

LOCAL TASTE FROM NATURE

FORESTS



WILD GAME

There are vast pine forests in the lands that surround the Baltic Sea, which were the origin for the famous mineral that is amber. There are also fir forests and mixed tree forests that are home to various wild animals and birds. Wild game, therefore, is an inherent part of Baltic cuisine.

Wild game is very healthy, the animals have eaten the cleanest food so the nutritional

FOREST BERRIES

The season for wild berries starts in June, when the colour red dominates – aromatic wild strawberries and sweet raspberries. In July, there are dark blueberries and bilberries, as well as blackberries. Later in

value is higher than in the case with livestock from farms. Popular animals in the area of wild game include reindeer, deer, rabbit and beaver. Moose are hunted in Nordic countries, and good chefs can also produce tasty dishes of wild boar and stag. People hunt ducks, geese, grouse and other birds.

The specifics of the taste of wild game will

depend on the animal's gender, the season when it was hunted, and other circumstances such as the terror that makes the diversity of tastes and flavours amazingly wide. Wild game often requires more spice than domesticated animals and birds and cooking times are longer. The results are always delightful with nature's own pure raw materials.



WILD MUSHROOMS

People in all of the countries of the Baltic sea region eat chanterelles and boletes, which have mild taste and can be used for lots of different dishes such as broths, creamed soups, sauces or sautéed dishes. Mushrooms are added to meat dishes,

used for stuffing, salted or marinated into spicy snacks and salads. Frozen or dried mushrooms are perfect for winter use, and mushrooms are an invaluable source of proteins for vegetarians. There are lots of different mushrooms

that are recognised and eaten by local residents, but beware of unfamiliar mushrooms in the forest, because they can be poisonous! If you want to go mushroom hunting, but have no experience, ask a guide to come with you.



NUTS AND SEEDS

Nuts grow in the wild and in gardens. Hazelnuts grow throughout the Baltic region and are eaten raw or are used for

baked goods. Walnuts are grown in Poland and Germany, while cedar nuts are found in the forests of the Nordic countries. All nuts are nutritional, and they can also be pressed for oil.

MEADOWS AND PASTURES

RYE BREAD

Rye bread is made of freshly ground rye flour. Homemakers and small businesses use sourdough starter and wood-fired stoves. Loaves can be round or angular, with all kinds of additives such as seeds, grains, coriander, caraway seeds or malt, all of which make the bread aromatic and

tasty. Rye bread is strong and nourishing, and even a small slice may be enough for a meal. Rye bread is stored for a long time and is a popular souvenir for tourists. People in all Baltic Sea region countries eat various kinds of sandwiches on a daily basis. Bread is served with soups and



GRAINS AND LEGUMES

Buckwheat, barley, pearl barley and oats are used to cook porridges or steamed as sides for meat dishes. People have cooked peas and beans since time eternal. Throughout the Baltic region, people cook yellow pea or bean soup with smoked pork, while in Latvia cooks also use grey peas. Estonians use kama flour that is a combination of rye,

barley and wheat flour, as well as dried peas. The mixture is not cooked. It is eaten with soured milk products or added to desserts. Semolina is used for desserts. One popular version involves berries or fruit to cook a dessert that is eaten with milk or a vanilla sauce. Semolina pudding is served with

jellies. Various seeds are used for bread and pastries, including flax, poppy, sunflower and other valuable seeds. Hemp seeds are pressed in Latvia to produce oil and butter. Rapeseed oil is common all around the Baltic Sea.

POTATOES

Potatoes are the most popular root vegetable in Latvia. They grow very well in our climate, are tasty, and are known as second bread. Potatoes are the most popular main for dishes. They are cooked with or without their peels, baked in the oven or cooked on a pan. In Denmark,

potatoes are caramelised with sugar and butter at Christmas to produce Brunede kartofler. Potatoes are mashed and added to soups and sautés. Grated potatoes are used to make pancakes, and potatoes are used to cook dumplings (Knedle in Poland), which are sweet or salty, Cepelinai in Lithuania, and Klöße in Germany).

Crispy potato chips are useful for quick snacks. They are made of specific types of potatoes and enriched with various interesting combinations of tastes.



CABBAGES AND BEETS

Cabbages are eaten in the Baltic region most every day in coleslaw, soups and sautés. Very popular in all of the countries of the region is stuffed cabbage, which involves ground meat and rice that are stuffed inside cabbage leaves and then sautéed in a sauce. People grow cauliflower, broccoli and Brussels sprouts. Sautéed sauerkraut is often served alongside roast pork, ribs or sausages during

the Christmas season. In Poland, bigos involves meat, dried boletes, black plums and red wine. Danes cook rodkål, which is made of red cabbage and a side of duck fat, sugar, vinegar, red wine, apples, onions and spices.

Red beets are also popular. They are boiled in their peels and then cleaned and chopped up for salads or soups. In Scandanavia and the Baltic countries,

beets are eaten in salads that are served with herring, boiled potatoes and soured cream. In Finland, the salads are known as rossoli, while in the Baltic States they are known as "herring in a coat." Chilled beet soup is popular in the summer, as is borscht in the winter. Borscht originated in Russia. Poles cook a clear beet soup called barszcz z uszkami.

flowers, leaves, mint and roots help to ensure good health and to deal with various illnesses if knowledgeable people offer the right kinds of teas. Herbal teas are also used to produce various original balsams, which

HONEY

Bees provide excellent honey from flowers during the short Nordic summer. The insects collect pollen from various plants – osier and pussy willows during the spring, various flowers during the spring and summer (lime blossoms in particular), and then heather in the autumn. Each type of honey differs in colour, taste and aroma, and each person will find the perfect variety. Honey is also one of the main ingredients

should be bought for well-known beekeepers or certified farms. In addition to honey, other bee products that are sold include pollen, ambrosia and propolis. Honey is eaten with bread and milk, as well as with cottage cheese and cheeses. People in the Baltic States bake honey cakes filled with soured cream. Honey is also one of the main ingredients



RIVERS, LAKES, THE SEA



STREAM WATER

Of great value is pure and tasty drinking water from a stream, well, or a deep well. Tap water is usually of perfectly good

quality and can be drunk. People who are accustomed to high-quality water often refuse carbonated sweet drinks that are

full of unnecessary calories. The quality of water is also important in the production of local beverages.

FRESHWATER FISH

River and lake fish are available all year round – trout, pike, perch, broach, roach, vimba, eel, etc. Crayfish are available during the season. Early sunrises with a

fishing pole, ice fishing and, in accordance with legal regulations, fishing with nets are all possible. Fresh fish are used to cook aromatic soups. They are cooked



SALTWATER FISH

Cod, salmon, plaice, herring, perch, bass – all of the fish from the Baltic Sea cannot be listed here. There are specific ways of preparing fish in each region of the countries that are along the sea. The fish are salted (tutefisk in Norway is salted and dried cod), salted (gravlaks with dill in Norway, gravlax with a shot of cognac in Sweden), fermented (rakfisk in Norway is fermented trout), hot or cold smoked, baked, cooked, marinated in spicy or gentle sauces and herbs.

People in Scandinavia cook fish soup with milk. Kalakeitto in Finland is fish soup with milk, while lohiakko is fish soup with cream. Scandinavians often serve food in the smorgasbord fashion, as is seen in the

form of breakfast buffets at hotels all around the world. The word means "sandwich table," and a proper smorgasbord has lots of cold cuts, including saltwater fish that is salted and prepared in various ways. These are put on bread for sandwiches. Norway is proud of its salmon. Denmark surprises with its delicious shrimps and oysters, while Germany tempts gourmets with fresh mussels (Miesmuscheln). Canned fish is easy to transport. Of particular importance is herring, whether salted, marinated or smoked, served on buffets and in hot dishes. Baltic people eat herring with boiled potatoes, cottage cheese and onions. Low-salt herring is added to milk soup with vegetables

in Latvia. Scandinavians prepare herring in sweet marinade or a tomato or mustard sauce. This is a traditional holiday dish. German roll up herring fillets that are stuffed with pickles or onions, and then put them in an herbed marinade. Catfish in Poland link herring to Lent. Sweden's surströmming is fermented herring with a very sharp taste and powerful smell. Transporting this product by plane is forbidden, so go to Sweden to enjoy it. Baltic herring and Baltic sprats are baked, marinated, served in herbed sauces or wine sauces, salted or smoked. Aromatic canned sprats are a wonderful export product from Latvia.

HOME AND GARDEN

MILK, CREAM, BUTTER AND CHEESE

Milk in the Baltic region comes from cows, goats and sheep, and dairy products have been a key part of the Baltic diet since antiquity. Milk is used to produce cream, soured milk products and cheese. Soured cream is used for vegetable salads and added to soups, sauces, meat dishes, casseroles and baked goods. Butter is churned from sweet or soured cream. It is spread on bread, used to cook vegetables, mushrooms, meat and pancakes, and added to porridges. It is irreplaceable for fine cakes and other baked goods. A unique soured milk product is kefir, which is produced with a specific fungus

and drunk with potato or legume dishes. Cottage cheese is produced quickly and easily from leavened milk. It is eaten with potatoes, baked into buns, used for dumplings, and also used for cakes and pies. All of the countries of the Baltic Sea region produce tasty ice cream, best of all from real milk and cream. There are a great many different kinds of cheeses of the region. Latvians produce a Summer Soltise cheese with eggs, butter and caraway seeds, and Estonians and Lithuanians have a similar one. Danes are proud of their bleu cheese (Danablu), with Jarlsberg cheese being a famous

Norwegian export. Rather more unusual is Gjetost brown cheese, which is actually caramelised cow milk. In the Polish mountains, shepherds use sheep's milk to produce Osetypek, which is pressed into special wooden forms. Germany produces fresh, retted and hard cheeses. Tilsiter is popular. Or Alter Schwede (Old Swede) which is produced and very much loved in North Germany. Lithuanians offer spicy hard cheeses (Dziugasis). The pride of Finland is crunched Lapland cheese that is grilled and eaten with cloudberry jam.



MEAT

People in the Baltic Sea region eat pork, veal, lamb, beef, poultry and rabbits. Pork is roasted, boiled or smoked. It is used for sausages and jellied pork, for roasts and pork chops. North Germans like to stuff pork ribs with dried plums. Beef is used for steaks, as well as thick and hearty soups such as solyanika, which comes from Russian cuisine. Throughout the region very popular are balls or patties made of mixed ground meats (Frikadellen in Germany, Köttbullar in Sweden),

stored for a longer time. In Scandinavia, the method is used for salmon as well as for wild game since ancient history. Hot-smoked dishes involved pork and fish that are juicier and softer than cold-smoked ones. Alder wood has particularly aromatic smoke, and marinated herbs are often used to ensure a more interesting taste. Smoked meat is eaten on its own, cooked with eggs or potatoes, sautéed, or cold-smoked fish or meat being able to be

PICKLING, SLATING, MARINATING

During the autumn and winter, people pickle cabbage, adding caraway seeds, carrots or cranberries. The resulting sauerkraut is eaten as a salad, sautéed, or cooked in soups. Sauerkraut soup is served with potatoes, and the soup is as

filling as any main. During cold weather, sauerkraut is a good source of vitamins and is good for your health. For winter storage, people also salt or marinate cucumbers and can tomatoes, squash and red peppers. Fresh fruits and



GARDEN FRUITS AND BERRIES

Juicy berries and fruits ripen during the summer. Strawberries, raspberries, plums, sour cherries, pears and apples are available in all countries in the Baltic Sea region. Fruit and berry orchards take up lots of land in Poland, where sweet cherries and apricots are also grown. Highbush

blueberries are increasingly popular. People use fruits and berries to produce jams, beverages, cakes, baked goods and desserts. North German's most favourite berry is the seabuckthorn which is used to make jam, juice, liqueur and different kinds of sweets. Jellies made of berries are

HERBS AND AROMATICS

Food is supplemented with chives and fresh or sautéed onions to add taste and vitamins. Many countries in the Baltic

region have soups and salads that involve lots of dill, as well as parsley and celery or peppermint leaves. Grated

BEER

Every country is proud of its beer, which is known as liquid bread. It is a light beverage that is full of vitamins, encourages appetite and is soothing during hot weather. Danes are proud of Tuborg and Carlsberg. Finns of Lapin Kulta. Swedes about all their variety of microbreweries. Germans are known for their good beer which is brewed according to the regulations of the so-called

"purity law" from 1516. It means that beer may only consist of hops, malt, yeast and water. Any other ingredients are strongly forbidden. Craft and niche beers are becoming more and more popular in Poland. In the Baltic States, small breweries offer unfiltered beer that is made on the basis of ancient recipes. It can be light or dark, made of barley with added hops and malt, and

DISTILLATES

During cold weather, glasses of warming beverages are perfect. All of the countries around the Baltic Sea have ancient distilling traditions, which alcoholic beverages made

of grain, potatoes, fruit, berries and even jams. Each country is proud of its special beverages – Aquavit in Norway, Finlandia in Finland, Absolut Vodka in Sweden, and Miody Dabrowski in Poland.