or can be recognized on the basis of their traditional unique quality. The food quality systems providing legal protection and recognition to Hungarian foodstuffs related to a certain geographical unit, and traditional Hungarian foodstuffs are determined by EU and national legislation.

The concept of geographical indicators in general is used as an umbrella term of indicators that are used to identify the geographical origin of marketed products (Szellemi Tulajdon Nemzeti Hivatal, 2014).

The point in protecting geographical indicators is facilitating to take actions against the unlawful use of the given indicator, by recognizing the provably existing relation between the product's quality indication and its place of origin. A typical example for this is when the given product does not originate from the indicated geographical unit, or if it does not comply with other requirements determined by the product description.

In Hungary the protection of geographical indicators is based on three different – sometimes mutually exclusive – systems operating alongside each other, namely (1) the national, (2) the community and (3) the international protection (*Table 1*).



Being registered on the list of the Hungarian Intellectual Property Office is a precondition for gaining national protection. As a result of Hungary's EU-accession, certain products are not entitled to gain national protection. These products can be registered under community geographical indication. Community geographical indication provides the entitled with protection in each state of the European Union (Hungarian Intellectual Property Office, 2014).

While the mutually complementary systems of national and community protection provide protection in the respect of certain product types, international registration results in a protection that is valid in the 26 states of the Treaty of Lisbon – including Hungary – and it remains effective until the indication expires in the country of origin.

Table 1: System of Geographical Indication Protection

Product Groups	EU (community) protection	National protection	International protection
agricultural products and foodstuffs	Exclusive (Regulation (EU) No. 1151/2012)	Not applicable in EU member states	Lisbon Agreement
Viticulture and winery products	Exclusive (Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013)	Not applicable in EU member states	Lisbon Agreement
Alcoholic beverages	Parallel (Regulation (EC) No. 110/2008, Regulation (EU) No 251/2014)	Parallel (Regulation (EC) No. 110/2008, Regulation (EU) No 251/2014)	Lisbon Agreement

Source: Hungarian Intellectual Property Office, 2015

The behaviour of European consumers has been undergoing gradual change. They now require not only much higher dietary, hygienic and health standards in the products they buy, but also look for certification and reassurance of products' origins and production methods. The quality is of the primary importance. The consumer awareness is reflected in the demand for products with individual characteristics due to specific production methods, composition or origin. Thus in the whole EU, there is a trend of increasing needs for the value added, special, high quality food products. So, new agro-food policy of EU is orientated in this direction. The increased freedom of movement of goods has certainly helped to make available a much wider variety of products from all over Europe, creating also a need for better consumer information. Hungary's accession to the European Union represents a great challenge for its food industry in both qualitative and also quantitative respects. The challenge can be met with excellent quality products and with products having a special, particular or unique character. In order to improve Hungary's competitiveness, the use of trademarks and labels indicating geographical specialities and guaranteeing special quality, is becoming extremely important (Kovács – Zsarnóczay, 2007).



What are the factors that influence the consumers when selecting among food products? The factors which influence the consumers' selection are usually unconscious and unintentional. The selection is usually based on earlier experiences and accidental expectations, learned habits from parents and grandparents. The Hungarian sense of taste is very conservative and eating habits can hardly be changed. Well-known tastes, smells, texture, and the aversion from new products also influences consumers' behaviour. The Hungarian consumer usually connects quality with traditional and regional tastes and senses. Hungarian meat products are part of the national heritage and pride. Hungarians feel that it is their duty is to introduce their children to all the special sensory qualities, to keep the traditional and local foods and their quality for the next generation, to improve demands and claims of the new generation. However, local, traditional meat products manufactured of indigenous, home animals constitute just a small part of the domestic Hungarian food market. On the other hand, Hungarian consumers are also open to modern or novel foods based on the latest results of food science and biotechnology. Plus, they are often influenced by factors related to environment protection, animal welfare, food-safety, human health, and others (Kovács – Zsarnóczay, 2007).

6.3. Summary

In this chapter we shortly summarized the possibilities and solutions for cultivating the national – sometimes internationally known – gastronomic values. The first part of this chapter details the possibilities for regional values, the other part will provide information of EU and national programmes for maintaining our culinary traditions. In the first part of this chapter, we went through the regional culinary traditions of different celebrations and fests. The second part of this chapter provided information on the national and EU level programmes for cultivating the gastronomic values in Hungary. The national level protection applies to the collection of Traditions – Flavours – Regions on the one hand and to the Hungarian Repository of Values and the related list of hungaricums on the other hand.

The Hungarian Ministry of Rural Development launched its Traditions – Flavours – Regions (hereinafter: HÍR) Programme by joining the European Union's Euroterroirs Programme with the aim of establishing a collection of Hungary's traditional and regional agricultural products and facilitating their economic utility. HÍR Programme introduced the concept of traditional and regional products in Hungary. The collection laid excellent foundations and it still provides source for the EU recognition of the agricultural products and foodstuffs. Organizing the products into a collection not only provides for their preservation, but the marketing activity attached to them has also gained more emphasis since 2009. For this sake Agrármarketing Centrum organizes events and provides subsidies available through tendering.

A hungaricum is a special, unique thing, specific only to Hungary, which can be a Hungarian work of art, a Hungarian product, native animal, cultural features, but the marker is occasionally applied to social or public phenomena. Hungaricum is not a Hungarian invention, since it has an abundant amount of foreign – in many times low quality – alternatives. Today, the Hungaricum Act (Act 30, 2012) defines – among others – the concepts of national value, outstanding national value, and hungaricum. The Hungarian national value – all intellectual, material, natural





community values or products related the Hungarian people. National values can be recognized municipally, on a county level, nationally, beyond the border, or on an international level. The Act defines the concept of hungaricum according to the following: “a national value worth of highlighting which with its specific attribute, uniqueness, specialty and quality represent the high performance of the Hungarian people within the country and abroad”. According to the definition, besides products, all values are considered to be hungaricum, which are classified as hungaricum by the Committee for Hungaricums. Thus, the definition has two important points. On the one hand, the interpretation of the act draws up softer criteria than previous hungaricum interpretations, since “value” is a quite broad notion, which can contain – besides the named products – various other, even intangible things. The values classified as hungaricums by the HB are added to the Collection of Hungaricums, and will receive a “hungaricum certification mark”. According to the status in January, 2015, the Collection of Hungaricums already consists of 45 hungaricums, while the Hungarian National Repository of Values has 115 items. Gastronomical products can be found in the agricultural and food industry, as well as in the field of tourism and hospitality. According to the status in April, 2015, the following belong here:

Products in the agricultural and food economy topic:

1. Pálinka 2. Törkölypálinka 3. Csabai sausage or Csabai thick sausage 4. Tokaji aszú produced in the Tokaj wine region of Hungary 5. Food products from fattened geese 6. Gyulai sausage or Gyulai double sausage 7. Szikvíz 8. Kalocsai ground paprika 9. Pick téliszalámi 10. Hungarian akacia 11. Hungarian akacia honey 12. HERZ Classic téliszalámi 13. Makói onions 14. Szegedi ground paprika 15. Hungarian grey cattle 16. Unicum sour liqueur

Products in the tourism and hospitality topic:

1. Karcagi mutton pörkölt 2. Gundel heritage – the Gastronomic and catering heritage of Gundel Károly and the Gundel Restaurant

On the basis of the European Union regulations, there are four quality systems present in the field of agriculture that facilitate the EU recognition of agricultural products, foodstuffs, wines, alcoholic beverages, and traditional and unique products. The common objective of the four systems is to stimulate the agricultural production to become more diverse. It is a means of making farmers' products distinctive on the market and of increasing their market value, a means of protecting the traditional products and those with geographical indication of the member states and thProducts classified into the categories above can be safeguarded by geographical indication, or can be recognized on the basis of their traditional unique quality. The food quality systems providing legal protection and recognition to Hungarian foodstuffs related to a certain geographical unit, and traditional Hungarian foodstuffs are determined by EU and national legislation. The concept of geographical indicators in general is used as an umbrella term of indicators that are used to identify the geographical origin of marketed productsird countries from abuse thus ensuring their preservation and constant quality.

The behaviour of European consumers has been undergoing gradual change. They now require not only much higher dietary, hygienic and health standards in the products they buy, but also look for certification and reassurance of products' origins and production methods. The quality is of the primary importance. The consumer awareness is reflected in the demand for products with individual characteristics due to specific production methods, composition or origin.

6.4.

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6.4. Control Questions

1. Please, provide some typical regional culinary tradition connecting to celebrations!
2. What are the possibilities for cultivating the Hungarian culinary traditions today?
3. Please list the national programmes for cultivating the Hungarian gastronomic values!
4. Please explain the significance of the HÍR programme!
5. What is the definition of hungaricums?
6. Why is it important to have a Hungaricum Act?
7. Please provide some examples for the hungaricums connecting to gastronomy!
8. What are the EU level programmes for protecting gastronomic values?
9. Please, provide some Hungarian product examples for each of the programmes!

6.5. Competence Developing Questions

1. What is your opinion about the consumers' choice among food products?
2. What do you think about using a trademark for foodstuffs?
3. What do you think about the trademark of Hungaricums concerning the EU consumers?



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Terminology

Broth: a liquid food preparation, typically consisting of water, in which bones, meat, fish, cereal grains, or vegetables have been simmered. Broth is used as a basis for other edible liquids such as soup, gravy, or sauce. It can be eaten alone or with garnish. If other ingredients are used, such as rice, pearl barley or oats, it is then generally called soup.

Cuisine classique: the traditional cuisine with which we are familiar. It is a mix of sophisticated recipes and local dishes. This type of gastronomy became the culinary standard in Europe during the 19th century up to the 20th century.

Cuisine: a specific set of cooking traditions and practices, often associated with a specific culture or region. Each cuisine involves food preparation in a particular style, of food and drink of particular types, to produce individually consumed items or distinct meals.

Eszencia: it is a very rare grape sugar essence - a grape syrup really - made from the tiny amount of free-run juice from the botrytised grapes that are used to make Aszú paste. Because its sugar content is so high, yeasts can work only at a snail's pace and these wines continue to ferment in cask for many a year. These were the sort of wines which made Tokaji's reputation as an elixir of life and love.

Food chemistry: the molecular composition of food, and the involvement of these molecules in chemical reactions.

Food engineering: the industrial processes used to manufacture food.

Food gastronomy is concerned food and beverages and their genesis. Fundamentally, the role of wine, and other beverages, in relation to food is to harmonize, in order to maximize the enjoyment to be had from both.

Food microbiology: the positive and negative interactions between micro-organisms and foods.

Food packaging: the study of how packaging is used to preserve food after it has been processed and contain it through distribution.

Food physical chemistry: the study of both physical and chemical interactions in foods in terms of physical and chemical principles applied to food systems, as well as the application of physicochemical techniques and instrumentation for the study and analysis of foods.

Food preservation: the causes and prevention of quality degradation.

Food safety: the causes, prevention and communication dealing with food-borne illness.

Food science: the discipline in which the engineering, biological, and physical sciences are used to study the nature of foods, the causes of deterioration, the principles underlying food processing, and the improvement of foods for the consuming public.

Food technology: the technological aspects of food production.

Fusion cuisine: combines elements of different culinary traditions. Cuisines of this type are not categorized according to any one particular cuisine style and have played a part in innovations of many contemporary restaurant cuisines since the 1970s.

Fusion food: general term for the combination of various forms of cookery and comes in several forms.

Gastro-geography: concerns the natural conditions for food consumption.

Gastro-history: concerns food items, influences and techniques learned through trading with adjacent nations, and brought back by explorers traveling further afield.

Gastronome: one knowledgeable of the art or science of fine eating (*i.e. in gastronomy*).





Gastronomist: one who actively combines theory of gastronomy with the practice of gastronomy (*i.e. one who cooks*).

Gastronomy: the art and science of fine eating with an emphasis on gourmet foods and dining experiences. In more commonly, gastronomy includes everything that connects to eating.

Geographical indicator: The concept of geographical indicators in general is used as an umbrella term of indicators that are used to identify the geographical origin of marketed products.

Global cuisine: a cuisine that is practiced around the world.

Gourmand: one who is fond of good eating, sometimes referring to one who enjoy good food to excess; derived from the Old French root *gormant*, meaning a *glutton*;

Gourmet: a connoisseur of fine food and drink.

Haute cuisine: French term that more literally translates as “high cooking”. It is a cuisine that is usually superbly prepared by high caliber chefs’ food and often comes in small portion sizes. This type of cuisine dates back to the 17th, 18th centuries.

Hungarian national value: all intellectual, material, natural community values or products related the Hungarian people. National values can be recognized municipally, on a county level, nationally, beyond the border, or on an international level.

Hungaricum: a national value worth of highlighting which with its specific attribute, uniqueness, specialty and quality represent the high performance of the Hungarian people within the country and abroad.

Local food or the **local food movement:** is a movement which aims to connect food producers and food consumers in the same geographic region, in order to develop more self-reliant and resilient food networks, improve local economies, or for health, environmental, community, or social impact in a particular place. The term has also been extended to include not only geographic location of supplier and consumer but can also be “defined in terms of social and supply chain characteristics”. For example, local food initiatives often promote sustainable and organic farming practices, although these are not explicitly related to the geographic proximity of the producer and consumer.

Molecular gastronomy: the scientific investigation of processes in cooking, social and artistic gastronomical phenomena. The term is commonly used to describe a style of cuisine in which chefs explore culinary possibilities by borrowing tools from the science lab and ingredients from the food industry. Formally, the term molecular gastronomy refers to the scientific discipline that studies the physical and chemical processes that occur while cooking.

Note by Note cuisine: is a style of cooking based on molecular gastronomy, created by Hervé This. Dishes are made using pure compounds instead of using animal or plant tissues.

Nouvelle cuisine: (French, „new cuisine”) is an approach to cooking and food presentation in French cuisine. In contrast to cuisine classique, an older form of haute cuisine, nouvelle cuisine is characterized by lighter, more delicate dishes and an increased emphasis on presentation. It was popularized in the 1960s by the food critics Henri Gault, who invented the phrase, and his colleagues André Gayot and Christian Millau in a new restaurant guide, the Gault-Millau, or Le Nouveau Guide.

Nutritional gastronomy: is at the forefront of recent advances in alternate diets, non-bulk approaches to eating, and the backlash to “fast food” obsessions in all countries.

Organic food: produced by organic farming. While the standards differ worldwide, organic farming in general features cultural, biological, and mechanical practices that foster cycling of



resources, promote ecological balance, and conserve biodiversity. Synthetic pesticides and chemical fertilizers are not allowed, although certain organically approved pesticides may be used under limited conditions. In general, organic foods are also not processed using irradiation, industrial solvents, or synthetic food additives.

Outstanding national value: The outstanding national values are of key significance, accepted as typical of the Hungarian people and commonly known. They enhance Hungary's reputation and increase the country's recognition in the European Union and throughout the whole world. Moreover they contribute to the formation and strengthening of the sense of national belonging and the awareness of Hungarian culture in new generations.

Practical gastronomy is concerned with the practice and study of the preparation, production and service of the various foods and beverages from countries around the world, i. e. the cuisines.

Puttony: A puttony is the traditional hod used as a measure for the sweet grape paste, made from pulverised botrytised grapes, added to wine made from unaffected grapes before a slow second fermentation, though the timing of this addition may vary.

Regional cuisine : based upon national, state or local regions. Regional cuisines may vary based upon food availability and trade, varying climates, cooking traditions and practices, and cultural differences.

Regional fusion: combines different cuisines of a region or sub-region into a single eating experience.

Renaissance: the period from the 14th to the 17th century, considered the bridge between the Middle Ages and modern history. As a cultural movement, it started in Italy, in the Late Medieval period; and later spread to the rest of Europe.

Roux: a mixture of warmed lard - or other kind of grease - and the same amount of flour. The flour is browned in the hot lard to an extent depending on the dish for which it is prepared. After the pot is removed from the fireplace, cold water is added to the substance and stirred until smooth. The resulting roux is added to the soft soup or főzelék base.

Science-based cooking: closely associated with the design of stimulating and novel dishes that make guests feel an explosion of sensations.

Sensory analysis: the study of how consumers' senses perceive food.

Service a la francaise: the practice of serving various dishes of a meal at the same time, in contrast to service a la russe. Formal dinners were served a la francaise from the Middle Ages until the 19th century.

Service a la russe: serving meals in courses, so dishes are brought sequentially and served individually.

Technical gastronomy looks at the systematic evaluation of anything in the gastronomic field that demands appraisal. It is a link between the small-scale operation and mass manufacture.

Theoretical gastronomy is concerned with a systems and process approach, focused on recipes, cookery books and other writing. It records various procedures that must be carried out in order to maximize success.

Traditional cuisine: a coherent tradition of food preparation that rises from the daily lives and kitchens of a people over an extended period in a specific region of a country, or a specific country, and which, when localized, have notable distinctions from the cuisine of the country as a whole.

Traditions – Flavours – Regions Programme: The Hungarian Ministry of Rural Development launched its Traditions – Flavours – Regions (hereinafter: HÍR) Programme by joining





the European Union's Euroterroirs Programme with the aim of establishing a collection of Hungary's traditional and regional agricultural products and facilitating their economic utility. HÍR Programme introduced the concept of traditional and regional products in Hungary.