



GUIDES ZINE 002

How to eat obwarzanki like a Pole

PETER MOORE JANUARY 16, 2021

Low on cash and hungry in Kraków? Follow the lead of the locals and start your day with an *obwarzanek*.

Obwarzanki Krakowskie are a unique ring-shaped bread snack only found in the Polish city of Kraków. They are cheap and filling and have been a breakfast staple in the city since the 14th century.

They are sold from small blue street carts scattered across the old city. The

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little old ladies selling them are as iconic as hot dog sellers in New York.

At only 2 zloty each (about 40p) *obwarzanki* make a deliciously affordable snack.

Obwarzanki are baked twice a day and then delivered to sellers across the city.



You'll find obwarzanki stalls on street corners across the old city. Some are cheekily positioned just outside more famous fast-food restaurants.

The dough is first braided and shaped into a ring roughly 15 cm in diameter. After being parboiled, the rings are sprinkled with salt and baked.

Every Cracovian will tell you that a good *obwarzanek* has a crunchy golden-brown crust but will be moist and slightly chewy inside.

What an *obwarzanek* should have sprinkled on top is another matter

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altogether. Those topped with coarse salt, poppy seeds or sesame seeds are perennial favourites. Those sprinkled with flax seeds, caraway seeds or paprika have their advocates too.

The truly adventurous can choose *obwarzanki* covered with grated cheese and/or onion flakes.



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Whatever you do, don't call them bagels!

Obwarzanki follow a recipe first devised by cooks in the court of King Vladislaus II Jagiełło and his queen, Hedwig in 1394. That recipe has outlived kings, republics and various military occupiers for hundreds of years.

Obwarzanki even have their very own protected geographical indication, placing them alongside champagne and Parmesan cheese as a recognised protected regional food.

All we know is that they taste good.

And that you can get three or more for the price of the cheapest item at a KFC.

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Peter Moore

Travel author and podcaster

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