



LIFE ACCORDING
TO NATURE'S RHYTHM



EUROPEAN REGION OF GASTRONOMY
KUOPIO REGION CANDIDATE 2020

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EUROPEAN REGION OF GASTRONOMY



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C O N T E N T S

Introduction and selected focus areas		10 Food education is an important activity of the Rural Women’s Advisory Organisation	56
FINLAND IS ONE OF THE PUREST COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD			
1 Towards a gastronomic region	12	THIS IS HOW WE ORGANISE OUR DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES	
		11 Organisation	62
		12 Event and project plan	64
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL WELLBEING IS IMPORTANT			
2 Kuopio – Capital of Lakeland, City of Happiness	16	THIS IS HOW WE COMMUNICATE THE PROJECT	
		13 Marketing and communication plan	74
STRENGTHS: NATURE, DIVERSITY AND COLLABORATION			
3 Ambassador	20	THIS IS HOW WE BUDGET AND EVALUATE THE PROJECT	
		14 Budget plan 2018–2020	78
		15 Monitoring and evaluation plan	79
THE CULINARY HERITAGE OF SAVO IS UNIQUE			
4 Life according to nature’s rhythm	26	Afterword	
5 Culinary calendar – the culinary heritage of Savo	28		
REGIONAL INGREDIENTS PROMOTE HEALTH			
6 The Nordic diet provides the foundation for health	32		
7 Regional ingredients at our disposal	35		
EDUCATION & RESEARCH			
8 Education and training	54		
9 Innovations and supporting businesses	55		



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INTRODUCTION AND SELECTED FOCUS AREAS

INTRODUCTION AND SELECTED FOCUS AREAS

Food has always been an important part of tourism, but in recent years interest in culinary tourism has increased significantly. In Europe, trips with the primary purpose of enjoying food and drink now number about 600,000 a year. Tourism experts estimate that the demand for culinary tourism will rise at an annual rate of 7–12%. Culinary tourism is a form of special tourism where the destinations may be, for example, food fairs, food festivals, food markets and other events, visits to food producers, cookery courses, food tours or well-known restaurants with their chefs. Food connects people around the world.

A challenge for Finland is the low level of summer and rural tourism. According to the national tourism marketing organisation Visit Finland, this problem applies to almost all of Finland. Owing to the low starting point, tourism in Northern Europe is growing faster on average than elsewhere in Europe. According to the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), the number of international arrivals rose by 4 per cent in 2016 to 1.2 billion trips. The increase in Europe was 2 per cent but 6 per cent in Northern Europe. Our objective, therefore, is to develop sustainable tourism, particularly rural and event tourism, in the Kuopio region. This can happen only through developing the content of tourist services by supporting local tourism businesses.

One of our key objectives is to promote innovation activities in the region's food and hospitality companies, including new products, new approaches and food-related business innovations. Internationalisation is another of our key objectives, which is closely linked with supporting businesses. We will ensure that food and tourism products have international appeal through collaboration between companies in the food, tourism and creative sectors. The companies at the centre of this development work are the foundation of our activities and, accordingly, are allowed to tell their stories in this bid book.

It is also our objective to take advantage of the opportunities to integrate companies in the health and wellness sector with the food and tourism industry. Food products and the health cluster are among the top innovation areas in North Savo. Tourism can be viewed as an industry that cuts across these sectors, supporting the region's economic and business activities and helping to promote prosperity. We like to speak of wellness thinking. Integration of companies in the health and wellness sector with the food and tourism industry will make it possible to develop products based on the concept of sustainable development that increase wellness and promote both the economic and social wellbeing of the region. In addition, development of food- and tourism-related education at all three levels of education, better integrated with each other and with international networks, and relevant to the challenges faced by the region's companies, will promote regional wellbeing. Close cooperation between the levels of education will lead to high-quality and flexible educational paths that produce top experts to serve the region's businesses. Educational institutions also play an important role in companies' innovation and R&D activities.

SELECTED FOCUS AREAS:

1. Support for SMEs
2. Promotion of innovations
3. Health
4. Education





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FINLAND IS
ONE OF THE PUREST
COUNTRIES IN
THE WORLD

1 TOWARDS A GASTRONOMIC REGION

ACCORDING to the vision of our rural programme, North Savo will be a nationally and internationally recognised gastronomic region by 2020. Food production and processing will be eco-efficient. This goal rests on the region's strong dairy and meat production. Moreover, a significant proportion of the country's berries, especially strawberries, are produced within the region. Milk production is based on a strong tradition and modern technology. Dairy farms have invested in improving production and increasing efficiency.

There are major dairy processing plants in the region: Valio's plants in Lapinlahti and the Maitomaa Dairy in Suonenjoki. The Valio plants produce Emmental and Edam cheeses and various whey powders. Lapinlahti is also the site of Valio's full-scale baby food plant. Also located in the region is Finland's only independent brewery with an export market, Olvi plc, whose roots go back to the 19th century.

The development of food production, as well as tourism, too, is limited by the long transportation distances and concomitant problems related to accessibility. Finland as a whole lies on the edge of Europe and North Savo is one of Europe's easternmost regions. North Savo's development is mixed. While Kuopio, as the regional capital, is growing and prospering, the extensive rural areas are losing population and problems related to the availability of labour are becoming commonplace.

The strength of the region's food production is purity and safety. Finland is the safest country in the world both with regard to the purity of food and more generally, too. Strict quality control guarantees food purity. Moreover, the arctic conditions are a special feature in relation to both tourism and food production. The sharp winter frosts prevent the spread of harmful plant diseases and in every way keep our natural environment pure. On the other hand, the arctic conditions shorten the growing season and cause extra costs.

The North Savo region has the potential to develop tourism. The Kuopio and Tahko area is one of the country's most attractive destinations. Gastronomy is raising its head. Finnish

tourism is marked by two distinct seasons. We are part of the Lakeland area, so water-based tourism and cottage tourism are summer season attractions combined with a variety of tourist programmes. In the winter season, cross-country and downhill skiing, snowmobiling and the Northern Lights are our attractions.

The region has had, and has, many projects aimed at developing culinary and cultural tourism. Little by little these development efforts are bearing fruit and we can believe that this area will turn into a gastronomic region. Major events around food and drink include the Kuopio Wine Festival, the Lapinlahti Cheese and Wine Festival, the Suonenjoki Strawberry Carnival and the Oluset Beer Festival in Iisalmi, just to name a few.

We are on the way towards a gastronomic region.



Kari Virranta
Director General

Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment for North Savo





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ECONOMIC AND
SOCIAL WELLBEING
IS IMPORTANT

2 KUOPIO – CAPITAL OF LAKE LAND, CITY OF HAPPINESS

KUOPIO is a growing and attractive university city, with a focus on health and wellness expertise, that is surrounded by the clean and fish-filled Lake Kallavesi with its sea connections. This region has diverse and extensive agriculture, food production and processing as well as related education and research.

The region's inhabitants understand something about the good life: Kuopio is known as the best environment for children to grow up in. Its amiable, down-to-earth and relaxed lifestyle provides a solid quality of life for all age groups.

The purity, safety and origin of raw ingredients are important to us. Appreciation for genuine, locally produced food has also increased among consumers. This is a region with major production and processing of dairy products, berries, wild herbs and fish. Kuopio is one of Finland's biggest milk producers. The surrounding rural area provides us with a natural resource with regard to both our way of life and our environmental values.

Kuopio possesses strong nutritional and research expertise. The University of Eastern Finland and Savonia University of Applied Sciences train experts in this field. A wide range of education is one of the region's trump cards – on the creative side, dance and music teachers are also trained in Kuopio.

The Kuopio region is witnessing a rise in events, conferences and tourism. Business- and science-related congresses and conferences bring a stream of visitors to the region throughout the year. The Tahko holiday resort is a popular winter tourist destination. The surrounding countryside also offers interesting farm tourism destinations. Rural tourism is envisaged as a growing, competitive and evolving sector by 2020, which will operate all year round and professionally, creating employment.

Of importance to us is the region's economic and social wellbeing and promotion of our citizens' health through support for innovations, training and business activities in this

field. We want to focus on the region's development in terms of business growth and the development of international activities. For us, the European Region of Gastronomy process is an excellent common platform enabling us to align our development resources. We want to make our region internationally well known through food and culture while strengthening our local identity.



Kirsi Soininen
Marketing Director

City of Kuopio





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STRENGTHS:
NATURE, DIVERSITY
AND COLLABORATION

3 A M B A S S A D O R

I N R E C E N T Y E A R S, North Savo has developed into a modern and diverse gastronomic region without forgetting the past. Indeed, in Kuopio we have the almost 90-year-old Hanna Partanen bakery, for example, which offers the world's best street food, meat pasties, while you can also find modern, small restaurants with the latest trends.

Entrepreneurs pulling together and the power of collaboration has grown in emphasis in the region hugely in recent years! Finally, something really fundamental has been grasped: when we serve customers as well as possible and offer products in our restaurants of the highest possible quality, we get people on the move, attracted by interesting services and events. We are no longer competing with each other, and in that way the industry's positive spirit is also conveyed to the consumers.

I trained as a chef in Kuopio. My appreciation for collaboration and high-quality ingredients has been gained here. The region's environment and nature inspires me constantly with its diversity and changing seasons. The towns are surrounded by verdant forests, with their mushrooms, berries and wild herbs, and clean waters that yield excellent fish, such as perch, zander, burbot and vendace. Our region has high-quality meat producers, farmers and wholesalers. Many high-quality beverage producers can be found in the region, producing juices, strong alcoholic drinks, beers and ciders.

The Kuopio region has also provided me with extremely good tools for entrepreneurship in the restaurant business and all of these elements together have led to the Urban Restaurant becoming one of Finland's most popular eating places and an award winner. Kuopio has also made me a cookbook writer. Helping hands and partners for the book were all found in my own town, too.

The wide range of what the Kuopio region has to offer is shown by the fact that here you can enjoy a meal in a manor house, the city centre restaurant area, the Market Square or in the street, in a boat restaurant, at the harbour, a downhill ski centre, in a market alley,

shopping centres, an old brewery, a bank vault, on the cloud line in the Puijo Tower or in the shelter of the forest at Rauhalahhti. This diversity is a tremendous richness, and all of these and many other evolving ideas are required for an active and colourful European Region of Gastronomy.

NATURE, PURITY, DIVERSITY AND COLLABORATION! EXCELLENT KUOPIO!

2015: Anssi Kantelinen, Top Chef of Finland

2016: The Best Restaurant of the Year / Glorian Ruoka & Viini magazine

2017: Best TV Chef Europe, silver medal. Gourmand World Cookbook Awards 2017

AC!

Anssi Kantelinen
ravintolaurban.fi



Wild rosemary was traditionally used in Finland to repel insects, for example.





KUOPIO REGION CANDIDATE 2020

THE
CULINARY HERITAGE
OF SAVO
IS UNIQUE

4 LIFE ACCORDING TO NATURE'S RHYTHM

IN THE NORTH, we are part of nature and we live according to nature's rhythm. Here the culinary year has four seasons: spring, summer, autumn and winter. The light summer nights, on the one hand, and the winter snow, cold temperatures and freezing of ground and water, on the other, have an impact on the healthy and safe production of food. The cold and dark of winter is seen in nature as a period of rest: everything is frozen and covered with snow. In early summer, growth is at its most rapid and nature at its most radiant. Then wild herbs and plants are gathered from the forests, meadows and uninhabited areas. In the summer and autumn, berries and mushrooms are picked from the forests and the harvest is gathered in from the fields and gardens. In the North, the harvest season is short. Preparation of the fresh meat of many animals for food is also largely tied to the seasons of the culinary year.

VEHVILÄINEN - A TOP BRAND FROM FINNISH FOOD

The reason we went into onion farming was our own region's need for onions and the suitability of the soil for special cultivation. Following cultivation trials with various vegetables, onions were chosen as the main vegetable and my parents became full-time agricultural entrepreneurs in the early 90s. Since those days, the market has changed a lot with the common economic area of the EU. Our farm has also grown in size and nowadays we are the biggest onion grower in Finland with an annual production of about 6 million kilos. The interest of the food industry and consumers in using Finnish raw ingredients has affected our operations to the extent that today more than half of our turnover comes from fresh and frozen processed onion products instead of unprocessed onions.

Finland has been shown to produce Europe's purist food and the reason for this is actually quite simple: the short summer and growing season and the midnight sun give plants a rapid growing time and, in its turn, the winter destroys many pests and disinfects the soil. The growing conditions here in the North are, therefore, quite different from those of our more southerly neighbours. This has a direct impact, for example, on the extent of the need for plant protection as nature effectively does the work for us.

The awareness and interest of consumers in the quality of their daily food has increased, but nevertheless I want to raise the Finnish food brand to a higher level. We could open doors for exports from Finland if, instead of analysing different production methods, we exported

products that few countries can produce. When we talk about pure and tasty Finnish products in our company, we are already looking to the future and speaking about Arctic Food.

Elina Vehviläinen-Liikka
vehvilainen.fi



5 CULINARY CALENDAR – THE CULINARY HERITAGE

IN ADDITION to the four gastronomically different seasons, religious holidays, festivals, anniversaries and various food events define the culinary calendar of the Savo region.

Traditional food was made from local ingredients, which, in the countryside, were obtained self-sufficiently, and contained freshwater fish, meat, dairy products, potatoes, root vegetables, mushrooms, berries, rye, barley and oats. Influences on the cuisine have come from the east and west and, in recent decades, from all over the world with the increase in tourism and multiculturalism. The foods on the calendar have remained basically the same, even for centuries, despite internationalisation.

Christmas and Easter, which follows a fast in the Orthodox Church, are two of our biggest culinary festivals. The traditional Christmas meal begins with an appetiser of cold fish dishes, roe and salads. The high point of the meal is ham, roast turkey or venison with a side dish of root vegetable casserole. Dessert consists of berry, prune and chocolate delicacies as well as Christmas pastries and gingerbread cookies.

In February, people enjoy sweet Runeberg tarts, named after Finland's national poet. On Shrove Tuesday, before Lent, the tradition is to have pea soup with pork and Shrove buns filled with jam or almond paste and whipped cream. The fish dishes eaten in midwinter are burbot roe, burbot soup and a fish and pork pasty called *kalakukko*. *Kalakukko* is the best-known fish dish from Savo. It consists of vendace or perch and pork enclosed in rye dough. It is baked in the oven for several hours.

Easter food has influences from Russian Orthodox cuisine.

In the Kuopio region, a traditional Orthodox Easter is still celebrated in local monasteries. The food served at Easter includes eggs, fish, lamb, *mämmi*, *pasha* and *kulich*. The dessert *mämmi* is a special Easter pudding dating back hundreds of years in Finland. It is a slow-cooked sweetened porridge made with rye malt and flour, which is then baked in the oven for a long time. *Mämmi* sales have increased in recent years, perhaps since people became aware of the excellent nutritional properties of rye.

In spring, May Day is celebrated with pickled herrings, *sima* (a lightly fermented lemonade) and ring doughnuts. In late May, you can find nettles, and in gardens, rhubarb. A fisherman may be surprised by a large perch catch. At Midsummer, freshwater fish are smoked, salmon is salted or shore fish is cooked and new potatoes are enjoyed. Perhaps spring morel sauce will be eaten with fish while meat or sausages are barbecued. Those who value wild plants will collect the ingredients for a nutritious salad from the pure, natural environment. Midsummer is also the time for baked rhubarb and the first flavoursome Finnish strawberries. They can be served with Savonian crêpes, for example.

The long days and light nights of July ripen the berries: strawberries, cloudberries, bilberries and raspberries. Currants are ripe in August and lingonberries in September, as also are sea buckthorn berries, rowan berries and the cranberries of the bogs. A still popular Savonian berry speciality is rye-crusted bilberry pie, which has a generous layer of bilberries inside a sweet rye dough. It is served hot with melting ice cream or vanilla sauce. Of the mushrooms, chanterelles

appear after Midsummer and in a good mushroom summer they can be found up to late autumn. Trumpet chanterelles grow until winter. The time for boletes, milk caps and many other mushrooms is mainly in August. In Finland, everyone has the right to pick wild berries and mushrooms.

In July, vendace catches in the lakes grow and, on a summer morning, even an amateur fisherman can catch many kilos of nutritious vendace in his nets. The crayfish season starts on 21 July and these valued delicacies, red when cooked, are enjoyed in the darkening evenings at crayfish parties, with schnapps and songs.

In the autumn, when the corn has ripened, porridge is made from the new grain and unleavened bread and rye bread is baked. A mixed beetroot salad known as *rosolli* is most delicious when made with freshly picked carrots and beetroot. Fresh, local vegetables are available from early summer. Stuffed cabbage rolls and cabbage casserole with lingonberries are enjoyed by many. The autumn berries and apples make for tasty pies, and healthy juice is made from the plentiful apple harvest.

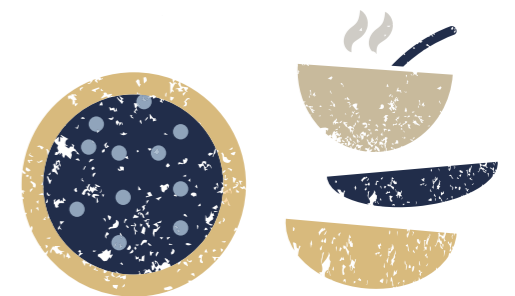
Autumn sees the start of the game and game bird season, when the prized game dishes come onto restaurant menus. On November 10th, the St Martin's Day goose festival is celebrated. Game bird farming ensures their use by restaurants. Dishes prepared from local lamb are also a feature of autumn meals.

In Eastern Finland, food is often cooked for a long time in a slow oven, which is also the current trend. With the rapid development of kitchen appliances, there is now a greater

variety of preparation methods in both professional and domestic kitchens.

When food is served in restaurants at lunchtime and at different kinds of functions in Finland, buffet-style service is typical, which comes from the Scandinavian smörgåsbord tradition. Hors d'œuvres, main dishes and desserts are assembled on a large table, from which each person can choose what to put on their plate. Nowadays, individual table service has become more common. Under the theme of "Let's eat together", the Chaîne des Rôtisseurs Finlande organisation, the Finnish Chef Association and many other groups organise shared meals. Shared meals are also an aim in the busy lives of families. Social eating is important and one dimension of food culture.

Respect and appreciation for food has been a strong feature of Finnish culinary customs. Hospitality is also noteworthy. An unknown wayfarer was invited to the dining table or at least served coffee and a bun. Coffee is drunk in the morning, during the day and often in the evening, too. The Finns are the biggest coffee-drinking nation in the world.





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REGIONAL
INGREDIENTS
PROMOTE HEALTH

6 THE NORDIC DIET PROVIDES THE FOUNDATION FOR HEALTH

FINNISH free school meals were a social innovation and are a significant part of our health. The law on school meals was enacted in 1943, the first of its kind in the world. School meals are viewed as an important part of student welfare and of the upbringing and education provided by schools. It is a means of guiding children and young people to healthy eating habits and teaching them culinary customs and Finnish food culture. The results have been excellent: education and school meals have ensured many success stories.

Nutrition- and food-related studies in Finland are focused on, among other things, the prevention of cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes, obesity and cancers. Based on research, fish containing healthy fatty acids is considered beneficial in preventing cardiovascular disease, for example. Products that have been developed and are available to us include cholesterol-lowering foods, various fermented milk products containing lactic acid bacteria, oat products, vegetarian foods and berry products.

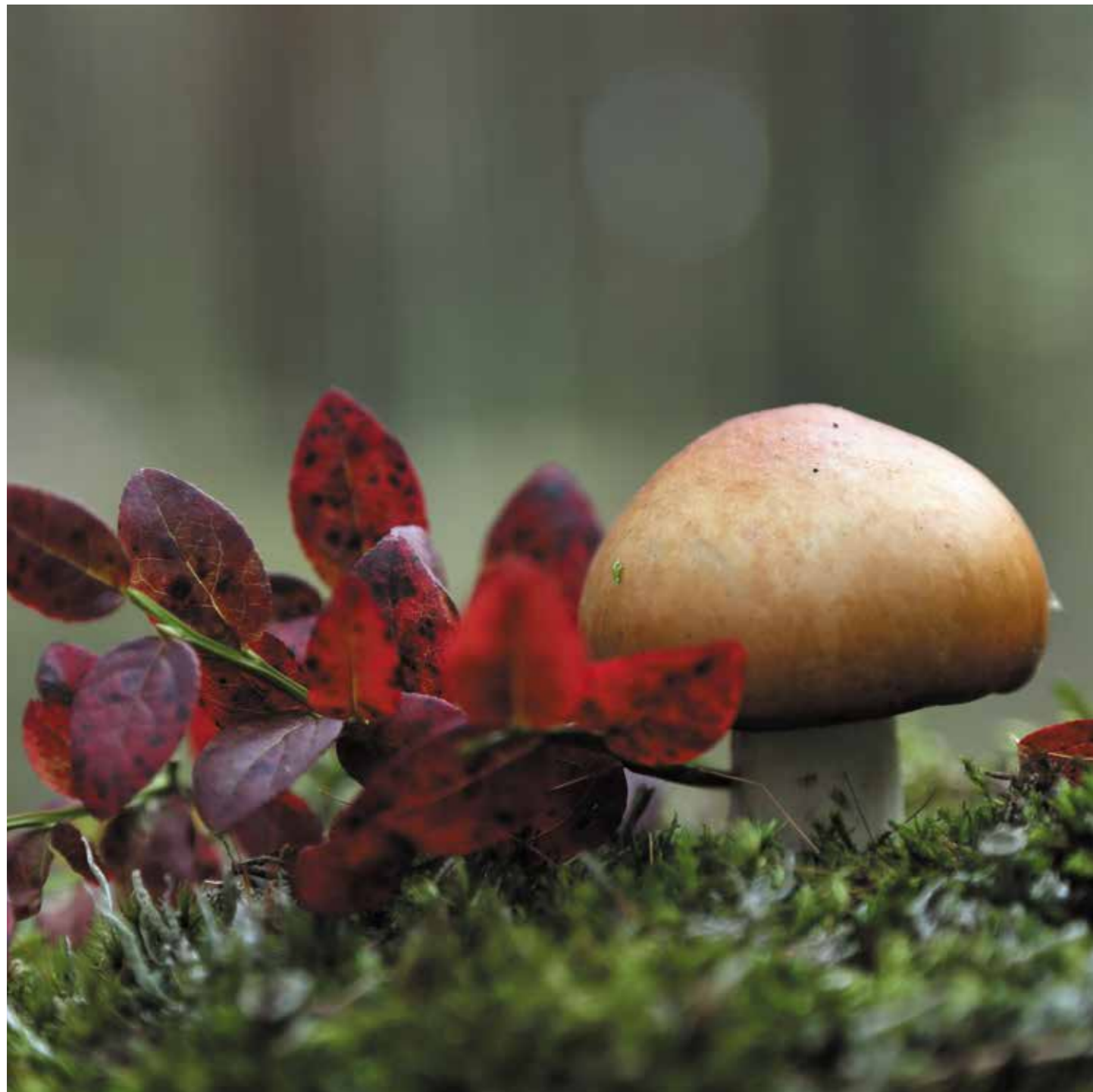
Berry studies have produced promising results on their health benefits. Berries are rich in antioxidant polyphenols and vitamin C and generally contain more fibre than other fruits. Bilberries, considered a super food, are particularly rich in flavonoids and other polyphenolic compounds. Also rich in vitamin C, sea buckthorn berries, blackcurrants, cloudberry and strawberries, as well as anti-inflammatory lingonberries, possess a variety of health benefits. Berries prevent cardiovascular disease, strokes, type 2 diabetes, infections and possibly some types of cancer, while promoting a healthy metabo-

lism and contributing to the health of the eyes, blood vessels, brain, skin and mucous membranes.

Of Finland's grains, rye and oats contain fibre, magnesium and other minerals, B vitamins and bioactive substances such as to make them exceptionally health-promoting.

Wild herbs and plants have a significantly higher content of substances that are important for health than cultivated vegetables, including dietary fibre, vitamins C and E, beta-carotene, folate, potassium, calcium, magnesium and manganese. In Finland, nettles, for example, and other wild plants were traditionally used in folk medicine.





7 REGIONAL INGREDIENTS AT OUR DISPOSAL

ALTHOUGH tourism and multiculturalism have for decades brought new tastes and colours to Finnish food, regional ingredients form the basis of our cuisine.

VEGETABLES

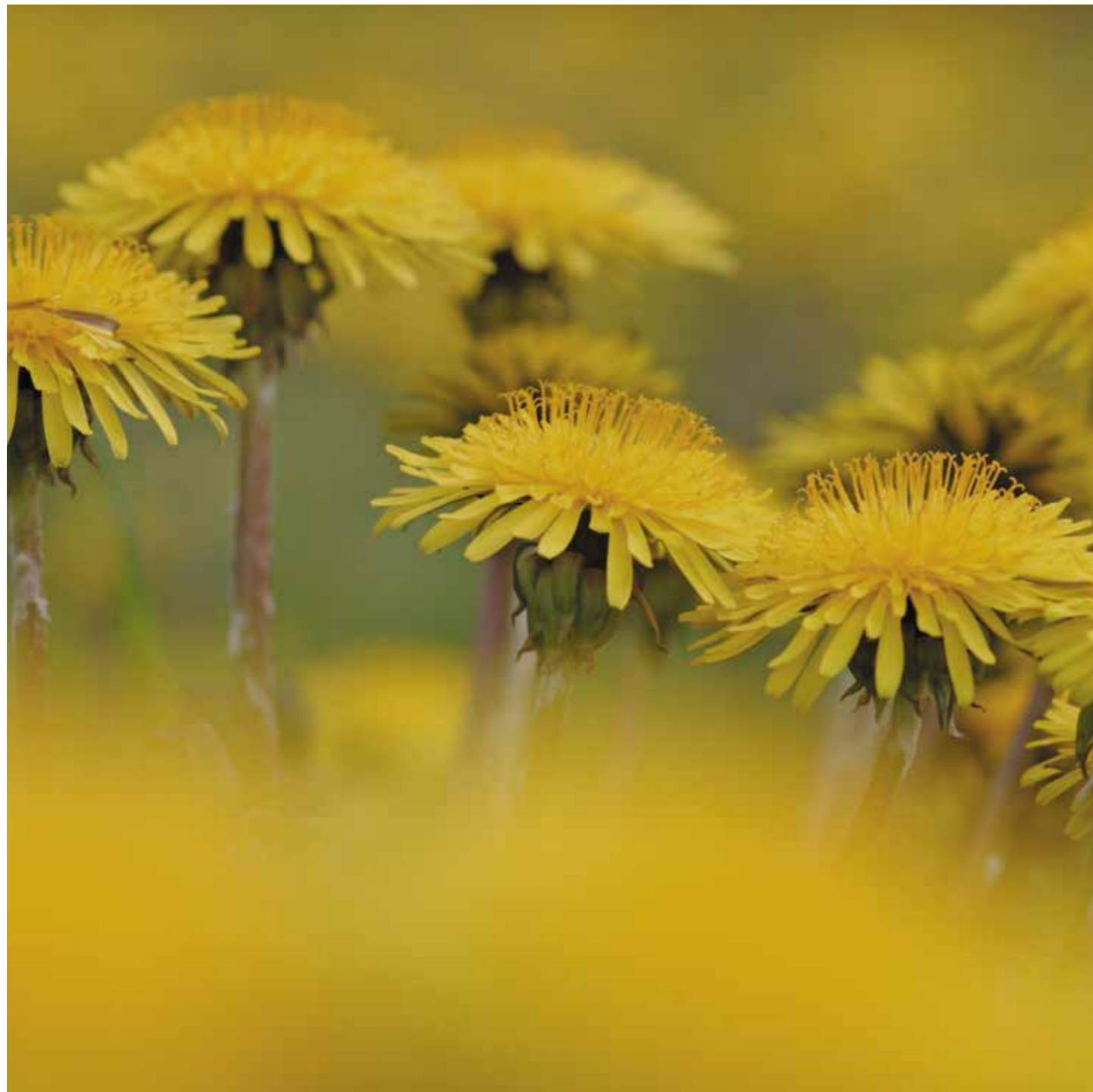
Root vegetables, cabbages and potatoes are the ingredients of basic Savonian food. Potatoes accompanied main dishes before pasta and rice became common. The use of peas and beans is increasing owing to their nutritional value. Nowadays, the range of vegetables has grown and healthy vegetarian foods are being developed by combining wholegrains and pulses with other vegetables. The number of vegetarians is increasing – for example, for ecological reasons.

Freely gathered wild plants and herbs can be added to different kinds of dishes or you can make them into separate dishes. North Savo is Finland's wild herb region. Spending time outdoors in the natural environment foraging for wild food is good for your health and wellbeing as well as providing the opportunity to enjoy the beauty and peace of nature. Health awareness is increasing the demand for wild food and boosts the opportunities for wellness tourism in Finland. The VisitSavo rural tourism products involve everyone collecting wild herbs and using them to make a meal together. In North Savo, the Rural Women's Advisory Organisation, for example, runs wild food courses and trips, for professional cooks, too, in order to improve knowledge of wild foods and preparation skills.

MUSHROOMS

About 200 species of edible mushrooms grow in Finland, of which 23 are recommendable for sale. Savo with its wild areas is one of Finland's richest mushroom regions. According to picking incomes, about 90% of Finland's mushroom harvest is got from Eastern Finland, depending on the weather. The total yield of mushrooms is about one billion kg, but only 1–4% of this is harvested. Of the commercial mushrooms, the highest sales are for ceps, or porcini, which are a European favourite, while milk caps are sold within Finland. Chanterelles and trumpet chanterelles are among the most popular mushrooms. Mushrooms enrich the taste and nutritional value of many dishes and new mushroom dishes and products are being developed. Matsutake is a mushroom prized by the Japanese that grows in pine forests.





ILTALYPSY - PRODUCTS THAT TASTE OF FINNISH NATURE

In 2009, during evening milking in Kiuruvesi, we were pondering of a suitable name for the cafe and restaurant we had just set up. This thinking led to the name Iltalypsy ("Evening Milking")! The thinking behind the name is also seen in our cafe products: Milkmaid's Pastries, Maid's Apple Pie and Farmhand's Chocolate Cake. Our family business is based on traditional products, old, traditional recipes and localness. Also developing and launching new products is a current focus. Especially with regard to wild herb and natural food products, the possibilities are huge! In our wild food products, we use rosebay willowherb flowers, spruce shoots, wood tar and meadowsweet, from which we make marmalades, syrups and sparkling drinks. We buy the ingredients for our products directly from collectors. Alongside our established product family, we have introduced Willimaku wild herb

products, which taste of Finnish nature.

In food preparation, we use a lot of traditional old recipes and we favour locally produced ingredients. We collaborate with more than 20 local suppliers, some of which also deliver organic produce. Most important, however, is that the produce is local and Finnish. Over 90% of what we buy is of Finnish origin.

Our family business runs smoothly in the hands of two generations. Our son, Eetu, joined the business after studying to be a restaurant cook. Although entrepreneurship wasn't an automatic choice for Eetu, subsequent hospitality management and bakery studies and his current studies for the Specialist Qualification in Management have confirmed that his decision was the right one.

Our operations are centred on our cafe restaurants in Kiuruvesi and Iisalmi. We also run a local shop in Iisalmi and produce and sell local food in Kiuruvesi. The products we make include spiced wine, mustards, syrups and salad dressings, and wild herb products such as rosebay willowherb drink, spruce shoot syrup and marmalades. There is also a small bakery in Kiuruvesi that supplies pastries for our own use and to local shops. This summer, we are expanding our operations to Kuopio by opening a summer cafe in the Pikku Pietari market alley. So in future, our named products will also be available in Kuopio.

Eetu, Kirsi ja Jari Tikkanen
> www.iltalypsy.fi



FISH

Thanks to our hundreds of fish-filled lakes, fish is one of the riches of our cuisine. Kuopio lies in the middle of the lake system, so freshwater fish are an important food. Vendace, a member of the salmon family, is probably the most popular fish in Savo, but also tasty are perch, zander (pike-perch), common whitefish and pike. Burbot are only fished in the winter, other fish throughout the year. Rainbow trout and also whitefish and zander are farmed, as well as sturgeon for caviar. Roe, such as the roe of vendace, whitefish, burbot and rainbow trout, is a delicious and valuable Finnish food, as is the region's only crustacean, the crayfish. With the shrinking of the fishing generation in Eastern Finland, fish farms have been established to ensure fish supply, with consideration for their environmental impact.



KUOPION KALATUOTE

Kuopion Kalatuote is a family business founded in 1992. Fresh and high-quality ingredients, traditional production methods and short distances from water to dining table are the principles on which our company has operated for over 20 years. We make our fish products from Finnish freshwater and sea fish and imported fish fillets. We are engaged in long-term collaboration with the region's fishermen. Local fish is purchased all year round and delivered to the region's shops and restaurants whole, filleted and processed. Almost all our production is on our customers' terms – in other words, products are made to order. This ensures the best possible shelf life and top-quality fish products for the end user.

One of the big product categories is kalakukko fish and pork pasties, which we

have been making for three generations, to the same recipe for over 70 years. Our kalakukko has been overwhelmingly the most successful product in the Finnish Kalakukko Baking Championship that is held annually at Kuopio's January Market. We are also one of the biggest producers of vendace roe. We have exported this prized delicacy to Sweden for 20 years, where it is regarded as one of the best. The other export countries are currently Italy and Germany.

In 2015, two products, Stone Kiln Cold Smoked Salmon and Salmon "Tsar", received a Superior Taste Award of two Golden Stars from the International Taste and Quality Institute in Brussels. These were the only Finnish products and the only processed fish products in the world that were given an award by

the distinguished jury in the blind tests. In 2016, we entered the event with three products and were successful then, too. Our Blazed Salmon with Soya & Chilli was awarded one Golden Star, Traditional Alder Hot Smoked Salmon two Golden Stars and Stone Kiln Cold Smoked Rainbow Trout three Golden Stars. The last-mentioned is probably the only such product that has ever received maximum points.

We are extremely proud of the fact that our products are among the best in the world. We will continue on our chosen path without compromising on ingredients, quality or taste experiences.

Kari ja Markku Ylihärsilä
> www.kuopionkalatuote.fi



MEAT AND GAME

In addition to the production of the usual beef, pork, lamb and chicken, there is, among others, breeding of geese, ducks and wild ducks in Savo. Sheep breeding is an old tradition in Savo that has increased in recent years with the popularity of lamb.

Forest game, elk, hare and forest birds and waterfowl add delicious taste experiences to our meals. Elk is the most important in quantity (about 10 million kg of meat/year) and value. Hare is mostly enjoyed in hunting households. Partridges, pheasants, pigeons, mallards and willow grouse can also be hunted commercially. Elk and northern reindeer are served in homes and many restaurants. The strict regulations of the Finnish Food Safety Authority control the hunting, handling and sale of game. In line with the hunting seasons, game appears most on menus in the autumn and winter.



MUSTA LAMMAS RESTAURANT

We at Musta Lammas ("The Black Sheep") believe that the best raw ingredients in the world are to be found in North Savo. We could not imagine operating as a producer of restaurant experiences without the local suppliers, seasonal ingredients and unspoilt forests and lakes.

Musta Lammas is part of Kuopio's history and present. In 1862, a vaulted cellar was built for a brewery. Gustaf Ranin bought the premises a few years later and, in addition to beer, started making the famous Savon Wiina, a brand of schnapps. Under that impressive vaulted ceiling, the Musta Lammas restaurant was established in 1982. On the outside of the restaurant, a Gourmet sign was erected. From then on, we have been promoting Finnish food and

drink culture. In March 2017, Gust. Ranin and Ravintolamestarit bottled their joint history in the present in the form of the splendid Mestari Gin, which is an excellent example of the seamless collaboration between businesses in our region.

It's great to be involved in creating a Savonian food culture. The uniqueness of our region also comes out in the Satoa festivals, which we have participated in from the start.

We prepare each dish ourselves from start to finish. The unspoilt forests, fields and lakes of the North are the source of inspiration for our menus.

We try to make use of Savo's nature as much as possible. We pick wild herbs

ourselves for our kitchen. In addition, depending on the season, we get wonderful ingredients gathered from the forest by local foragers. We get freshwater fish from local fishermen and local farms supply us directly with great tastes. Game is used according to season. This summer, we have our own field under cultivation. If we have a successful harvest, our guests will be able to enjoy our own preserved root vegetables throughout the winter.

We want to be gastronomic pioneers in our region. History cannot be bought

Eeva Mertanen

> www.mustalammas.net

www.ravintolamestarit.net



DAIRY PRODUCTS AND CHEESE

North Savo has a long history of dairy farming and Kuopio is one of the largest milk producing areas in Finland. Dairy farms are increasing in size but decreasing in number. The region has dairies and dairy production, including cheese. Many unripened cheeses are made in Finland, and Savo has, for example, long produced Emmental cheese, which has even gained international recognition. The production of other matured cheeses has gradually expanded as new cheese factories have been established.



PELTOLAN - TASTY ARTISANAL PRODUCTS FROM OUR OWN FARM MILK

Peltolan is a company rich in tradition that makes top-quality artisanal products from its own farm milk – cheese, ice cream, sorbets and real churned butter without additives. All our products are made from genuine natural ingredients with respect for nature. Our delicious products are created according to the customers' needs. This enables us to produce completely unique taste combinations for our customers. If required, we can also add a very carefully chosen finishing touch to complement any menu.

Cultivation on the old Peltola family farm was started back in 1847. Today, our farm in Rautalampi produces about 700,000 litres of milk per year, which is our company's principal raw ingredient.

Peltolan Blue cheese and our churned butter have found favour with restaurant chefs throughout the country. The secret of the delicious taste of our cheeses lies in our own farm milk from cows nourished by the red clover we grow. Our goal was to produce distinctive cheese and in this we have succeeded. Peltolan butter is made by the traditional method of souring and churning.

With the expansion of ice cream and sorbet production, we moved our operations to the Futuria Business Park in Suonenjoki. With about 400 different recipes, our refreshing varieties of ice cream and sorbets are always produced from pure, natural ingredients without preservatives. They have a delicious taste

of berries, fruit and other natural flavours. Finnish ingredients are supplemented with, for example, exotic fruits and alcoholic drinks.

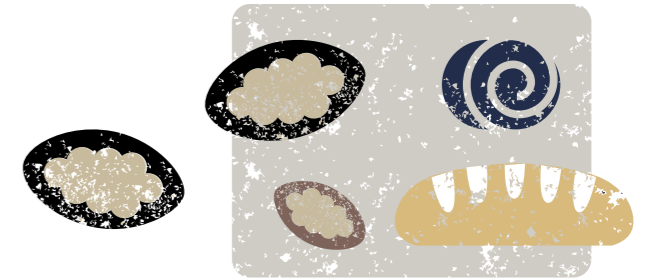
We develop our production in accordance with our values. Sustainable and environmentally friendly production methods and respect for local food culture are an important part of our operations.

Matti Kärkkäinen
> www.peltolan.fi



BREADS, PASTIES AND PIES

The range of breads is very wide. Rye bread is typically eaten at all meals and in 2016 was voted by Finns as the national food. The dough base is allowed to sour for about 24 hours before the bread is baked. Various unleavened breads, baked mainly from barley, are traditional in Savo and the range of oat breads is also wide. Rice-filled, rye-crust Karelain pasties and many other pasties with egg and butter spread are part of everyday meals as well as special occasions.



LIEPUSKAN HERKKUPAJA - LOCAL TASTES FOR THE WORLD TO ENJOY

The family firm Liepuskan Herkkupaja came into being in Nilsä in 2011 with the idea of showcasing North Savonian skills in cooking and baking. We believed from the outset that local product expertise based on quality and tradition, but capable of innovation, would bring us success. We take the view that things can always be done better.

In addition to running a bakery, we provide a catering service, sell pastries and have a cafe right in the centre of Nilsä. Our products are sold by many retailers in Siilinjärvi and Kuopio, and our Karelian pasties are also available in Helsinki. We meet the special requirements of our customers and tailor products to the occasion. We want to be dependable, provide added value and be

an innovative partner for our customers and collaborators.

We source our ingredients as locally as possible, using local grain from small farmers, for example. In our ingredients, we always take advantage of the seasonal harvest. All the products from our bakery are additive-free and are always made by hand.

We are highly skilled in many different product categories in baking. For example, we are the Rye Bread Champion of North Savo. The award-winning Liepuska Kibbled Rye Bread was the result of experimental baking by an innovative and skilled baker using high-quality local flour.

Bilberry pies, Karelian pasties and

kalakukko fish and pork pasties, all of which are among our key products, are the most traditional pastries in our field. We make first-class Finnish products that reflect Finnish food culture and tastes. We make our products so well that they are worth exporting. The first batches of the traditional Savonian delicacy, rye-crust bilberry pie, have already gone on the market in London, and later the range will be extended with rye bread, Karelian pasties, mini vendace and pork pasties and tartlets filled with smoked salmon and mushrooms.

**Riitta Vartiainen sekä
Eeva-Maria ja Timo Turunen**
> www.liepuska.fi



BERRIES

There are 37 species of edible wild berries in Finland. The annual berry yield is about 550 million kg or about 100 kg per person. The majority are wild berries, about 10% of which are harvested. The berry harvest has increased with the help of foreign pickers. Bilberries and lingonberries are the most exported – about 4 million kg of each per year. Half of the total income from berry picking in Finland is generated in Eastern Finland. Berries are an important raw ingredient for the food industry. They are at their most nutritious when fresh and uncooked.



PAKKASMARJA - WELLBEING FROM FINNISH BERRIES

Owned by berry growers, Pakkasmarja is based in Suonenjoki, the strawberry town of Finland, in North Savo. Commercial strawberry production in the region had its beginnings more than 100 years ago. The purity of the environment and the changing seasons in North Savo provide the best conditions for growing delicious and fragrant strawberries. The dedication and professionalism of the region's growers also guarantees the unique taste of Suonenjoki's strawberries, well-known throughout Finland. Pakkasmarja was founded in 1982 when the region's growers began collaborating to make local strawberries into year-round products. Later on, strawberry products have been joined by other cultivated, organic and wild berry products.

The company's strength lies in the superb Finnish raw ingredients, the benefits of which are apparent to berry eaters in many respects. Their taste, healthiness and safety make berries gems of Finnish food. Berries are full of various vitamins, fibre and other essential nutrients. Some of the nutrients are lost, however, if the berries are cooked. Research has shown that Finnish berries are so pure, there is no need to cook them. Then they keep their taste and nutrients in the best possible way.

In our recipe and product development, we consider it important to develop berry products and delicacies with as few additives as possible, preserving the natural vitamins and taste and giving Finnish berries pride of place. The food bloggers Virpi

Mikkonen and Tuulia Talvio have created for us a wonderful range of berry-based Recipes for Wellbeing. In keeping with the spirit of the times, the recipes do not contain any dairy products, gluten or white sugar.

It is also the task of Pakkasmarja to safeguard and develop Finnish berry growing. All our operations are based on collaboration, and the network is continually being expanded so that these wonderful raw ingredients will be available in the future, too.

Terhi Janatuinen
> www.pakkasmarja.fi



GUST. RANIN / LIGNELL & PIISPANEN - ARCTIC LUXURY

THE FINNISH ARTIC RASPBERRY GIVES ITS TASTE TO THE FAMOUS LIQUEUR

I am often asked whether my choice of career in the family business was voluntary. I sidestep the question by saying that, instead of blood in my veins, there is alcohol and not only did I grow up in a barrel but I was born there too. This year, we are celebrating the 165th anniversary of our family business. Since 1852, the skills of the trade have been passed from father to son or daughter. As a small boy, I myself went round the liqueur distillery with my father, and now my son, too, enjoys being there.

We try to buy our raw ingredients from Finnish suppliers. The finest of these ingredients is the Arctic raspberry. The liqueur made from it is the product for which Lignell & Piispanen is best known. Lignell & Piispanen is the only production

plant in Finland utilising the Arctic raspberry on this scale. Our strengths are our use of genuine Finnish natural ingredients, either wild or cultivated berries and herbs, craftsmanship dating back to the 19th century and the associated history and traditions. Our fourth strength is design.

Our production is both craft-based and mechanised. Genuine raw ingredients require a great deal of handicraft – in handling the berries, for example. Of course, berry liqueur production has evolved in 165 years, but on the other hand, cloudberry liqueur, for example, is produced in the same way as when production started.

We like to work with family businesses and we aim for long-term partnerships. We share the same values, values that are always found in family firms regardless of their size.

WE ARE ARTISANS OF ARCTIC LUXURY!

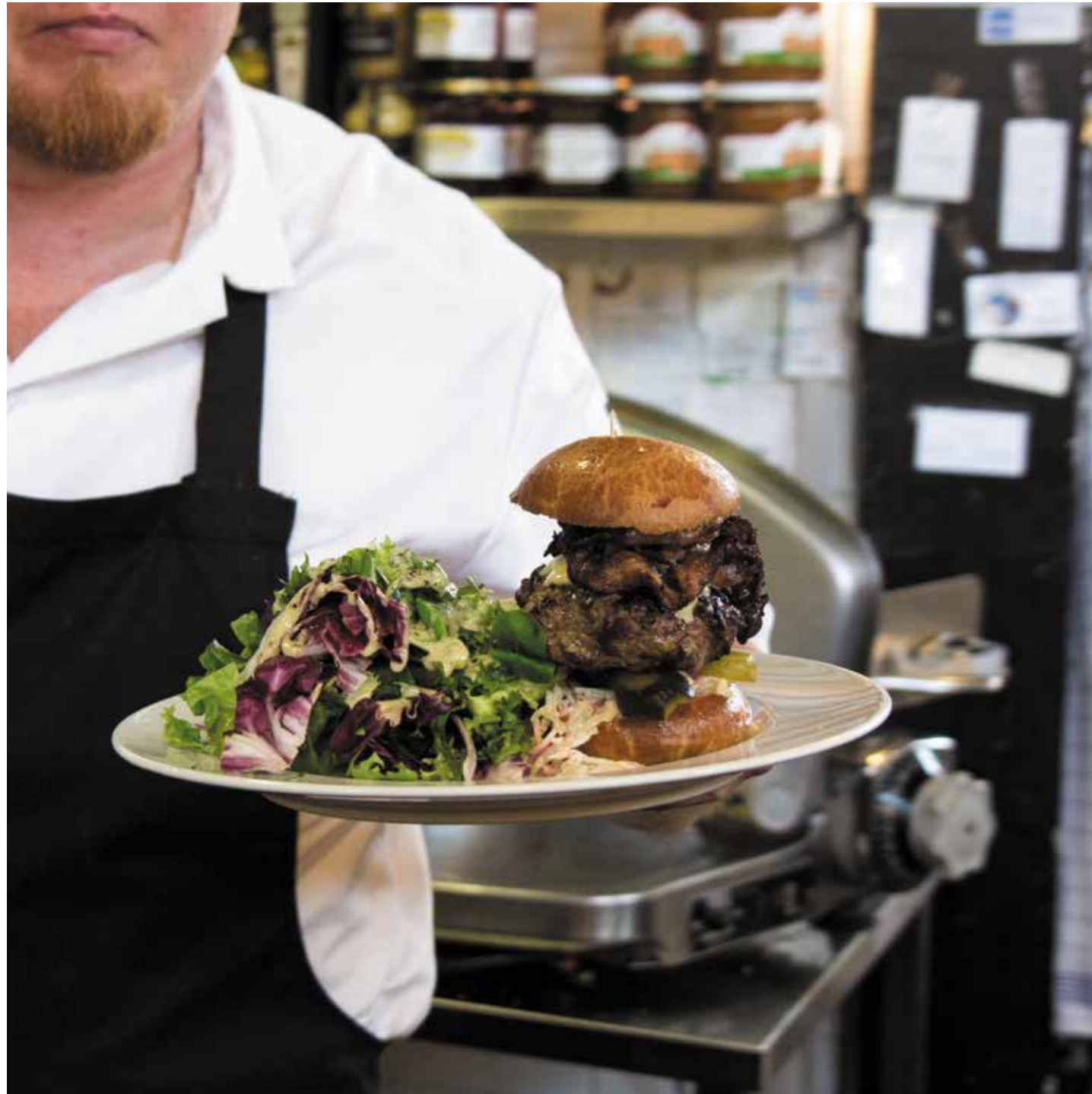
Gust. Ranin manufactures alcoholic beverages from natural Arctic ingredients for connoisseurs in Finland, Europe and Asia. Our work is directed by high quality, excellent design, innovative concepts, customer orientation and the artisanal skill in beverage production that has passed from father to son since 1852. Our marketing name is Lignell&Piispanen.

Harri Nylund

> www.lignellpiispanen.fi







KUOPIO REGION CANDIDATE 2020

EDUCATION & RESEARCH AS THE BASIS FOR INNOVATIONS

8 EDUCATION AND TRAINING

KUOPIO has a long history of education in the fields of food, nutrition and tourism, and such education is available at the basic, vocational and higher levels. The education continuum in the field is good and enables the continuous development of a range of skills – in the spirit of lifelong learning.

A good foundation for an interest in food and food culture is provided by the compulsory home economics courses taken by all secondary school pupils in Finland, enabling them to learn practical everyday skills as well as stimulating their interest in the subject and in studying it further.

Vocational schools provide a solid foundation for agricultural entrepreneurship and the development of production processes and also train skilled staff for the restaurant, catering and food industry. The Service Sector College Kuopio provides various vocational training courses in the field of hospitality for both young people and adults. Some of the vocational upper secondary qualifications in the field of food and hospitality are studied for at Savo Vocational College. The training provided by vocational schools is job-oriented and cooperation with employers is of key importance.

The Savonia University of Applied Sciences in Kuopio provides education in the field of tourism and hospitality. Every year, about 100 students start studying tourism and hospitality services management. After graduating, they may work for companies in this field in supervisory positions or as entrepreneurs, for example. Beginning in autumn 2017, Savonia is running a new minor programme in Wellness Business, which also includes food and nutrition as part of a

holistic approach to wellness. This is a growing field with a need for trained business professionals. The programme also helps prepare students for entrepreneurship.

Responsible food production is one of Savonia's four strategic focus areas, in which new, nationally and also internationally important expertise is being vigorously developed. Covering the whole food chain, the focus area is characterised by a holistic "from field to table" approach. Savonia's Degree Programme in Agricultural and Rural Industries strengthens food industry know-how by training experts in primary food production and rural developers, for example. During their studies, students have the opportunity to deepen their expertise – for example, on food chain responsibility and safe production processes.

The University of Eastern Finland provides nutritional education in Kuopio. Various kinds of nutrition professionals graduate from the nutrition study programme. In addition to nutrition and food science, the studies include medicine and natural and behavioural sciences. The University's Institute of Public Health and Clinical Nutrition also has extensive research and development activities and produces doctoral graduates as well. Another strength of the University lies in food development.



9 INNOVATIONS AND SUPPORTING BUSINESSES

AN INNOVATION is a competitive advantage arising from expertise that benefits business, society and human well-being. An innovation can be application of new knowledge, skills or technology, a completely new product or technical solution, a new expert service, design or brand. A new business model or value network, a new management approach or a public service implemented in a new way can all be described as innovations.

North Savo is an economically developing area with both strong primary production and food producing companies with R&D expertise. The competitiveness of North Savo in Finland, Europe and globally depends on successful companies, and we work hard to develop their business operations. That is the best form of regional development.

For the region's businesses, it is of vital importance that they have access to the research, development and innovation services of the educational institutions and research institutes. In collaboration, ProAgria, the Savonia University of Applied Sciences, SawoGrow and the University of Eastern Finland can provide companies with comprehensive R&D service assistance both in developing primary production and in the innovation processes of food companies. Our services cover the whole innovation process from product and concept ideation to consumer testing of the product and scaling up for production. Through our business expertise, we can influence the creation of new businesses and the growth and internationalisation of existing businesses.

Food industry companies actively make use of Savonia's Fu-

ture Food R&D and food laboratory services. The Future Food environment has been created to serve the food industry comprehensively. It develops operations to meet the changing needs of the business world and increases regional food expertise. The Future Food environment is also aimed at increasing links between education and the local, national and international business community.

The services of the development company SawoGrow support the development needs of, in particular, the berry sector and the food industry. The SawoGrow Berry Know-How Centre provides information and training for berry growers and Futuria-Food Development is focused on R&D, space design, product information services and quality and food safety systems. One of its strengths is that sector-specific services can be combined with business-related advice, from starting up onwards.



10 FOOD EDUCATION IS AN IMPORTANT ACTIVITY OF THE RURAL WOMEN'S ADVISORY ORGANISATION

THE FOOD EDUCATION events organised by the Rural Women's Advisory Organisation are designed to promote children's food education and healthy food choices as well as the use of local food. Here are a few examples of the events.

FRUIT & VEG HOARD PUZZLE FOR PRESCHOOLERS

The aim of the *Fruit & Veg Hoard Puzzle for Preschoolers* is to increase consumption of vegetables, fruit and berries by 3–7-year-old children through practical guidance using taste training methods. The long-term goal is to promote the health of preschoolers. At the same time, we increase knowledge of healthy eating habits and sense-oriented food education in families with preschool children and encourage staff at day care centres to make use of sense-oriented food education.

The *Fruit & Veg Hoard Puzzle* tempts out the bold food detectives and allows the children to become familiar with vegetables, fruits and berries using all their senses. During the event, the children have the chance to solve the exciting fruit and veg hoard puzzle. Shared tasks challenge the senses and provide fascinating experiences of the diverse world of fruit and vegetables. The event climaxes when the clever detectives receive their own magnifying glasses and certificates!

WHERE BREAD GROWS

Where Bread Grows events help to increase awareness among schoolchildren, parents and teachers of balanced and healthy eating. The functional advice provided by the Rural

Women's Advisory Organisation emphasises the quality of carbohydrates, the importance of dietary fibre and reducing sugar consumption. The aim is to increase the consumption of wholegrain products and vegetables as good sources of fibre and increase schoolchildren's knowledge of the food chain.

A *Where Bread Grows* event involves illustrative activity checkpoints where pupils and their teachers examine choices based on the nutritional recommendations with the help of practical examples. In addition, the activity track presents good snack options that are easy for children to prepare.

EAT WELL

In the *Eat Well* project, the nutritional recommendations are introduced and support is provided for healthy food choices by children and families with children at info sessions with illustrative activity points in family cafes and other family meeting places.

The events are designed to promote a reduction in consumption of products containing sugar, the importance of eating together in families and healthy choices such as eating more vegetables, berries and fruit.







KUOPIO REGION CANDIDATE 2020

THIS IS HOW
WE ORGANISE OUR
DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

11 ORGANISATION

THE KUOPIO region is aiming to become a European Region of Gastronomy in 2020. The bid for the designation and the process leading to it can give us a competitive advantage that will benefit the region's businesses, generate new jobs and be reflected in the wellbeing of consumers. We see the process as a big opportunity. Our activities can be represented as an organisational tree, where the roots of the activities and organisation are the regional actors: businesses, developers, funders, the third sector and educational institutions. Responsible and goal-oriented collaboration between these actors, in line with sustainable development, produces fruit on the branches of the tree: new business products and services, festivals that use local ingredients, tourism services whose products are culturally sustainable and genuine, or, for example, the Young Chef Award in collaboration with IGCAT.

This organisational model illustrates activities in the Kuopio region but is also suitable as a model for the European Region of Gastronomy Platform and its activities. The tree also bears fruit in the form of new operating models created in the Platform.

A BUSINESSES

These comprise businesses in the food, tourism and creative sectors, restaurants and recreation service providers.

B FARMS

Besides traditional farms, primary producers operating on a very small scale can also be involved in the activities – for example, by selling their products in REKO rings.

C ORGANISATIONS

These include Chaîne des Rôtisseurs Finlande, the Rural Women's Advisory Organisation, etc.

D FUNDERS & DEVELOPERS

Foundations, municipalities and regional, national and international funders.

E EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

F VISIT FINLAND JA FINPRO

G EUROPEAN REGION OF GASTRONOMY PLATFORM

H IGCAT

International Institute of Gastronomy, Culture, Art and Tourism

I DIGITAL SALES AND MARKETING

e.g. www.kuopiotahko.fi

1 visitSAVO

A rural tourism cluster involving about 25 businesses and actors in the tourism, food and creative sectors. Marketing to Germany is carried out in collaboration with Visit Finland. visitsavo.fi

Ilona Sares, ilona.sares@proagria.fi

2 FESTIVALS & EVENTS

To begin with, our aim is to productise the summer: responsible events every weekend from the beginning of June to the end of September. Jarkko Kääriäinen, jarkko.kaariainen@proagria.fi

3 tasteSAVO

Branding of food companies has been started with brand seminars and a small

group of businesses.

Ilona Sares, ilona.sares@proagria.fi

4 REKO RINGS

60 primary producers and entrepreneurs are involved in REKO food rings. Customers number about 6,000. Marja Niskanen, marja.niskanen@maajakotitalousnaiset.fi

5 BUY FROM THE FARM DAY

The event has been held twice in Finland. ostatilalta.fi
marja.niskanen@maajakotitalousnaiset.fi

6 YOUNG CHEF AWARD

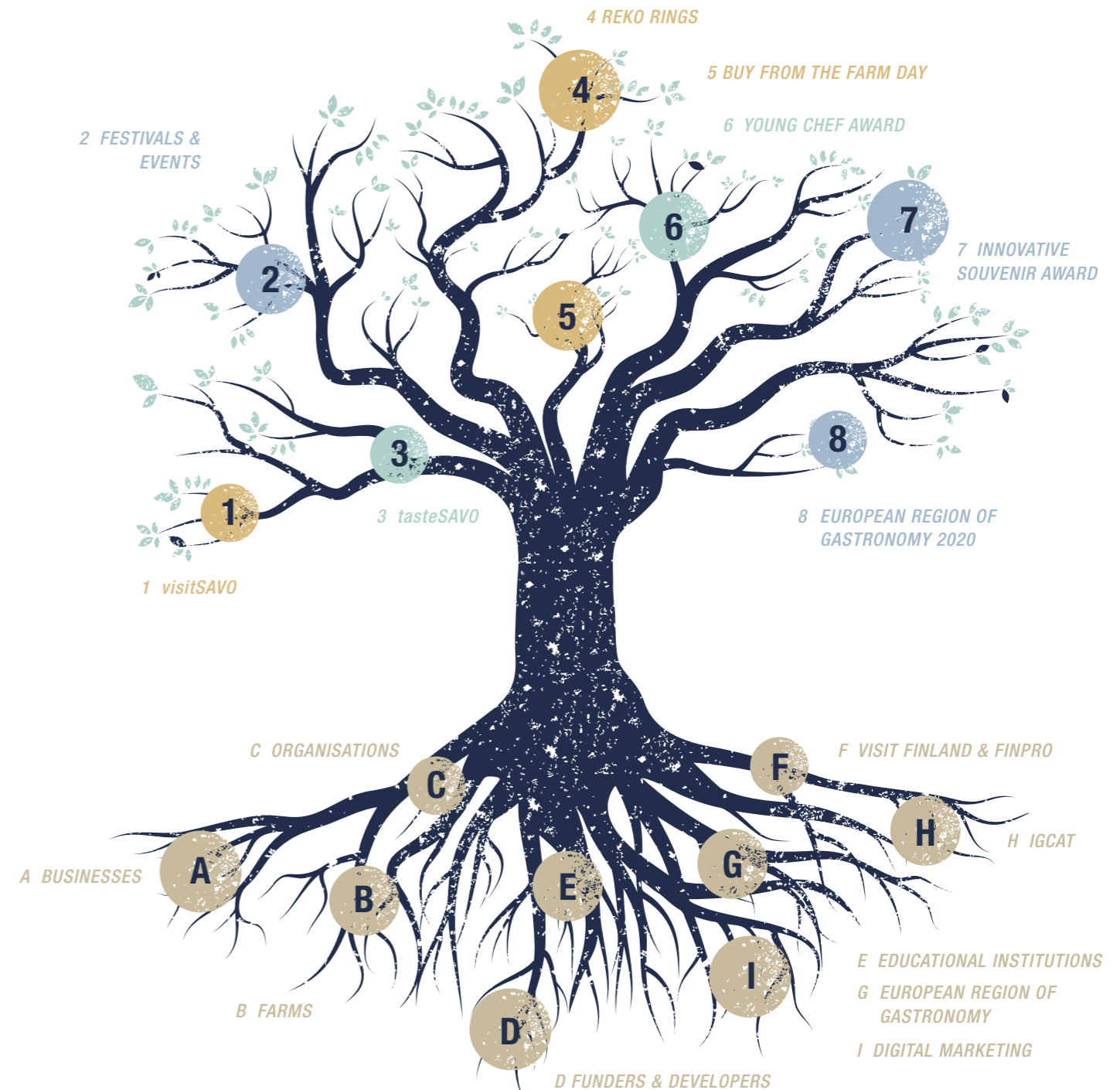
The person responsible for the Kuopio region competitions is Jari Linden. jari.linden@savonia.fi

7 INNOVATIVE SOUVENIR AWARD

jari.linden@savonia.fi

8 EUROPEAN REGION OF GASTRONOMY 2020

The programme of activities for 2020 will be prepared in detail.



12 EVENT AND PROJECT PLAN

WE ARE BUILDING our future purposefully and responsibly. Responsible activities involve operating models that help create new jobs and economic vitality in our region. These are not one-time models, they are enduring models that form the basis for the region's business collaboration and activities that benefit regional actors more widely. Accordingly, in event and project planning, we produce new models by making use of existing structures as much as we possibly can. This can be seen in our festival calendar, for example. Also listed are those festivals that will be developed. In this section, we have listed responsible structures that we will implement and develop further. The programme of activities for 2020 will be prepared later

VISITSAVO

According to the current state report produced for the Kuopio region in 2013, collaboration between businesses in the tourism, food and creative sectors was natural cooperation arising out of a need. Except for the region's strongest tourism companies, however, it was rather tentative and sporadic. Since the beginning of 2015, we have developed new operating models for collaboration between businesses in the tourism, food and creative sectors. These rural tourism products involve five rural hotels together with farms and food and creative sector businesses in the same geographical area. We have included the Kuopio region's events and festivals as part of the weekly programme of the tourism products.

HAAPANIEMI TRAVEL - NATURE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Haapaniemi Travel is located in the countryside of Upper Savo, about an hour's drive from Kuopio, on Lake Haapajärvi. The family farm has gradually been turned into a tourist attraction and, over the decades, accommodation, saunas and function rooms have been built according to the customers' needs. We have a wonderful traditional smoke sauna, and it is lovely to take a break from the heat and jump into the clear and refreshing lake!

I am responsible for product development in our family business, and through

that I am involved in developing tourism products aimed at international customers. The presence of nature and localness are important values, whether we are choosing timbers for the smoke sauna or ingredients for the kitchen; the principles of sustainable development are important to us. We also want to be present for our customers here at Haapaniemi and meet them when they arrive. Our services reflect the everyday luxury connected with Finnish culture and traditions – practical functionality

that has been refined into traditions and customs over time.

Through VisitSavo collaboration, we have been able to make our products even more impressive and interesting. Our goal is to provide our customers with special experiences and to enjoy producing them. This attitude of caring and enjoying our own work is also conveyed to the customers

Sanna-Riikka Nissinen
> www.haapaniemenmatkailu.fi



RUUKKUMAA - EXPERIENCES FOR TOURISTS THROUGH CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION

Making pottery is my work but also an attitude to life. It is my way of bringing beauty, joy and boldness into my own life and the lives of those around me. My business, RuukkuMaa, was founded in favourable circumstances: I returned with my family to live in the rural area where I spent my childhood. The countryside presents opportunities to make a living if you are hard-working and ready for something new.

Last summer, we built a wood-burning pottery kiln in our yard. We named it Sylvi because when you put something in there, something beautiful comes out, so the name is a beautiful and delicate female name. The results of wood firing are often quite surprising. It isn't as easy to control as an electric or gas kiln because outside factors – humidity, wind and temperature – also affect the result. That indeed is where its essence lies: when

the kiln is opened after 20 hours of firing and cooling, those gathered around it are quiet and excited. Like small children, we wait expectantly to see what comes out of the kiln.

Through VisitSavo, in the last couple of years we have developed cross-sector collaboration. The partners involved in product development are geographically close rural hotels, farms, food and recreation businesses and businesses and actors in the creative sector. I play a key role in the network: I engage in marketing in Germany on sales trips and I also act as a guide for customers.

Entering international markets alone would be difficult, but together we create strong packages that combine local culture, local food and outdoor experiences. We take tourists with us to heat the sauna, to the farm to bake rye bread and to the forest to make sauna

whisks. We have trust in each other, a good spirit and enjoyment in working together. Collaboration produces success for all the partners. As our guests, tourists get to know us, Finnish entrepreneurs and local culture.

We in the creative sector have our feelers out for new things and perhaps for this reason a certain sensitivity is also present when we meet customers: when we bake rye bread with a customer, the moment, at its best, shapes us both. For me as a designer, everyday beauty is found in utensils and shapes – say, in traditional birch bark baskets and the sandwiches made from rye bread that are packed in them.

Susanna Hotari
> www.ruukkumaa.fi

CROSS-COLLABORATION WITH OTHER REGIONS OF GASTRONOMY PLATFORM PARTNERS

We are part of the European Region of Gastronomy Platform. Although our goal is 2020, we are already developing responsible, long-term operating models within the Platform. An important part of these activities is close collaboration, as extensive as possible, with the other regions. All of our countries and regions need to collaborate to learn about and understand other cultures and good practices. Through collaboration, we will also understand better what is special here in Finland and in the Kuopio region.

We have been a member of the European Region of Gastronomy Platform for a couple of years. At the end of last year, Mikko Tiihonen from the Urban Restaurant competed for the European Young Chef Award in Spain and we are delighted that he is acting as a responsible food ambassador for our region, and also that every year we have the opportunity to attract young chefs to our region ready to take part in the Young Chef Award. We hope that we will be able to host the competition in 2020.

This year, Århus in Denmark is a European Region of Gastronomy. We intend to celebrate this year in Århus with the Danes by working side by side at the Århus food festivals in cookery workshops with our chefs.

FRESHWATER FISH PROJECT WITH CHAÎNE DES RÔTISSEURS

Productisation of the freshwater fish in Finland's lakes and rivers is already being carried out in several projects. However, consumption of fish such as roach and bream, not to mention pike, zander and perch, three fish highly valued in Europe, is still marginal in relation to what our lakes have to offer. Our aim is to safeguard a responsible production chain for fish from lake to table and increase the use of currently undervalued fish species. In productisation, we follow modern gastronomic trends.

La Chaîne des Rôtisseurs is the largest gastronomic organisation in the world with over 20,000 members on all continents. Collaboration with this organisation provides a good basis and a critical pilot group for the development of products aimed at both restaurants and consumers.

ANTI – CONTEMPORARY ART FESTIVAL

The theme of the ANTI – Contemporary Art Festival in 2020 will be food. Produced at several urban sites in Kuopio, the art works will investigate how contemporary artists explore the sensory experience of taste, food as material of art and the social practices around cooking and eating. Food as a marker of identity, ethnicity and community provides an exciting opportunity for the international site-specific festival focused on the urban fabric of Kuopio to continue engaging its citizens in the realm of art. The food-themed festival will be organised in close collaboration with the Satoa Festival and local restaurants, food producers and food businesses.

SUMMER FESTIVALS IN NORTH SAVO 2017

	FESTIVALS AND EVENTS	DESCRIPTION
1.5.	MAY DAY	May Day is a spring festival and public holiday.
14.- 20.6.	KUOPIO DANCE FESTIVAL	The oldest and biggest international dance festival in the Nordic countries. > www.kuopiodancefestival.fi/en/home
16. - 17.6.	SATOA GOES WILD	Food & Culture Festival in Kuopio. > www.satoa.fi
23. - 24.6.	MIDSUMMER	Festival with great bonfires and local festivities in all Finland.
30.6. - 1.7.	WIFE CARRYING WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS, SONKAJÄRVI	A crazy competition based on the story of a local robber who ran off with women. > www.eukonkanto.fi/en/
30.6. - 8.7.	KUOPIO WINE FESTIVAL	An annual festival held at Kuopio Harbour. This year's theme is "Taste of America". Performances by top Finnish bands" > www.kuopiowinefestival.fi
7. - 8.7.	OLUSET BEER FESTIVAL, IISALMI	The programme includes a beer school and guided tours of the Olvi brewery. > oluset.fi
7. - 9.7.	SUONENJOKI STRAWBERRY CARNIVAL	A festival where strawberry growers take a break and celebrate. > www.mansikkakarnevaalit.fi/english.html
12. - 16.7.	KIURUVESI SCHLAGER FESTIVAL	A schlager music festival in the genial Savonian atmosphere of a small rural town. > www.iskelmaviikko.fi
14. - 15.7.	TUUSNIEMI SPAWNING FESTIVAL	A warm village festival at Tuusniemi harbour. Food made from local fish. > www.kutujuhlat.fi
20. - 22.7.	FOOTBALL WITH SLIPPERS ON WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS, VESANTO	A crazy and fun football tournament played in Reiska slippers. > www.mmreiska.fi/fi/In+English.html
5. - 6.8.	LAPINLAHTI CHEESE & WINE FESTIVAL	A festival being held for the 20th time where you can enjoy local cheeses and imported wines.
11. - 12.8.	STURGEON & CHAMPAGNE IN VARKAUS	Music and delicious food and drink in the Caviar Capital of Finland . > www.sampeajasamppanjaa.fi
25.-26.8.	SATOA KUOPIO FOOD FESTIVAL	A festival of local food and culture in the heart of Kuopio. > www.satoa.fi
25. - 27.8.	TRADITIONAL HARVEST FESTIVAL IN KUOPIO MARKET SQUARE	
9. - 10.9.	FISH MARKET AT KUOPIO HARBOUR	Fish and fish product traders from all over Finland.
16.9.	BUY FROM THE FARM DAY	The national Buy from the Farm Day is being held for the third time this year. > www.ostatilalta.fi

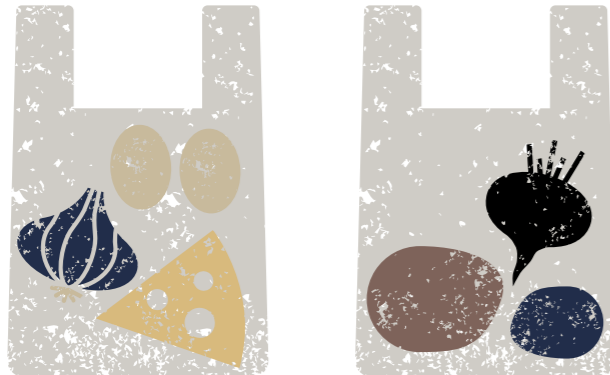
REKO LOCAL FOOD RINGS

REKO (fair consumption) local food rings enable producers to sell directly to consumers. Consumers get locally and ethically produced high-quality and sustainable food whose production chain is transparent. At the same time, producers get a fair price for their produce since there are no intermediaries taking their cut. Food rings are a way to engage in responsible trade by supporting small, local producers and the local economy while reducing unnecessary packaging and transportation. REKO food rings operate on Facebook, where the customer places an order and then collects it on the agreed day from the pick-up point. In North Savo, there are currently seven REKO rings with about 60 primary producers and entrepreneurs. The total number of members – that is, customers – is 5,839.

This trading model is ideal for consumers who want to buy fresh, locally produced and ecological food at a reasonable price and to know what they are eating. Interaction is of great importance in direct trading: when buying through REKO, the consumer comes into face-to-face contact with the food producer and other consumers with similar values and interests. The produce is seasonal: fresh berries in the summer, lamb in the autumn and fresh fish in the winter. Also sold through REKO are food products made with love and skill that are free of additives.

REKO is a new way to buy food, giving sellers and buyers the chance to try new products. Consumers can try exciting new seasonal varieties that can't be found in shops. Exchanging experiences, recipes and products as well as visiting the places where the food is produced are fundamental to direct trading.

Finland's first local food rings were set up in 2014 and their number has grown rapidly. There are already many primary producers in Finland who sell their whole crop through REKO rings. In 2015, the combined turnover of local food rings in Finland was about €8m, while the corresponding figure for 2016 was about €30m, an almost four-fold increase.



SONKAKOSKI MILL - PURE, WHOLEMEAL GRAIN BY WATER POWER

Sonkakoski Mill is Sonkajärvi's oldest operating business, which was founded by Juho Fredrik "Reeti" Mustonen in 1882. Heikki is a fifth-generation miller and farmer who has been running the business since 2004. The sixth generation is growing up in the rich environment of a Savonian heritage landscape and culture. The mill is a traditional stone-grinding mill powered by the River Matkusjoki that runs alongside it.

The mill grinds local grains – oats, barley, rye and wheat – into wholemeal flours. Stone-ground flour has a unique texture that is excellent for baking. The mill also produces flakes, crushed grains and hulled whole grains.

The main product of Sonkakoski Mill has always been the same: pure, wholemeal grain. The mill's operations are also a social event. During our 135-year history, we have gone from the days when farmers with their horse-drawn grain carts gathered at the mill to the social media of today.

Our products are sold directly from the mill and in a local shop, but more and more of our customers in the Savo and Kainuu regions are members of REKO local food rings on Facebook. With REKO, contacts with customers have remained direct and open, and the social network is extensive.

The operations of Sonkakoski Mill have always been customer-centric, whether in relation to mobile milling customers or direct sales customers. The products are produced to order as requested by the customer, whether regarding the coarseness of the flour or the texture of the crushed grain. From generation to generation, serving the customers has been a matter of honour for our family's millers.

Heikki ja Riitta Mustonen
> facebook.com/sonkakoskenmylly

EUROPEAN REGION OF GASTRONOMY WEEK IN KUOPIO MARKET SQUARE

During our European Region of Gastronomy year, we want to invite all the other members of the Regions of Gastronomy Platform to celebrate with us. The City of Kuopio is making the Market Square available for a week for this event. We hope that the other members will bring treats reflecting their own cuisine, tourism and culture.

EUROPEAN YOUNG CHEF AWARD 2020 & INNOVATIVE SOUVENIR AWARD 2020

The Savonia University of Applied Sciences is interested in holding the European Young Chef Award and Innovative Souvenir Award in Kuopio in 2020 in collaboration with IGCAT. Savonia has the expertise and previous experience of organising national competitions in the field of tourism and hospitality management as well as international meetings. Savonia's Event Services enables students from different fields to collaborate with experts and employers in planning and implementing events. This provides them with valuable education and experience for their future working lives.

LICENCE TO EAT - A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN IN PRACTICE

I have twice had the honour of organising the Licence to Eat event in Kuopio.

The purpose of the event is to make people aware of how much food that is fit to eat is thrown away per person every year. Our partners either donate food for the event or send a representative to the event to talk about the issue of waste.

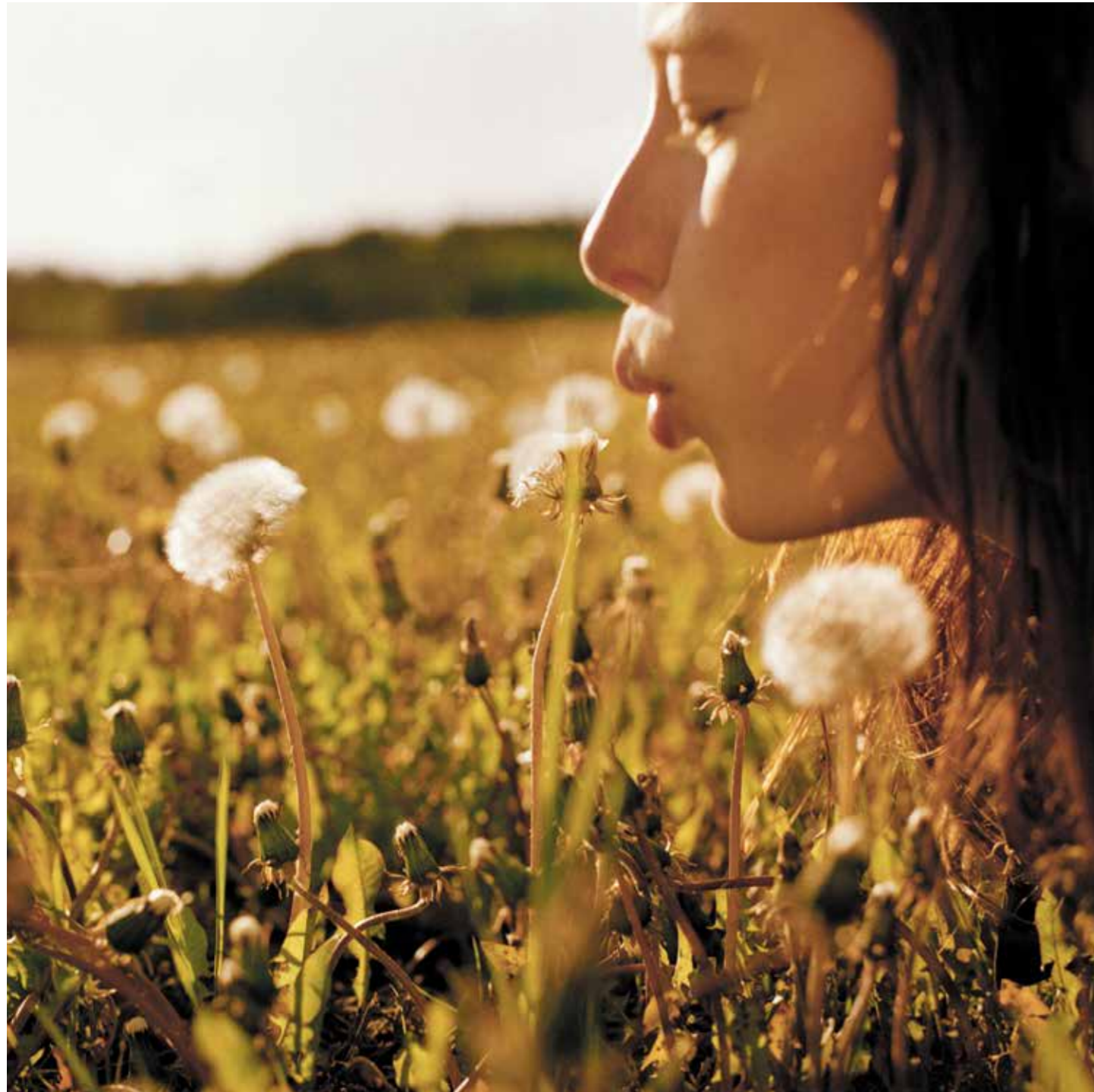
In 2016, I was in charge of the kitchen for the event. On offer were small samples of

food made from discarded ingredients for 1,000 people. The food went down well and people were pleased with the event.

The message of the event is important and it is good to remind people about the issue of waste every year through this kind of event. As a student, planning such an event has given me a lot and taught me responsibility as well as developed my supervising and organisational skills.

Antti Heiska
3rd year Bachelor of Hospitality
Management student
Savonia University of Applied Sciences





KUOPIO REGION CANDIDATE 2020

THIS IS HOW
WE COMMUNICATE
THE PROJECT

13 MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION PLAN

WE INTEND to bring the aims and principles of the European Region of Gastronomy Platform close to the daily lives of everyone in the municipalities of the region, whether they are consumers or entrepreneurs in the culinary tourism sector.

We have started communication in the region's municipalities, with entrepreneurs and organisations, by informing them of the aims and successful examples of the European Region of Gastronomy project under the guidance of, among others, the Irish cheesemonger Seamus Sheridan and regional tourism entrepreneurs in briefings held across the region in 2016–2017. Thanks to active communication, the European Region of Gastronomy Award has received coverage in the local and national media and also featured prominently in a speech by a Member of Parliament in the spring of this year.

We want to integrate the principles of the European Region of Gastronomy network and regional stakeholders – businesses, organisations and municipalities – with existing marketing and communication structures as naturally as possible. One way of achieving this aim is by setting up a portal with links to websites about culinary tourism and gastronomy. We will create a website bringing together the key content related to culinary tourism in the Kuopio region and the European Region of Gastronomy project. We will highlight interesting blogs about food production, education and gastronomy in the region so that they can be shared on social media. We are engaged in marketing and communication collaboration with regional actors, such as Kuopio-Tahko Marketing, and are jointly posting national and international highlights on social media channels from 2017 onwards.

In highlighting gastronomy and health and wellness tourism, a key role is also played by events. Major annual food festivals and events are one of the focal points of culinary tourism in the region, effectively connecting town and country. The events are marketed both in local and international publications. Through events, we will also make consumers aware of the European Region of Gastronomy Award. To the events we organise in the region, we will invite, besides the local media, international bloggers and representatives of travel agencies and the media, and this will help us publicise the region's gastronomical products, health and wellness expertise and biodiversity to people living outside the region. We will put together tourism packages for the region's culinary tourism destinations and for businesses committed to the principles of the European Region of Gastronomy Platform through the VisitSavo culinary tourism packages, and, together with Visit Finland, we will promote them at international tourism trade fairs.

Our aim is to proudly present the region's culinary tourism activities holistically, from large municipalities to small entrepreneurs, and make the European Region of Gastronomy Award well known both within the region and nationally by 2020.





KUOPIO REGION CANDIDATE 2020

THIS IS HOW
WE BUDGET
AND EVALUATE
THE PROJECT

1 4 B U D G E T P L A N 2 0 1 8 – 2 0 2 0

THE AIMS of the European Region of Gastronomy Award for 2020 correspond with the region’s strategies and objectives. According to the vision of the Rural Strategy of the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, North Savo will be a nationally and internationally recognised gastronomic region by 2020. The aims are also in line with the objectives of the Regional Council of Northern Savo, since

food products and the health cluster are top innovation areas whose development is being invested in. Integration of companies in the health and wellness sector with the food and tourism industry will make it possible to develop products based on the concept of sustainable development that increase wellness and promote both the economic and social wellbeing of the region.

BUDGET PLAN 1000 €

Project management	500
Marketing and communications	200
International collaboration	150
New ideas and programme of activities for 2020	300
Development of tourism product content	2.350
Estimated budget for 2018–2020	3.500

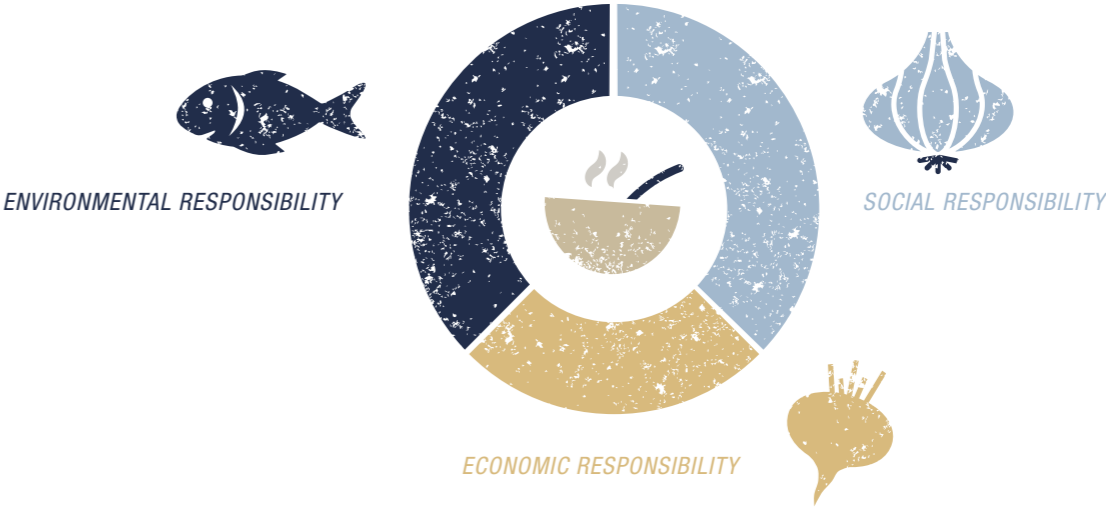
Development is tied to the funding received. Content will be developed through projects and funding will be applied for from various national and international programmes.

1 5 M O N I T O R I N G A N D E V A L U A T I O N P L A N

Kuopio is a member of the Finnish Sustainable Communities (FISU) network and is currently drawing up a road map of measures aimed at zero waste, carbon neutrality and sustainable consumption by 2050. The work entails formulating a vision for the region in 2050 and goals and a package of measures for the period up to 2030.

In 2018, we are adopting the ISO 26000 standard on social responsibility. The standard provides guidelines that are applicable to all types of organisations regardless of size and location. In applying the standard, we will define indicators to be measured annually.

In our collaboration with the FISU network, we choose three social, economic and environmental responsibility indicators. An example of an economic indicator is the proportion of local ingredients used at food festivals. This indicator simultaneously measures social, economic and environmental responsibility. We are jointly responsible for reporting to IGCAT and, in practice, reporting is part of the coordinator’s job.





AFTERWORD

OUR REGION'S gastronomic expertise is second to none in the country. Culinary tourism is a rising trend in the tourism industry, which we want to invest in. One of Finland's top culinary tourism products, the SATOA Kuopio Food Festival, combines local tastes, restaurants and creative sector specialists while increasing appreciation for agriculture that produces a wide variety of pure raw ingredients. In addition, our region's high-quality education continuously provides the farming, tourism and hospitality sectors with new and needed research-based information.

This European Region of Gastronomy bid book marks the start of collaboration between the gastronomy, tourism, arts and creative sectors. It is a demonstration of our region's expertise and determination to give such expertise the attention it deserves. It also demonstrates our determination to strengthen our region's vitality, generate new business activities and attract new flows of tourists.

This bid book was edited by:
Ilona Sares (ProAgria North Savo) and **Mira Saari** (Savonia University of Applied Sciences)

If you have any questions regarding the book, please contact the editors.

We thank those featured in this book and Sinikka Määttä, Marja Niskanen ja Jarkko Kääriäinen for their help in producing it.

List of European Region of Gastronomy partners in the Kuopio Region: <http://bit.ly/2rf3ggd>

