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INVESTING IN YOUR FUTURE



FOODS LATVIANS PREFER

Latvian cuisine could be called 'multi-layered' – just like one of our traditional dishes, the dessert known as *rupīmaizes kārtajums* – crumbed rye-bread, whipped cream and lingonberry jam, layered in a large glass. Polish, Swedish, German and Russian cuisine are seen as the primary influences, but Latvian cuisine maintains its link to nature, preferring to utilise farm- or forest-fresh produce. This holds true to this day.



The Gourmand's Guide is an invaluable source for getting to know the cuisine of the Riga-Gauja Region. It is a one-stop shop for information on our restaurants, markets, points of interest and events for food devotees who appreciate nature's bounty and its seasonal flavours.



It is also an invitation to savour the culinary diversity of the Riga-Gauja Region, because what is not available in city restaurants can be located in delightful farmers' markets (and vice-versa). Use our recommendations to experience the hospitality of our homesteads and artisan food producers.

It is hardly surprising then, that in 2017, we will be a European Gastronomic Region – we have much to offer both our own people and every European lover of fine food!

MARKETS



RIGA CENTRAL MARKET
Riga Central Market, included on UNESCO's World Heritage List, astonishes with its magnitude and vitality. The massiveness of its above-ground presence comes from airship hangars inherited from Germany at the beginning of the 20th century. Meanwhile, underground the market is home to spacious cellar storerooms and freezers covering a total area of two hectares. Seasonal products from Latvia's forests, waters and farms arrive here every day.
Nēgu iela 7. Open daily.



KALNCIEMS KVARTĀLS FAIR
The Kalnciems kvartāls (Quarter), with its restored timber houses, is the pride of Riga and becomes even more attractive when its weekly fair takes place every Saturday. Farmers bring their own herbal tea blends, jams and preserves, smoked meats and many other treats. And going to the Kalnciems Fair is like going out for dinner – you will never leave hungry! The fair also offers hand-crafted items that would embellish any dinner table.
Kalnciema iela 35. Open Saturdays.

STRAUPE RURAL GOODS MARKET
The market's motto is 'We grow it – We sell it!' in line with the basic principles of 'slow food'. The market features meat, dairy, honey and baked goods, as well as diverse vegetables, spices, fruits and berries. These are supplemented by local artisan brewers and winemakers, as well as local craftspeople. Easter, Līgo, and Christmas market days are particularly special, as they are accompanied by music, dancing and other entertainments.
*Plācis, next to Highway A3
First and third Sunday of every month.*

SPRING

For gourmets, the year starts in spring with birch sap and maple syrup, whose just-tapped freshness lasts but a brief moment. Just about everyone – not only gourmets – following winter hibernation, crave the first greens that sprout up – aromatic, succulent, crisp and chock full of vitamins.



RHUBARB
Latvia's proclaimer of the new gastronomic year. Every Latvian household has a Rhubarb patch, not only for its useful traits, but also for its good looks. Frequently used in large amounts for gourmandian immoderations – Rhubarb pie, Rhubarb dumplings, Rhubarb jelly, Rhubarb ice-cream, Rhubarb Chutney, Rhubarb jam, Rhubarb salad, Rhubarb wine, candied Rhubarb, etc.

SORREL
The first appearance of Sorrel obliges even hardened city-dwellers to go out into the meadows and seek these small, bright-green, vitamin-rich leaves, an unmistakable sign that spring has truly arrived. Latvians use Sorrel in many ways – for salads, soup, for breakfast with cottage cheese and many more ways.



BIRCH AND MAPLE SAP
The colder the winter, the sweeter the sap. The sap is used as a fermented or non-fermented drink, to make wine, sorbets, in ice flakes, salad dressings, bouillons, spirits, beauty compresses, and as a detoxing cure – a good thing there's so much of it. At home, fermented saps are filled into bottles and supplemented with a pinch of sugar, some raisins, a blackcurrant twig, or lemon peel.

DZINTARS KRISTOVSKIS



VALMIERA MARKET
Since its inception on the mists of time, the unique and vibrant atmosphere of Valmiera market has stood out. Residents of Valmiera come here every day for produce grown by local farmers, gardeners, ranchers and artisan food producers.
*Terbatas iela 6, Valmiera
Open 07:00-14:00, closed Sundays, Mondays.*



SIMJŪDS FAIR VALMIERA
The Simjūds Fair tradition began in the Middle Ages, when the foundations of Valmiera's Sv. Simanis (St Simon's) Church were laid in October 1283. Now, the fair is organised annually by the Valmiera Museum and it features home-made bread, baked goods, smoked meats, fish, cheese, sweets, gingerbread, fresh and dried fruit, vegetables, honey, wax candles, wicker-work, wooden and ceramic items, sheep-wool, rabbit- and even dog-fur knits, all accompanied by song, dance and storytelling.
*Valmiera Rātslaukums (Town Hall Square) and Livonian Order Castle grounds (old town).
2nd Saturday of October.*

CĒSIS MARKET
In the very heart of the city, Cēsis Market attracts local farmers and artisan producers. Things get particularly busy in the mornings, when city residents vie with local restaurant and cafe owners for the choicest produce. Once a month, the market expands as vendors from all over Latvia arrive to sell their products.
*Tīrgus laukums,
Uzvaras bulvāris 24, Cēsis.
Daily from 08:00 to 14:00.
Closed Mondays.*

SUMMER

Latvian summers are short but nonetheless full of gastronomic goodies that can be savoured in the right place, at the right time. Summertime is when Latvians are earthbound, so to speak, they have the uncanny ability to commune with Mother Nature. Nothing provides more pleasure than tending a garden, venturing deep into a forest for wild strawberries or chanterelle mushrooms, or choosing a spot lake or riverside for fishing.



CATFISH
The largest fish in Latvia, it can reach up to 250 kilos in weight. To make catfish more delicate, one should leave a whole gutted catfish for two to three days in cold in order to serve a pinkish fish of light consistency. The fishbone can be used for making a strong bouillon.

SOUR CHERRIES
The sour cherries are excellent for one's health, as, besides vitamins and minerals, the sweet-sour berries contain a lot of melatonin, which helps the human body to fight aging and insomnia. Devoted housekeepers insist that a jam or wine should be made just from the sour ones.



CLODBERRIES
Cloudbberries hide in deep and far marshes. However, if you are lucky to find them, they can be used in making of a honeyed jam which perfectly complements dessert cheeses or fruit salad. Despite everything, cloudberry is the queen of contemporary forest gastronomy.

DZINTARS KRISTOVSKIS



Riga-Gauja region with its special concept „Wild at Palate” has been titled as European Region of Gastronomy 2017. Chef and master of herbs and spices Dzintars Kristovskis from the restaurant „Valmiermuīza's Beer Kitchen”, has been appointed official Ambassador. He says: „If you look at some of the most iconic cuisines of the world and put it in perspective, what they all have in common is that they are based off products and ingredients that come from that particular region. It is these raw products and ingredients that have made them popular.
We, too, had our fundamental values, but at some point in history we began to drift away from them. Therefore it has to be understood: that what we are trying to create is not a new trend, but going back to our roots. Through what is characteristic of the region, through the taste that comes from this land.”

AUTUMN

The Latvian proverb has it that 'autumn is a rich man'; thereby the populace knows how to 'reap what it sows' – literally! The beautiful and scrumptious penny-bun mushrooms, just waiting to be picked or the abundant quince, that yellow fruit perfect for syrups or candied peel, or on a plate with game meat.



CYDONIA
Cydonia or more accurately shrub Quince has become known as our lemon, the pride of Latvia and one of contemporary Latvian cuisine's trademarks. Today Quince is an element of the culinary art, utilized as a marinade for lamb, a component of tangy homemade dessert wines, and for jams perfect for select cheese plates.

VENISON
Latvia abounds in deer parks, wide open, impeccably managed, with clean air and water, and lushly forested. Venison is perfect for autumn stews – a scrumptious staple of any family's Saturday or Sunday dinner and served as tartare or steaks in select restaurants.



BOLETUS MUSHROOM
We Latvians are a mushroom-foraging nation, and the boletus (porcini) is considered the pinnacle for modern-day hunter-gatherers. Simply sautéed with butter, braised in cream with new potatoes, marinated, sun-dried, a side dish for seafood, beef, as a pâté ... we could continue this delicious list forever! Remember though – the ones you pick yourself taste best.

EVENTS FOR FOOD LOVERS



RIGA FOOD
Riga Food is the biggest food-trade exhibition in the Baltic region, keenly following the latest industry trends, accenting innovation and providing opportunities to meet food-processing companies face-to-face. The Kipsala Exhibition Centre becomes a paradise for food lovers and those seeking novel culinary ideas. Entertaining showcases by bartenders, cooks, pastry chefs. Professionals see it as fertile ground for acquiring new knowledge to enhance their business prowess.
Kipsala Exhibition Centre.



RĪGAS SVĒTKU RESTORĀNS/ RIGA FESTIVAL RESTAURANT
*The Rīgas svētku restorāns opens at Spīķeri laukums during the Riga City Festival and features 15 of Riga's best restaurants giving visitors a rare chance to try special seasonal dishes created from local produce. The square is taken over by an open-restaurant atmosphere in which popular chefs surprise diners with their culinary secrets, all accompanied by live music, contests and entertainment.
Spīķeru centrālais laukums.*

WINTER

Cold and damp weather in Latvia results in fare that is rich and filling, with character. Simple but sturdy foods from garden vegetables and grains. Potatoes and barley, rye products – through the centuries are a reminder of home fires burning. But what about the rowan berries? Beautiful and mildly tart – for a real taste of life.



RYE BREAD
It goes without saying: nowhere on planet Earth the rye bread is more delicious than in Latvia, and it's taste is a result of our history, memories, dreams, and philosophy on the order of things. It's not surprising that rye bread is what every Latvian living abroad craves for.

ROWAN
Dried and powdered, the red-orange rowan berry is a subtle spice for various sauces and marinades. In jellies and marmalade it is an ideal accent for meat dishes or mild cheese. And as a liquid additive for your cocktail, it is the best that a berry can offer alcohol.



TURNIP
Making our noble contribution to the current renaissance in long forgotten herbs and veggies – we give you: the turnip, stupendous in stews! Or simply baked in the oven, but better yet – in a salad with smoked fish and nuts. The turnip – just doing what comes naturally!

EVENTS FOR FOOD LOVERS



SAULGRIEZIS
As summer takes off, just a week before Latvia's biggest festival *Līgo* or Midsummer, the park at Valmiermuīza Manor hosts an event launching the summer solstice – *Saulgriezis*. Live music and dancing are accompanied by farm-fresh food treats and handicrafts, and, naturally, draft beer from the brewery and local artisans.
*Valmiermuīzas alus brewery
Dzirnavu iela 2, Valmiermuīza, Valmieras pagasts, Burtnieku novads.*



SAVOUR THE FLAVOUR AT VALMIERMUĪZA
Marking Latvia's seasonal festivals, an all-encompassing food and crafts fair, *Savour the Flavour at Valmiermuīza*, is held outside the *Valmiermuīzas alus brewery* eight times a year. The underlying principle is the discovery of ancient Latvian traditions through the media of having fun, creative workshops and mouth-watering traditional dishes.
*When: February, March, May, June, August, September, November, December
Valmiermuīzas alus brewery
Dzirnavu iela 2, Valmiermuīza, Valmieras pagasts, Burtnieku novads.*

„RESTAURANT WEEKS” IN SIGULDA AND SURROUNDING AREAS
Twice a year – in April and November, restaurants in the town of Sigulda and its environs, spotlight the tastiest of foods for customer-friendly prices – around EUR 20.

CASTLES AND MANORS



UNGURMUIŽA 10

Meals are prepared and served exactly as the manor's cook once intended. Just like in the 18th century, our chef places fresh and flavourful local produce at the forefront – meat, vegetables, dairy products, eggs, and even fish are bought from neighbouring homesteads. Meanwhile, berries and mushrooms are gathered in the forests surrounding Ungurmuiža. *Ungurmuiža, Raiskuma pagasts, Ph.: +371 22 007 332*



KĀRLAMUIŽA 11

Do you want to feel like a 19th century guest at a baronial manor? Then you must visit Kārlamuiža! Most of the produce for the aristocratic meals is sourced locally – from the allotments of Kārļi residents and the forests of the Amata River and the Gauja National Park. The manor itself has a picturesque garden graced by herbs, teas, various berry bushes and fruit trees. When the apple harvest is abundant, guests will definitely want to try the apple wine. *„Kārlamuiža”, Kārļi, Amatas novads. Ph.: +371 26 165 298*



SIGHTS FOR FOOD LOVERS



ALDARIS BEER MUSEUM 15

The Aldaris Beer Museum is the first of its kind in Latvia and the most modern in the Baltics. The pride of the brewery is its authentic vat room, untouched since 1938. The museum also offers Beer workshops, where one can learn about the differences in beers brewed around the world and learn the secrets of achieving a good brew. You can even try your own hand at this ancient craft. *Tvaika iela 44, Rīga. Ph.: +371 20 016 261*

MORE SAFARI AND DEER PARK 14

Set up for hunting purposes, the 170 hectares of Latvia's first private deer park are populated by more than 300 fallow deer, as well as European white and red deer. Take the unique opportunity to try venison you have hunted yourself. *Saulstari, Mores pagasts, Siguldas novads. Ph.: +371 29 444 662*

CĒSIS MEDIEVAL CASTLE 17

Although ruins are all that remains of the Livonian Order's mightiest castle, experts in Medieval crafts occupy them from May until September. Come and meet the gardener and discover vegetables and herbs grown from heirloom seeds. Meanwhile, the castle's cook will help visitors bake their own loaf of bread in the outdoor oven. Groups can sign up for a grand Medieval feast or beer tasting. *Pils laukums 9, Cēsis*



DIKĻU MANOR 12

The earliest records mentioning the Dikļi manor date back to the 15th century, but the building gained its current stately form in the 19th century, hardly surprising it is a national cultural monument. The Dikļi mansion, adorned with collections of antique furniture, paintings and functioning fireplaces, is now is a 4-star hotel with aristocratic accommodation and an exquisite restaurant of excellent quality. The menu features contemporary interpretations of products locally grown or bred in the Gauja National Park and its environs. The restaurant is listed as one of the 30 best in Latvia. *Dikļi, Dikļu pagasts, Kocēnu novads. Ph.: +371 26 515 445*



MĀLPILS MANOR 13

The sophisticated atmosphere of Mālpils Manor is an appropriate environment for care-free leisure. After an aristocratic night's sleep in satin sheets, the morning greets you with a scenic landscape, while the meals created by the Manor restaurant's chef transport you to joyful horizons of taste. *Pils iela 6, Mālpils. Ph.: +371 26 666 600*

BĪRIŅU MANOR 14

Take in the aristocratic atmosphere of yesteryear in the elegant halls, the ballrooms and the design-perfect accommodations. The Manor Restaurant features treats that the lords may have once enjoyed – local game and catch, and side dishes straight from nature. Your dining experience and overnight stay will be elegant and invigorating. *Bīriņi, Limbaži novads. Ph.: +371 64 024 033*



RESTAURANTS IN RIGA



LE DOME 1

restaurant Le Dome reveals to the guests new nuances of seafood, demonstrates skillful use of products from local farms and creates refined combinations of tastes applying European culinary techniques. Here one will find fishes from Latvian lakes and the Baltic sea, prepared in a variety of ways. *Miesnieku iela 4, Rīga. Ph.: +371 67 559 884*



OSTAS SKATI 2

With a fantastic view of the river, port, and town, restaurant's menu depends on the seasonal and local fresh produce and is influenced by the best international and local cooking traditions. *Matrožu iela 15, Rīga. Ph.: +371 26 693 693*



RESTORĀNS 3 3

Restorāns 3 has chosen to go down the forest-food path, a concept becoming ever more popular in northern Europe – fresh, hand-picked produce from forest and field, the bounteous harvest of our short summer, hunters' and fishermen's 'catches' – berries, mushrooms, game, fish and vegetables. In preparing their exquisite dishes, the chefs focus on preserving the natural energy and flavour of the ingredients. *Kalēju iela 3, Rīga. Ph.: +371 26 660 060*

3 PAVĀRI 4

Open kitchen and seating at the bar for a close-up view of the chef in action is a concept new to Latvia. Watch while your starter or entree is being prepared, ask about the ingredients, flavours and culinary experiments. Sous-vide or slow cooking are the main methods used here, with the accent on local, seasonal products. *Torņa iela 4, Rīga. Ph.: +371 20 370 537*

BIBLIOTĒKA N°1 5

BIBLIOTĒKA N°1 Restorāns is a shining example of contemporary Latvian cuisine. Its prime location in a central Riga park, stylish interior, nuanced and masterful cuisine are enhanced by a sophisticated selection of Italian wines, as acknowledged by Wine Spectator. Connoisseurs will be pleasantly surprised by traditional Latvian dishes in a contemporary execution. *Tērbatas iela 2, Rīga. Ph.: +371 20 225 000*



VALMIERMUIŽA'S BEER KITCHEN 6

Valmiermuiža craft brewery „Valmiermuižas alus” has a fine eatery in Riga, complementing its unique range of craft beers with a menu based on seasonal produce, carefully selected from the wild or artisan farmsteads. Deep-fried lichen, a pine-bud dessert, pike-perch direct from lake to plate are just some of the revelations awaiting you at this amiable and bold restaurant. *Valdemāra pasaža, A. Briāna iela 9A, Rīga. Ph.: +371 28 656 111*

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MEDUS KĀRE 30

Medus kāre (Passion for honey) is a homestead brimming with stories about the world of bees and their hard-working lives in apiaries and hives. Taste honeys produced from different meadow and forest flowers, as well as other bee products. *„Zvirgzdi”, Vaidavas pagasts, Kocēnu novads. Ph.: +371 28 341 533*

ZILVER WINERY 32

Zilver's artisan wines are made from self-grown and hand-picked berries and fruit. Make a reservation to visit the wine shop; group tastings also available; the tour covers the entire wine-making process, down to the tiniest detail. *„Pīlāži”, Siguldas novads. Ph.: +371 26 320 208*



KRIMULDA MANOR WINERY 33

Krimulda Manor offers an exclusive opportunity to explore a winery and taste the manor's wines. You will be greeted by a lady of the manor who will explain its operations and lead a short tour around the manor's historic centre, including a visit to the winery, where everyone will be welcomed by winemaker Jānis and a tasting of his wine. *Mednieku iela 3, Sigulda. Ph.: +371 29 111 619*

RESTAURANTS IN SIGULDA



APARJODS 7

One of Sigulda's oldest restaurants, possessing the wisdom of traditional Latvian cuisine nurtured with fond affection for more than 23 years. The building's handsome exterior, with its natural wood-shingle roof, complements the outstanding flavours of the Aparjods kitchen. *Ventis iela 1a, Sigulda. Ph.: +371 67 974 414*



KUNGU RIJA 7

This authentic log cabin just outside Sigulda is home to a delightful restaurant. With its serene pace of life, the farmstead co-exists in harmony with nature. Book your visit one day in advance to order steamed sturgeon, barn-smoked catfish, leg of lamb, roast venison, stuffed goose or duck, in fact anything that nature or the market can provide. *700 m from Turaida Museum Reserve, „Kungu rija”, Krimuldas novads. Ph.: +371 67 971 473*



FAZENDA 7

With outstanding tradition, cordiality and showcasing of local products our foundation, this restaurant features delicious meals, fine wines, local herb teas and homemade bread. *Vidzemes šoseja/highway 16, Sigulda. Ph.: +371 66 900 669*



HOTEL „SIGULDA” RESTAURANT 7

You will not regret taking time out to sample the superb food and take in the local scenery, whose beauty was lauded by the aristocracy of long ago. The cozy restaurant is located in the hotel building, initially opened in 1890. Feel the aura of history here, when Prince Nikolai Kropotkin hosted a delegation from St.Petersburg. *Pils iela 6, Sigulda. Ph.: +371 67 972 263*



GADALAIKI 7

Located in charming and picturesque Sigulda, this restaurant's speciality is a seasonal menu offering the finest of foods with distinct local flavor. *„Ezeri”, Siguldas novads/region. Ph.: +371 67 973 009*



MR.BISKVĪTS 7

Mr.Biskvīts is a homey and friendly cafe smack in the center of Sigulda, perfect for a family outing. Scrumptious cakes and pastries, entrees and aromatic coffee! *Ausekļa iela 9, Sigulda. Ph.: +371 67 976 611*

RESTAURANTS IN VALMIERA



RĀTES VĀRTI 8

The Rātes Vārti restaurant convincingly makes it into the list of Latvia's best. The extensive menu will satisfy the most demanding gourmets with seasonal specialties from garden, farm or forest prepared with prowess and innovation. The striking interior takes diners back to the Middle Ages and the Hanseatic League. *Lāčplēša iela 1, Valmiera. Ph.: +371 64 281 942*



TEĀTRA VĪNA STUDIJA 8

Located in the Valmiera Drama Theatre complex, Teātra vīna studija is where select wines, flame-grilled entrees and mouth-watering desserts meet the creative spirit of the stage and the arts. Good company, fine wine and warm hospitality are what Vīna studija is all about, with international cuisine in partnership with that of the Latvian countryside. *Lāčplēša iela 4, Valmiera. Ph.: +371 26 211 222*



BEER KITCHEN IN VALMIERMUIŽA 25

Valmiermuižas alus is leading the push to restore beer to its rightful historic place in Latvia's culinary culture. The restaurant's chefs seek inspiration in Latvia's natural bounty, traditions and fluctuating seasons, creating contemporary blends of Latvian flavours and utilising beer as a harmonious element. *Dzirnavu iela 2, Valmiermuiža, Valmieras pag, Burtnieku novads. Ph.: +371 20 264 269*



AGNESE 8

Visiting the Agnese Restaurant-bar is like reading an adventure-filled book that you simply can't put down! Enjoy the barley and other cereals favoured by our ancient forebears, pike-perch and tench from nearby Burtnieks Lake freshly picked berries and vegetables in combinations to delight any gourmet, or choose a culinary adventure from distant parts. *Tērbatas 16a, Valmiera. Ph.: +371 64 207 304*



„PARKS” RESTAURANT 9

This eatery is located in the center of Valmiera city, in Vecpišu Park. The selection of appetizers, entrees and desserts are wide and bountiful. You will find local, traditional cuisine, and cuisine that is 'local and traditional' elsewhere in the world. *Vecpišu parks, Rīgas iela 19, Valmiera. Ph.: +371 26 117 444*



„VECPUIŠIS” RESTAURANT 8

In the historic pavilion inside Vecpišu Park in downtown Valmiera, you will find a restaurant simply perfect for a relaxing dinner or for a banquets marking a special occasion. Master chef Jānis Rozenbergs will whip up anything you desire, but accent here is on foods made with fresh, locally-grown products. *Vecpišu parks, Leona Paegles iela 10, Valmiera. Ph.: +371 26 110 026*

RESTAURANTS IN CĒSIS



IZSALKUŠAIS JĀNIS 9

In a 1932 fire station, complete with fireman's pole, customers can watch their meal coming together in the open kitchen. Each season sees a new menu developed by one of Latvia's best chefs. But the *lelmoīfāt* at *Izsalkušais Jānis* is unassuming and understandable dishes, just like the restaurant itself. *Valmieras iela 2, Cēsis. Ph.: +371 29 262 001*



MOMO 9

Inspired by the music played at its location – the Vidzeme Concert Hall – the chef at the MoMo restaurant holds that all dishes – whether simple or complicated – have to be prepared from seasonal ingredients sourced locally from nature or artisan farmers. For his part, the chef must compose an innovative culinary melody from traditional constituents. *Raunas iela 12, Cēsis. Ph.: +371 20 641 016*

CAFÉ 2LOCALS 9

The restaurant's name stems from the chefs who hail from Cēsis and prefer to utilise locally grown produce. Watched over by the majestic Sv. Jāņa (St John's) Church, garden and farm-fresh ingredients are turned into dishes from the cookbooks of yesteryear or used in distinctive recipes created by our two locals. *Cēsis iela 24a, Cēsis. Ph.: +371 28 811 774*

