

Summary of the European Capital of Gastronomy Culture

2020-02-25

The approaching end of the year is a time of summaries, also in Krakow, where the past 12 months have been marked by cooking. Throughout 2019, Krakow has been the European Capital of Gastronomy Culture.

The aim of the project was to build the image of Krakow as a significant gastronomic culture center on a European scale as well as a culinary destination and capital of a region rich in local and certified food products.

The meeting summarizing the European Capital of Gastronomy Culture 2019 organized on December 10, 2019 in the Krakow City Office was an opportunity to present major events that took place in the past year.

- Today we are summarizing the project, but we are not finishing it - emphasized Elżbieta Kantor, Director of the Tourism Department of the Krakow City Office - We want culinary products to reign in Krakow. Ms. Kantor emphasized the key role of 44 partners who supported the city in activities promoting Krakow as a culinary tourism destination. This group included chefs, restaurateurs, local producers, directors of gastronomy schools, cultural institutions and the media.

- In 2000, Krakow was the European Capital of Culture. We can still remember this title and construct various events on it. I hope this will be the same for the European Capital of Gastronomy Culture - said Anna Korfel-Jasińska, Deputy Mayor of Krakow for Education, Sport and Tourism, who gave all the partners written thanks from the Mayor of Krakow, Jacek Majchrowski.

On the initiative of chefs and restaurateurs, numerous tasting dinners were held throughout the year devoted to regional dishes and products, including one fully vegan. The Slow Food Masterclass dinner series, a platform for cooperation between Krakow and foreign chefs associated in Slow Food Chefs' Alliance, enjoyed great interest.

In 2019, open events for residents, such as the Krakow Zapusty Festival or the Obwarzanek Festival, as well as the following industry events took place in Krakow: the MADE for Restaurant conference, the European Congress of Gastronomy "Food & Art & Technology", and the finale of the Bocuse D'or competition in which third place was taken by chef Michał Stężalski from the Szara Gęś restaurant. In connection with the events, Krakow was visited by many distinguished chefs from the world, winners of several dozen Michelin stars. The opening of the MAKRO Inspiration Academy took place in autumn. It was attended by representatives of the city authorities.

Culinary Krakow has been close to the residents and tourists who visited our city throughout the year. An exhibition entitled "Tower of Tastes" devoted to the history of food culture was opened at the Krakow Museum. In connection with the "Freedom Menu" Krakow and on June 4, Krakow handed out bagels to passers-by. A special tram was traveling around Krakow promoting the Krakow Capital Menu. The latest information on events related to the European Capital of



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Gastronomy Culture could always be found on the Culinary Krakow website and on Facebook. Facebook itself has published a special guide to our city in partnership with Krakow - the first such guide in the world. The blue booklet enjoyed great interest on the part of the residents of Krakow and tourists, and disappeared from Krakow Info points within a few days. The publishing house received the Silver Paperclip industry award of the, given by the Association of Public Relations Companies.

The culinary image of Krakow was also presented during more than a hundred partner events in the country and abroad. Krakow cuisine aroused considerable interest in Warsaw during the prestigious Wine & Food Noble Night culinary competition. Krakow was also present abroad: Krakow presented itself from the culinary side at the tourism fairs in: Berlin, Lyon and Vienna. Krakow restaurants promoted culinary heritage during special events at the Polish Embassies in: Madrid, Rome, Lyon, Edinburgh, Nuremberg and Lisbon.

Krakow products were promoted as part of the Slow Food-CE program, which is part of the European Capital of Gastronomy Culture Krakow 2019 program. One of the most interesting challenges of the project is the reconstruction of a new culinary product - the *głąbik krakowski* [a variety of stem lettuce], in which Fairs in Krakow, the organizer of the 27th International HORECA® Hotel and Catering Equipment Fair, were involved. Culinary shows presented by the best Krakow chefs took place at the fairs in the Krakow Slow Food Zone. Visitors had the opportunity to become familiar with regional products, meet producers and taste the products, including the aforementioned *głąbik krakowski*. Earlier, Krakow chefs were involved in planting, harvesting and attempts to process the *głąbik krakowski*. During the meeting in the City Office Meeting Room, awards were presented for restaurants that won the plebiscite for the best Krakow Capital Menu. 19 Krakow restaurants took part in the project. For several months, they placed a special insert to their menus containing Krakow dishes. In the online plebiscite run by Interia.pl, residents of Krakow and tourists selected the best three: **prizes were awarded to Baroque Food & Style, Copernicus Restaurant and Szara Gęś.**

Anna Korfel-Jasińska, Deputy Mayor of Krakow for Education, Sport and Tourism expressed hope that in the following years even more local entities will join the cooperation on the Culinary Krakow project. The President thanked restaurateurs for creating Krakow cuisine based on the rediscovered traditions. She emphasized that in 2019 Krakow was visited by as many as 14 million tourists who travel to experience and taste Krakow.