

CHAPTER 6

Culinary tourism in the Cuiavian-Pomeranian Province, Poland

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Introduction

Poland is the ninth biggest country in the European Union. It is situated between the Baltic Sea on the north and the Sudetes and the Carpathian Mountains on the south, into the river basins of the Vistula, Odra and Neman River. Most of the land area is a lowland - a part of Central European Lowland. Geographical regions change from the lowlands on the north into uplands and mountains in the centre and on the south of the country. Poland is divided into 16 provinces. The capital city is Warsaw. Bearing in mind the fact that the article describes the culinary tourism issues, it is worth to mention that historical events had a great impact on the development of the specific Polish cuisine. In the past, Poland was a homeland for

a many different nations, which played a major role in the national cuisine. As a result, there are many Tatar, Turkish, Rusyn, German, French, Italian and Jewish culinary impacts.

The Cuiavian-Pomeranian Province is situated in the center of the northern Poland, between the Pomeranian and Masurian Lake Districts (fig.1.). It also consists of some macroregions and geographical-historical regions. The biggest cities are: Bydgoszcz (367 054 citizens), Toruń (200 080 citizens) - with the headquarters of the provincial governor, Włocławek (119 939 citizens). Regardless of the administrative division, the region consists of some culturally and historically diverse areas. They are Cuyavia and Paluki - the area associates with 7 culture, and the Piasts - the first historical ruling dynasty of Poland. Moreover, the region is the largest part of the Cuiavian-Pomeranian Province. Nowadays, Dobrzyń Land, which used to be a part of Mazovia, is also a part of the area. Another area is Chełmno Land, known for its retained buildings of gothic architecture (churches and a castle of the Teutonic Knights), with medieval Toruń old square signed up for UNESCO list. The northern part of the province belongs to the Lower Vistula Valley macroregion, with its cultural landscape of the XVIII and XIX century Mennonite settlement. The area used to be inhabited by the Borowiaks people (the Kashubians) and the Kociewiaczy people, who had different origin and culture. Geographically, the south-western part of the province called Krajna, belongs to the Pomeranian Province

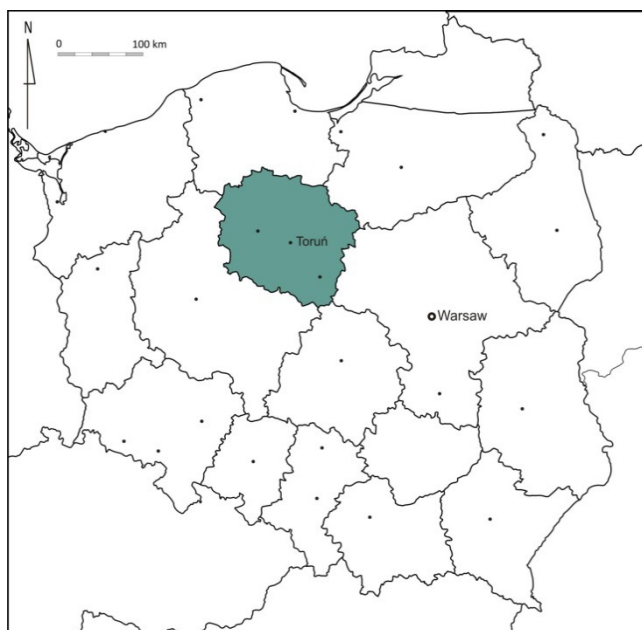


Fig.1. A location of the Cuiavian-Pomeranian Province.

From the ethnographical point of view, it is said to be the northern part of the Greater Poland because of many cultural features common with the west Polish region. The difference of the culture is seen in the regional / local cuisine.

Culinary tourism

The culinary aspect of travelling was always essential. Presently, the increasing interest in culinary art and the new trend in travelling are observed. World Travel Association says that it constitute one of the most developing ways of tourism (Global Report on Food Tourism, 2012; Internet source no 1). As a term, 'culinary tourism' was created in 1998 and introduced by Lucy M. Long (Kowalczyk 2008). In English researches the 'culinary tourism' term is also

known as ‘food tourism’ (Hall, Sharpels 2003) – a broader term. Most of culinary tourism definitions are associated with the cultural tourism (Czarnecka-Skubina 2008, Mikos von Rohrscheidt 2008, Jędrysiak 2010). Taking up a culinary tourism means, for instance: taking part in culinary festivities and festivals, participating in gastronomic competitions, travelling across so called culinary trails. The most obvious reason people choose the culinary travelling is the need to get to know the taste of traditional regional cuisine and dishes prepared by different ethnic groups (Kowalczyk 2008). The diversity of travelling has an impact on the development of the culinary tourism (Durydiwka 2013). The Cuiavian-Pomeranian Province is rich with substantial and formal offers (restaurants, breweries, vineyards, culinary trails, festivals, culinary museums).

Poland, as one of the European Union country, saves and promotes regional goods of high quality. One of the basic way of quality policy realization is giving a high quality sign to regional farm and food products which come from different regions and are traditionally made (Internet source no 2). More and more often, products made in a traditional way attract tourists, who come to the places where the products are prepared. Jęczmyk and Sammel (2012) believe that regional products of the traditional method of manufacturing, may be the main motive for traveling to the particular region. In the Cuiavian-Pomeranian Province 54 regional products was registered (Internet source no 3). They are: dairy, meat, confectionery, bakery products, oil, fat, honey, alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks, prepared dishes. A special attention in the article is paid to some of the products which help to develop the culinary tourism in the Cuiavian-Pomeranian Province.



Fig.2. “Półgęsek” known also as “piersnik”. Source: <http://www.czasnagesine.pl/>

The first, worth to mention, is “półgęsek”, which used to be a very popular snack in the Old Polish cuisine. It looked like a cylinder made of goose skin, with a layer of fat, sewed using twine or plaited string (Fig.2). Nowadays, it is raw smoked goose meat distinguished by intensive smell and taste. In the Pomeranian Province “półgęsek” is made from the goose breasts after removing the bones. Traditional ways of preparing goose meat in the Pomeranian, Kashubia and Krajna are known till now. The goose breeding is seasonal and lasts from the spring to the early winter. Traditional goose slaughter used to take place shortly before 11th November (before Saint Martin’s Day). Preparing and curing, as well as smoking of “półgęsek” have become traditional ways of preservation.



Fig.3. A trademark-shop selling goose products. Source: <http://eurodown.com.pl/v/ges-biala-koludzka>

Taking the taste and nutrition into consideration, the Cuiavian-Pomeranian Province is famous for its best goose breed, so called the “Kołuda White” (gęś biała kołudzka). To continue and support traditional goose breeding The National Breeding and Research Center was founded in 2003, in Kołuda Wielka (village near Inowrocław). What is more, a brood farm and a hatch section exist there as well. Annually, pure-bred geese from the brood farm are delivered to local farmers. Nowadays, the “oat goose” is the most popular goose breed in Polish poultry. Moreover, it is also the most often exported and wanted product from Poland. The country exports about 95 % of goose meat. The National Breeding and Research Center also makes and sells goose goods or even dairy products made from sheep milk (eg. Bryndza cheese) (Fig.3).

An offer culinary tourism can consist of things associated with regional cuisine. A tool that makes use of the advantages of culinary are undoubtedly themed culinary trails (Tomczak 2013). In the province there is a unique trail, of which the main theme is goose products (Fig.4). The originator of “The Goose Goods Trail” is The Cuiavian-Pomeranian Tourist Organization and the local government. Presently, there are seventeen restaurants on the trail, which serve dishes made of goose meat.

Apart from the all year open restaurants, some of the culinary festivals are organized, where goose dishes are presented. The most important one takes place every year close to 11th November (The Independence Day) in Przysiek, near Toruń. The Cuiavian-Pomeranian Goose Festival is probably the biggest market of goose products (Fig. 5, 6).

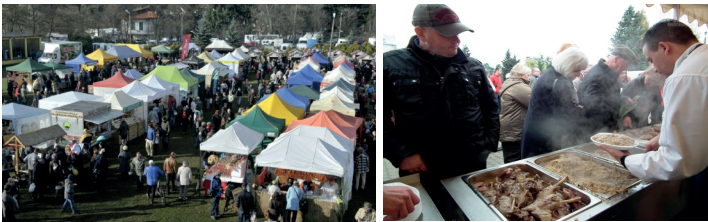


Fig.5. The 'Goose Festival' in Przysiek, 2013 Source: <http://torun.naszemiasto.pl/artykul/zdjecia/festiwal-gesiny-w-przysieku-2013>



Fig. 6. The 'Goose Festival' in Przysiek promotional posters from 2012 and 2014. Source: <http://www.czasnagesine.pl/>



Fig.7.The traditional copper cauldron using for making plum preserve Source: <http://bydgoszcz.naszemiasto.pl/artykul/zdjecia/swietuj-ze-sliwkami-i-strzelcami>

Moreover, the plum preserve made in the Lower Vistula Valley is becoming more and more popular in the Cuiavian-Pomeranian Province. The area is inhabited by culturally different groups of people. The second part of the nineteenth century was a fruit farming development in the territory. At that time, settlers mainly from Netherlands, thanks to specific soil and climate conditions developed agriculture and orcharding. Nowadays, the traditional rituals are resumed.

For instance, the traditional way of making plum preserve is becoming popular in many small towns situated in the Lower Vistula Valley. The plum preserve is made in big, copper cauldrons hanged over the fire. A wooden stick (called 'a stork') (Fig. 7) is used to stir the liquid. The preserve is made of purple plumps grown by the local registered producers (Fig.8).



Fig.8. Plum preserves from the Lower Vistula Valley. Source: <http://www.powidla.pl/>



Fig. 9. A group of visitors preparing gingerbread cookies
Source: <http://www.muzeumpiarnika.pl>



Fig. 10. Worksheets for gingerbread urban game 2014.
Source: <http://yoyo-design.com/?swieto-piarnika,61>

In addition, one of the most known confectionery product in the region is gingerbread. Presently, the gingerbread is baked at homes as a traditional spiced cake with honey. Its baking tradition started in the Middle Ages when Toruń was the most popular baker center in Poland. The wealth and location of Chełmińska Land, which is situated on the Hanseatic Trail, enabled the development of the craft. Nowadays, Toruń is still associated with gingerbread cookies. For the last few years, the cookies have been made in a traditional medieval way. In The Gingerbread Museum in Toruń visitors are able to bake gingerbread cookies using traditional tools, for instance the wooden cake tins (Fig.9). It constitutes an interesting way to get to know the tradition and culture of the region. The museum has also got an on-line shop where the hand-made cookies can be bought (Internet source no 4). The gingerbread cookies are also made by a big confectionery factory copyrighted as “Toruń gingerbread”. What is more, there is a cyclical event called “The Gingerbread Fest” in Toruń organized by the city government, the Toruń delicacy producer, The District Museum of Toruń, The Ethnographic Museum and ‘Baj Pomorski’ – the theatre. In the current year, 250th anniversary of “Kopernik” – the confectionery factory, was celebrated (Internet source no 5). During the festival was organized thematic urban game dedicated to the gingerbreads (Fig. 10).

Enotourism

The beginning of the enotourism started with *Grand tour* of British aristocrats from 17th to 19th century (Kowalczyk 2003). Mikos von Rohrscheidt (2008) claims that the kind of tourism is becoming more and more popular and is regarded as a popular cultural tourism. According to Buczkowska (2008), the enotourism is considered as a type of a tourism connected with cultural heritage and a current culture. Dubińska (2013) believes that the popularity of enotourism makes it a separated form of cultural tourism.



Fig.11. Owner of the “Przy talerzyku” vineyard with a group of tourists.
Source: <https://www.facebook.com/winnicaprzytalerzyku/>

The wine from Cuyavia is another traditional product made in the region. According to many historical resources, the tradition of Polish vinification started in 11th century. The vineyards were established mainly near monasteries, bishops’ or dukes’ residences, for instance, in Toruń (Charzański et al. 2013, Internet source no 6). Currently, it is hard to compare a development of enotourism in the Cuiavian-Pomeranian Province with the huge vine regions in the southern Europe. Viticulture and vinification is performed by a group of friends and hobbyists. Taking climate and the soils conditions into consideration, the Lower Vistula Valley is the most proper to cultivate grapevine. Moreover, in Koźielec “The Vine and Plum Festival” have taken place for some years (Internet source no 7). It draw the attention of the increasing number of enotourists. The meetings of vineyards and wine aficionados is taking place regularly in the vineyard called “Przy Talerzyku” (Fig.11).

Beer tourism

Beer tourism is defined as a kind of tourism, of which the main goal is visiting breweries, taking part in theme festivals, tasting homemade beer (Hashimoto 2005). Unfortunately, the number of local breweries in the Cuiavian-Pomeranian Province is being drastically reduced. It has been caused by bigger brewing concerns. The traditional way of making beer is still held by local brewery called “Krajan” and two breweries which are placed in restaurants in Toruń and Bydgoszcz. Nowadays, “Nakielskie” pale and dark lager beer is made in the “Krajan Cuiavian-Pomeranian Brewery”. The tradition of making beer in Krajna province, especially in Nakło nad Notecią, was initiated at the beginning of 16th century. Beer tourism is also associated with visiting local microbrewery restaurants, which offer locally made beer. In the described province there are two restaurant breweries. “Jan Olbracht” Brewery in Toruń (Fig.12) is known of both - its homemade beer and traditional Polish and local dishes served.



Fig. 12 The interior of the 'Jan Olbracht Brewery' located in the old town in Toruń (Fot. R. Stańczyk).

Culinary events

The culinary tourism in the Cuiavian-Pomeranian Province plays very important social and economic roles (Gonia 2013). The culinary festivals gather a great number of tourists. There are about ten cyclical culinary events in the region. A festival in Gruczno is one of the most known in the Cuiavian-Pomeranian Province. It takes place every year in the last weekend of August. The aim of the festival is to promote regional richness of different tastes and dishes from different parts of the province (Internet source 8). Every year in March, during the tourism fairs called “Wypoczynek”, the “Festival of Taste” takes place in Toruń. Beside the culinary shows there are also Toruń’s cooks competitions. This year the main theme of the fair was “Kopernik cuisine” (Internet source 9). The next two festivals are dedicated to promotion and popularization of goose dishes. It is celebrated close to 11th November (The Independence Day). In Przysiek, near Toruń, “The Goose Festival” is organized by local government. It constitutes the main event of “Goose for Saint Marcin” (Internet source 10). The “Goose Festival of Krajna” is smaller and younger of mentioned goose festivals. It takes place in Minikowo, close to Bydgoszcz. It is organized by the Cuiavian-Pomeranian Agricultural Consultancy Office in Minikowo. Except promoting the regional cuisine, it has also got an educational goal and its aim is to save the culinary heritage of Krajna and Pałuki (Internet source 11). What is more, the “September Cuiavian-Pomeranian Fair” has been organized for eleven years, so far. It promotes cuisine and goods made by regional farmers, honey producers, the owners of a quality control certificate food producers, the “Village Housewives Clubs” or even folk artists. One of the main aim of the fair is the integration of city and village communities (Internet source 12). All the festivals mentioned are the biggest culinary events in the Cuiavian-Pomeranian Province.

Promotional activities in the region

Nowadays, the number of culinary tourists is increasing. According to Jędrysiak (2008), the culinary tourism constitutes a bigger and bigger part of the world tourism. Thanks to culinary heritage, tourists can meet different cultures and traditions of other countries and regions (Hall et al, 2003). The increasing number of culinary tourists was noticed by the local government. It also makes a great way for the promotion of the region. The Cuiavian-Pomeranian Province government has taken promotional actions for years. Moreover, the local authorities and the groups of the social representatives, like for instance village housewives clubs or local slow food producers producers are involved.



Fig. 13. The restaurants' owners awarded with the certificates and plaques of the 'Culinary Goose Trail' Source: <https://pl-pl.facebook.com/GesinowySzlakKulinary>

One of the most popular and developing action taken is the promotion of goose dishes called “Goose meat on Saint Martin Day”. It gather the Cuiavian-Pomeranian Province Government, the National Poultry Association, some of the food processing and gastronomy representatives, and village housewives clubs. The effect of the last five-year activities is the 80% increase in goose meat consuming (Kamiński 2014). In addition, the Cuiavian-Pomeranian Tourist Organization set up the “Goose Culinary Trail” in September of 2013. It does many promotional activities. It printed maps and brochures, created mobile applications (Internet source 13). The “Goose Culinary Trail” is also promoted on the Internet as well as on the social networking services (Internet source no 14). Many culinary competitions are organized. The winners are able to win vouchers to restaurants which are placed on the trail (Fig. 13). What is more, many culinary festivals are celebrated.



Fig. 10. Plaque informing that in restaurant are served local dishes from Cuyavian-Pomeranian region (Spichrz restaurant in Toruń).

The richness of traditional culinary goods inclines to the promotion of regional cuisine. One of the way is the “European Regional Culinary Heritage Organization” membership. From January, 2013 the Cuiavian-Pomeranian Province has been a member of the ‘European Culinary Heritage Organization’. So far, the organization has linked 32 regions in 12 European countries. The history and tradition of making the high quality slow food in the Cuiavian-Pomeranian Province is promoted (Internet source no 15). The design of the recognizable sign (Fig.14) helps to promote local products. Also it gives the culinary tourist guarantee, that restaurants displaying such sign is serving regional dishes (Internet source no 16).

Summary

The physical, geographical and environmental conditions, as well as the cultural heritage, have a good influence on the tourist attractions in the Cuiavian-Pomeranian Province. As it was presented, the region offers a great number of the culinary tourism activities. Tourists can be attracted by many traditional products, festivals, festivities and culinary competitions. It is worth to mention that there are also some initiatives which focus on the popularization of the regional heritage. Due to the fact that the number of culinary tourists is still increasing, the culinary tourism is becoming a good way of the region promotion. It was important to create a strategy of promotion and development of the local cuisine and culinary tourism. Such activities are conducted. In the Cuiavian-Pomeranian Province practically every kind of the culinary tourism activity can be accomplished.

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