

September 2019

Rising in the east 煮氣東來

Kee Foong

Follow this and additional works at: <https://repository.vtc.edu.hk/ive-hosts-ambrosia>



Part of the [Food and Beverage Management Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Foong, Kee (2019) "Rising in the east 煮氣東來," *AMBROSIA 客道 : The Magazine of The International Culinary Institute*: , 20-29.
Available at: <https://repository.vtc.edu.hk/ive-hosts-ambrosia/vol8/iss1/14>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Hotel, Service & Tourism Studies at VTC Institutional Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in AMBROSIA 客道 : The Magazine of The International Culinary Institute by an authorized editor of VTC Institutional Repository. For more information, please contact wchu@vtc.edu.hk.

Fuelled by an abundance of wild ingredients and respected age-old techniques, innovative chefs are driving revolution in the often-overlooked cuisines of Eastern Europe. 創意非凡的廚師們善用豐富的野生食材和歷史悠久的烹調技巧，為改革備受忽視的東歐菜添柴加薪。By Kee Foong

Rising in the east

煮氣東來



Cabbage Stalk, Scallop Muscle and Fermented Honey at Selfie
Selfie的捲心菜莖、帶子和發酵蜜糖



It would be fair to say that Eastern European cuisine rarely figures at the top of favourite cuisine lists. As a region, it's more difficult to define than the Mediterranean or Scandinavia. Historically a geopolitical hot potato, its territory has been fought over, invaded and occupied, with borders redrawn over the centuries.

According to the United Nations Statistics Division, Eastern Europe includes Belarus, Bulgaria, Czechia (aka Czech Republic), Hungary, Poland, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russia, Slovakia and the Ukraine. The Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are often included. And for many, the region is defined by the communist-era Soviet Union, or USSR, to which several of the above countries belonged until the union's collapse in 1991. They were bleak times, not just politically and economically, but gastronomically, when a bland uniformity of peasant and proletarian food was the norm.

Anatoly Kazakov, of Selfie restaurant in Moscow, says that "in the USSR, any kind of connoisseurship was discouraged. Food was considered only as fuel for the body." Polish chef Dawid Balana adds: "it was one of the most tragic and dark times in our history, including our culinary history."

東歐菜不是大受歡迎的料理，此話雖不中亦不遠矣。相比起地中海和北歐，東歐比較難定義。歷史上，這地區幾個世紀以來一直是燙手山芋，歷經戰爭、侵略、佔領等，國家之間的疆界重劃又重劃。

根據聯合國統計部門的劃分，東歐包括白俄羅斯、保加利亞、捷克、匈牙利、波蘭、摩爾多瓦、羅馬尼亞、俄羅斯、斯洛伐克和烏克蘭。另外，波羅的海三國愛沙尼亞、拉脫維亞和立陶宛也通常被納入東歐。在許多人眼中，這地區以共產主義時期的蘇聯或蘇維埃社會主義共和國最為人熟悉，前面提到的國家，許多都是1991年因為蘇聯解體而獨立出來。那時候的東歐，不只是政治和經濟，就連烹飪文化也給人一片荒涼的感覺，盡是乏味的窮鄉和無產階級菜式。

莫斯科餐廳Selfie的大廚Anatoly Kazakov表示：「在蘇維埃時期，政府不鼓勵任何形式的享樂，食物只被視為身體所需的燃料。」波蘭廚師Dawid Balana亦補充：「那是我們歷史上，包括烹飪歷史，最可悲和黑暗的時期。」

Once thought of as heavy and stodgy, the reputation of Eastern European cuisine is improving, however, with a new breed of chefs cooking up a storm in some of the most exciting restaurants to be found in Europe. According to Mārtiņš Sirmāis of 3 Pavāru Restorans in Latvia, "things changed dramatically after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The shift was radical – from planned economy and starving people eating basic food, to the tough times of the 1990s. Now we are a region that is proud of its heritage and wild ingredients, cooking and preserving techniques."

Like other regions, Eastern European cuisine reflects a plurality of food and cooking styles influenced by its people, culture, climate and geography. Seasons are important. Many areas endure harsh winters, especially in the north, making it difficult to grow produce several months of the year. Preserving, pickling, curing, fermenting and salting is common. Hearty stews and soups are a staple. Come spring and summer however, produce – fruit and vegetables in particular – is plentiful and the dishes lighter.

Expanses of forests, farmland, rivers, lakes and seas provide meat and wild game, grains and seafood. Mushroom and berry-picking is a popular pastime. Dairy features prominently – cheese, cream, butter, milk – as does bread made from rye and sourdough. Sourness is a prized flavour, and is often combined with sweetness. The best restaurants of today harness the region's bounty, pay respect to tradition, and are taking the cuisine forward.



不過，東歐烹飪已慢慢擺脫沉重而枯燥乏味的過去，新一代的廚師部分已躋身歐洲最有趣的餐廳，備受關注。根據拉脫維亞餐廳3 Pavāru Restorans大廚Mārtiņš Sirmāis所說：「蘇聯倒台後，情勢急速轉變，由計劃經濟和只能靠基本食物維生的匱乏歲月，進入1990年代的艱難時期。現時，我們對自己的傳統、野生食材及烹調和保存食物的方法引以為傲。」

東歐菜式跟其他地區的菜式一樣，受到不同民族、文化、氣候和地理的影響，形成豐富多元的美食和烹飪風格。季節對東歐菜式影響極大，部分地區，特別是北部，冬天非常嚴寒，一年之中有好幾個月無法耕種，因此以醃漬、熟成、發酵和鹽醃等方法保存食物非常普遍，濃郁的燉菜和湯在冬天大行其道。不過到了春、夏季，蔬果等農產豐收，菜式會變得較為清淡。

廣袤的森林、農地、河流、湖泊和大海為這地區的人提供肉類、野味、穀物和海鮮。採摘菇菌和莓果是這裡甚受歡迎的消閒活動。芝士、忌廉、牛油和牛奶等奶類製品，以及黑麥酸種麵包均非常流行。這裡的人特別喜歡酸味，食物通常會甜中帶酸。今天，區內的頂級餐廳均善用本地豐富的物產烹調佳餚，菜式向傳統致敬之餘，亦不忘與時並進。

Opposite page:
Venison "montage",
Duck Ravioli, Celeriac
and Chervil at Onyx

This page, from top:
Shrimp Snack at 3
Pavāru Restorans;
Chef Anatoly Kazakov
of Selfie

對頁: Onyx的鹿肉卷伴
意式鴨肉餃子、芹菜頭與
香葉芹

本頁上至下: 3 Pavāru
Restorans的蝦小吃；
Selfie大廚Anatoly
Kazakov

Russia

As the largest country in the world, at 17 million square kilometres, Russia dwarfs the rest of Europe. It stretches east to China, and north into the Arctic circle, encompassing extremes in terrain. "Russia is the land between Europe and Asia, so our cuisine has a strong touch of both," says Vladimir Mukhin, Executive Chef at White Rabbit in Moscow, ranked number 15 on The World's 50 Best Restaurants list 2018. For example, *pelmeni* (dumplings with meat), a classic Russian dish, originated from China and arrived via the ancient Silk Road.



Mukhin's mission is to bring the true taste of Russia to diners. "For this reason I travel and gather forgotten recipes and then come back to Moscow to my laboratory to reinvent them. My methods are modern – for example I use a Rota Val rotary valve machine to cook one of my signature soups, cold beetroot soup with cherry, or whip butter in a centrifuge, but the food I create has the same taste as it did in the past."

According to Mukhin, every region has its specialities, though some such as *Borodinsky* bread, made of rye flour, malt, molasses, sourdough and coriander seeds, can be found everywhere. Hot and savoury soups, including *solyanka*, made of beef, and borscht, a beetroot soup that the Ukraine claims as its own, are important in any meal. Importantly, "the taste of the dishes may be sweet, may be sour, but never bitter," says Mukhin.

For rising star chef Anatoly Kazakov, of Selfie in Moscow, Russian food culture reminds him more of Scandinavia than Eastern Europe. "We consume a lot of preserves, fermented vegetables, dried mushrooms, berries and fruits, cereals and roots."

He observes that Russian cuisine has evolved quickly in the last 10 years, especially in big cities such as Moscow and St Petersburg. As more people travel and develop greater understanding of gastronomy, they increasingly seek out light, healthy and elegant dishes, which restaurants such as White Rabbit and Selfie offer. "Sustainability is key to my cuisine," says Kazakov. "What's growing near me is cheaper and fresher than imported goods. In Selfie, we have 17 small suppliers – farmers, fishermen and hunters who provide us with meat, fish, game, fruits, vegetables and herbs," everything he needs for his kitchen, sourced locally.



This page, from left: Cod Neck and Pickled Turnip at Selfie; Sea Urchin Caviar, Potatoes and Tangerines at White Rabbit

本頁左至右：Selfie的鱈魚頸肉配醃大頭菜；White Rabbit的海膽魚子醬配薯仔和橘子



This page, from top: Inside at White Rabbit; the restaurant's chef Vladimir Mukhin
本頁上至下：莫斯科餐廳White Rabbit的室內裝潢；餐廳大廚Vladimir Mukhin



“Russia is the land between Europe and Asia, so our cuisine has a strong touch of both”

俄羅斯位處歐亞之間，因此菜式同時受到兩個大洲影響

– Vladimir Mukhin

俄羅斯

俄羅斯是全球最大的國家，面積達1,700萬平方公里，其他歐洲國家在它面前都顯得細小。它東接中國，北鄰北極圈，涵蓋多個極端地形。莫斯科餐廳White Rabbit在2018年的全球50最佳餐廳排行榜上位列15，其行政總廚Vladimir Mukhin表示：「俄羅斯位處歐亞之間，因此菜式同時受到兩個大洲影響。」其肉餃pelmeni就是好例子，這道經典的俄羅斯菜式其實是經古絲綢之路由中國傳入。

Mukhin矢志為客人炮製真正的俄羅斯味道，他說：「為了這個原因，我周遊全國收集已失傳的食譜，然後回來我在莫斯科的實驗室重新創造這些菜式。我的烹飪方法其實十分現代化，包括用迴轉閥機烹調拿手菜凍車厘子紅菜頭湯，或是用離心機打牛油等，但我會確保菜式保留昔日的味道。」

Mukhin表示，每個地區都有自己的特別菜式，但同時也有通行各地的食物，例如以黑麥粉、麥芽、糖漿、酸種和芫荽籽做的麵包Borodinsky。熱騰騰的湯如由牛肉烹調的solyanka，以及烏克蘭人稱是他們發明的紅菜頭湯，都是每餐必備的菜式。重要的是，「菜式可能是甜的，也可能是酸的，但永遠不會是苦的。」Mukhin如是說。

莫斯科餐廳Selfie的新晉大廚Anatoly Kazakov則認為，俄羅斯的飲食文化比起東歐，其實更接近北歐，「我們有許多醃漬和發酵的蔬菜，乾菇菌、莓果和水果，以及穀物和根莖類。」

他發現俄羅斯菜在過去十年正急速轉變，特別是在莫斯科和聖彼得堡等大城市。因為越來越多人到過其他國家旅行，對美食的了解增加，於是漸漸開始尋找清淡、健康和雅致的菜式。White Rabbit和Selfie正是供應這類菜式的餐廳。Kazakov說：「我非常重視可持續發展，而且附近地區種植的東西比入口食材便宜和新鮮。Selfie有17家小型供應商，他們包括農夫、漁民及獵人，為我們提供禽畜肉類、魚肉、野味肉、蔬果和香草等。」他採用的所有食材都來自本地。





波蘭

歷史上，波蘭歷經被侵略者和暴君統治的劫難，尤其是在20世紀。

不過，餐飲集團Main Square Hospitality Group行政總廚Dawid Balana卻非常樂觀，他相信現在的波蘭和東歐菜式已經趕上10至15年前的北歐。Main Square現時在前波蘭首都克拉科夫經營數家頂級餐廳，包括米芝蓮推介的Kogel Mogel。

Balana說：「波蘭人開始以自己的傳統、歷史和根源為榮。我們有肥沃的土壤、溫和的氣候，因此能夠出產各種各樣的食材和農產，供應我們所需。」

他指出在16世紀時，波蘭是世界強國，入口許多當時的奢侈品，如番紅花、胡椒、麝香葡萄、柑橘、杏仁等等。加上波蘭與多國接壤，因此亦引入猶太、烏克蘭、俄羅斯、白俄羅斯、立陶宛和韃靼等民族的菜式，發展出兼收並蓄的烹飪文化，「菜式、烹飪技巧和食材均異常豐富」。

Balana認為，水煮或輕煎餃子pierogi、濃郁的發酵穀物湯żurek、由德國酸菜和雜肉燉煮的bigos及波蘭香腸kiełbasa都是值得嘗試的經典波蘭菜。他又建議以上好的krupnik佐膳，這種由穀物釀製的香料蜜糖酒有波蘭伏特加之稱。

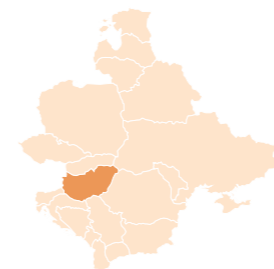
駐港波蘭領事Miroslaw Adamczyk會用季節來劃分故鄉的美食，他說：「春天的食物講究新鮮，有許多蔬菜苗、蘆筍和大黃蛋糕；夏天是水果的季節，有各種莓果、豆類、雞油菌和怡人的紅菜頭葉忌廉冷湯。」秋天菇菌當道，冬天是他心目中大啖德國酸菜燉肉的最佳時間。然而，不管是哪個季節，他都建議「大家的胃部一定要給麵包、芝士、香腸和餃子預留一點空間。」

This page, from top: Chef Dawid Balana; a fish dish served with sour cream and caviar, and Potato, Sour Cream and Truffle, both at Kogel Mogel

Opposite page, from left: Amuse bouche at Onyx; the dining room at Onyx

本頁上至下：廚師Dawid Balana；Kogel Mogel的煎魚配酸忌廉和魚子醬；以及薯仔、酸忌廉與黑松露

對頁左至右：Onyx的精緻小點；以及用餐區



Hungary

If there's one ingredient that is identified with Hungarian cooking, it's paprika. Although originally from Central America, the Hungarians have successfully cultivated it for centuries.

Ádám Mészáros, Executive Chef at Onyx in Budapest, the first restaurant in Eastern Europe to attain two Michelin stars, says “paprika is the key ingredient in every Hungarian home. We use sweet paprika powder to enhance the unique taste of many of our traditional dishes, and it gives a nice colour to the plates – you can recognise these typical dishes instantly.” These include *pörkölt* (beef stew) with *galushka* (mini dumplings), goulash soup, stuffed cabbage, chicken paprika, stuffed paprika and bean soup with pork knuckles.

Onions and garlic are also essential to Hungarian cooking, while bay leaf, thyme, tarragon and dill appear regularly. Dairy, including cottage cheese and sour cream add a rich twist to traditional dishes. Mészáros says that Hungarian food is “characterised by delicious richness,” perhaps best exemplified by prized goose liver and duck liver, which is served at Onyx on specially handmade plates by renowned Hungarian porcelain maker Herend.

Mészáros describes his style of cooking as “honest”. He mixes a deep respect for tradition with a progressive approach to cooking, based on the best Hungarian ingredients. “I like to discover and get these from those Hungarian farmers, whom I have gotten to know, and we work together in harmony.” Tradition and innovation inspire his two tasting menus, which “leave behind stereotypes without abandoning our national roots.”

Hungary has a long winemaking tradition, with diverse regions that include world-famous Tokaj, Villány and Eger. Mészáros is keen for diners to enjoy Hungarian wines, and offers wine pairings with the restaurant's tasting menus, “so they get to know our wineries and grape varieties with the guidance of our great sommeliers.”



匈牙利

如果要用一種食材來概括匈牙利菜，那就是紅辣椒。雖然它原產於中美洲，但匈牙利人幾百年前已成功將它移植。

位於布達佩斯的Onyx是東歐首間米芝蓮二星餐廳，其行政總廚Ádám Mészáros說：「紅辣椒是匈牙利菜的主要材料，我們會用甜的紅辣椒粉提升許多傳統菜式的味道，它也可以令菜式的顏色更漂亮——你可以馬上看出哪些菜式有用紅辣椒粉。」它們包括有燉牛肉pörkölt伴迷你餃子galushka、牛肉湯goulash、釀捲心菜、紅辣椒雞、釀紅辣椒和豬手豆湯。

洋蔥和蒜頭也是匈牙利料理的必要食材，月桂葉、百里香、龍蒿和蒔蘿也很常用，奶類製品如農家芝士和酸忌廉等則可以令傳統菜式更濃郁。Mészáros指，匈牙利食物「以美味濃郁見稱」，眾口稱譽的鵝肝和鴨肝就是最好的例子：Onyx會用匈牙利陶瓷品牌Herend以人手特別精製的碟子盛載鵝肝和鴨肝。

Mészáros以「真誠」來形容他的烹飪風格，他對傳統極之尊敬，但同時也會利用先進的烹飪方法，並採用最好的匈牙利食材。「我喜歡發掘並從我認識並合作愉快的農夫那裡獲得這些食材。」他的兩份嚐味餐單同時包含傳統與創新的元素，「保留民族根源但不會掉入陳舊的框框」。

匈牙利有悠久的釀酒傳統，並有多個釀酒區，包括世界知名的Tokaj、Villány和Eger。Mészáros非常鼓勵客人嘗試匈牙利酒，其嚐味餐單也提供佐餐美酒。「如此一來，他們就可以在我們優秀的侍酒師引領下，認識我們的酒莊和葡萄品種。」

This page, clockwise from right: Inside at NOA; chef Mārtiņš Sirmāis prepares the table for the bread course at 3 Pavāru Restorans; Beef Carpaccio at NOA; chef Justinas Misius of Sweet Root

Opposite page: Green Asparagus at 3 Pavāru Restorans

本頁右圖起順時針：NOA的室內裝潢；3 Pavāru Restorans廚師Mārtiņš Sirmāis正在準備用來展示麵包的餐桌；NOA的意式薄切生牛肉；Sweet Root大廚Justinas Misius對頁：3 Pavāru Restorans的綠色蘆筍



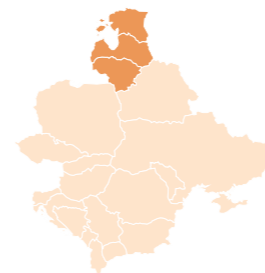
Foong: Rising in the east ????



Our identity in food is not reflected in fancy names or gourmet ingredients, but in pure and rustic dishes

我們的特色是菜式質樸，不會取花巧的名字或使用高級的食材

– Justinas Misius



Baltic States

More geopolitical grouping than formal alliance, the Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania nonetheless have much in common, including borders and coastline along the Baltic Sea.

Tõnis Siigur, Executive Chef at NOA Chef's Hall, regarded as the best restaurant in Estonia by the prestigious White Guide, nominates conservation as the main characteristic of Estonian cuisine. With significant variation between and within seasons, and long spells of cold weather, food preservation occurs "in every possible way. All that we can harvest, we can also marinate, ferment, smoke, salt, acidulate – you name it, we do it."

His cooking style is clean and minimalist, combining French technique with a Nordic aesthetic. With half of Estonia given over to forest, Siigur praises the "many unique Nordic ingredients hidden within it. These authentic and ecologically pure ingredients are sadly something we see less and less in the world's cuisine."

Across the border in Latvia, forest also covers more than half the country. It feeds into the cuisine, which utilises wild ingredients such as herbs, berries and mushrooms. Chef Mārtiņš Sirmāis, of innovative 3 Pavāru Restorans in Riga, is also a fan of dairy. One of his signature dishes, oven baked-colostrum with cinnamon, uses a milky fluid derived from mammals.

In Lithuania, Justinas Misius from Sweet Root, says it's not so much the ingredients that are different, but the way in which they are used, for instance, cucumber and honey, blueberries and milk, tomatoes and sour cream, and lard and apple. "Our identity in food is not reflected in fancy names or gourmet ingredients, but in pure and rustic dishes."

Misius, who only uses local ingredients, has to work with what nature sends him. "Our short seashore doesn't offer much fancy seafood, so most of our fish (water-sprats, eel, lamprey) comes from lakes and rivers. When we want to put something luxurious on our plates we usually head to the forests," where there are moose, wild boar, wild strawberries, cloudberries, cranberries, blueberries, ramson, as well as a wealth of edible mushrooms. "We are said to have at least 303 of those," says Misius who finds plenty to bring to the table.



波羅的海諸國

愛沙尼亞、拉脫維亞和立陶宛因為地理位置而常常被合稱為波羅的海三國，實際上並不是正式的聯盟。不過儘管如此，三國之間有不少共通點，包括擁有相同的疆界，以及都是波羅的海沿岸國家。

獲北歐知名餐廳指南White Guide譽為愛沙尼亞最佳餐廳的NOA Chef's Hall由Tõnis Siigur擔任行政總廚，他認為以各種方法保存食物是愛沙尼亞菜的特色。愛沙尼亞菜在季節之間甚至在同一季節內都有明顯的差異，而由於寒冷的日子甚長，以各種方法保存的食物「無處不在，任何農作物都可以用醃漬、發酵、煙燻、鹽醃、酸化等各種方法處理。」

他的烹飪風格結合法國烹調技巧和北歐美學，乾淨簡單。森林佔去愛沙尼亞一半以上的土地，Siigur很高興地指出，「森林裡可以找到許多獨一無二的北歐食材，但很可惜這些原始、由大自然孕育的食材在世界各地的菜式中越來越少見。」

毗鄰愛沙尼亞的拉脫維亞也有超過一半的土地被森林覆蓋，而且同樣喜用森林裡找到的食材如香草、莓果和菇菌等入饌。充滿創意的3 Pavāru Restorans餐廳位於首都里加，負責掌廚的Mārtiņš Sirmāis也非常喜歡用奶類製品烹調美食，他其中一道招牌菜式焗肉桂初乳，便採用哺乳類動物的奶汁。

在立陶宛，Sweet Root餐廳的大廚Justinas Misius表示，三地的食材分別不大，但使用方法卻相距甚遠。以黃瓜和蜜糖、藍莓和牛奶、番茄和酸忌廉及豬油和蘋果為例，「我們的特色是菜式質樸，不會取花巧的名字或使用高級的食材。」

Misius只用本地食材，根據大自然所賦予的東西進行創作。「我們的海岸線很短，海產不太豐富多樣，魚獲（西鯡、鱈魚、七鰓鱈）大部分來自江河或湖泊。當想用奢華的食材時，我們通常會進森林裡找。」那裡有駝鹿、野豬、野生土多啤梨、雲莓、紅莓、藍莓、熊蔥以及各種各樣的可食用菇菌。「聽說森林裡至少有303種菇菌。」不愁食材不夠多樣化的Misius如是說。