

Article

Linking of Traditional Food and Tourism. The Best Pork of Wielkopolska—Culinary Tourist Trail: A Case Study

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Abstract: Agriculture, food and tourism is combined into offering tourist products in rural areas. The development of local activities combining traditional food and tourism becomes an investment for the future with both the concept of sustainable gastronomy and agriculture sustainability, and helps in the development of local entrepreneurship in rural areas. The European Union has introduced provisions for the protection of traditional and regional food that can be used to create a variety of tourist products. Currently, tourists are looking for unique local products. More and more people travel because of culinary motifs, and local products, dishes and local processors can become an attraction in these places. This paper presents the idea of ‘The Best Pork of Wielkopolska’ culinary trail, which is based on a local product from Wielkopolska, in Poland—the native breed of pig—the Złotnicka White pig. The rapid development of culinary tourism means that tourists are looking for offers in this area. There are many cooking-related products available in the tourism market, one of which is the culinary trail. Food becomes one of the advantages of places where tourism related to the culture of the region develops. Based on cultural heritage, a variety of tourist products can be created, e.g., culinary trails combining agriculture and food produced in this area with tourism.

Keywords: traditional and regional product; sustainable food production; tourist trail; pork; pig; sustainability; Poland

1. Introduction

Culinary trails are a part of new trends in the development of modern tourism. The tourist product offered to the tourist includes such elements as: accommodation, attractions or transport, and additionally, an inherent element of every tourist product is the catering service.

Food is a physiological necessity, but food service and food image are also very important components of cultural tourism [1]. Food is one of the most basic human needs [2] and is recognized as an important tourist attraction [3], and tourists can spend almost half of their budget during their travel on food and drinks [1]. The food we consume plays an important role in our health and well-being [4].

The services and food at a destination could be unique strategic resources that cannot be easily imitated by other destinations [5]. Undoubtedly, culinary tourism is one of the key factors of sustainable development, because it has been recognized as the main way to strengthen the concept of sustainable development by strengthening the position of local communities [6,7]. Small producers need to be protected from large commercial food companies to defend local cuisine and food production, because gastronomy is based on food cultures deeply rooted in the places where this food comes from.

Moreover, the trend of sustainable gastronomy is welcomed by tourists and will be an increasingly important factor in the decision-making process of potential tourists [8,9].

Nowadays, the fast development of culinary tourism and its growing role in the promotion of regions are evident. The term culinary tourism was developed by Long in 1998 [10]. Long [3] defined this form of tourism as participation, including but not limited to the consumption and presentation of food or cuisine, in the special or unique food experiences related to a tourist destination [11]. The UNWTO defined culinary tourism as one of the most dynamically developing tourism sectors in recent years. Long defined this concept as a way of experiencing other cultures through food [12]. Whereas, Hall and Sharples [13] considered culinary tourism as the leisure pursuit of a memorable eating and drinking experience, made to places where good foods are prepared for the purpose of fun or entertainment, which incorporates visits to local producers, food fairs, farmers' markets, cooking demonstrations and any food-related tourism activities. According to Wolf, culinary tourism is travelling in order to search for and taste ready-made dishes and drinks [10], and the World Food Travel Association (WFTA) stresses that these are authentic and unique experiences [14]. Tourists are increasingly choosing a specific region in terms of its culinary heritage, which often becomes the main motive of travel [15]. While practicing culinary tourism, tourists taste and learn about dishes and culinary products of a given region [3,10,16,17]. Nowadays, literature contains various terms related to tourism and food, depending on which aspect the emphasis is on. This form of tourism is called food and wine tourism, tasting tourism and gourmet tourism, but most commonly, culinary tourism, food tourism or gastronomic tourism [18]. The last three are often used as synonyms.

Various definitions of the forms and types of this tourist activity can be found in the literature on the subject [18–20] and in practice (Figure 1). In Poland, the most commonly used concept of the analyzed phenomenon is the term culinary tourism [21].



Figure 1. Forms and types of culinary tourism.

Virtually every tourist participating in a tourist trip becomes a culinary tourist in a more or less conscious way. The tourist can only consume various food products offered by gastronomic companies, or consciously choose the objects and attractions related to local food as his destination. This is where tourism links with local producers of agricultural products and local processors. Farmers can supply catering companies or hotels with their products, but they can also create agritourism facilities or other tourist attractions themselves, in which they will use local food products. Currently, agriculture, food and tourism are increasingly combined in the framework of created products offered to tourists [22,23].

Several authors have analyzed the relationship between food and tourism from the perspective of food as part of a reflection of the local culture [24]. Local food is frequently defined as authentic products which not only symbolize tourism destinations but also vividly demonstrate local traditional culture [25]. By combining tourism with rural or local resources and traditional village-specific products, it is possible to revive the rural economy and thus, their sustainable agricultural development [6,7,26]. The concept of agricultural sustainability should be an important element of the development of the rural economy [27–30]. Undoubtedly, tourism, including food tourism, contributes to the multifunctional development of agriculture and rural areas [31]. Compared to other elements of multifunctional agricultural development, it is a product of supralocal significance and is consumed by visitors, mainly city residents [32,33].

Culinary tourism represents an emerging component of the tourism industry and encompasses all the traditional values associated with the new trends in tourism: respect for culture and tradition, authenticity and sustainability [34]. In case of culinary tourism, the authenticity of the products offered and the place where they are produced play an important role [34] because it is one of the dominant attributes of culinary tourism [35]. Therefore, the best way to experience the authenticity of food is to be there locally, and tasting local dishes is an indispensable way of seeking authenticity for tourists [25]. Culinary tourists experience a complete sensory experience, especially in terms of flavor, and through food, tourists receive a greater engagement with the environment where the visit takes place, far from the role of the simple observer traditionally associated with tourist visits [36]. It is also important to meet different people who produce local products, local creators, artisans, etc. In case of culinary tourism, visitors meet with different people responsible for food products and dishes in the area. Cohen [37] has already stated in his theory of authenticity that all stakeholders are important for the authenticity of tourist experience.

With an increasing interest in authentic food, leveraging local cuisines is recognized as an effective tool in destination marketing, differentiation and branding [38].

Cuisines and regional products are a tourism development factor [39], as well as leading to creating many other tourism products [40]. The tourism market offers a wide range of products with culinary themes [41], including culinary trails.

The aim of this article was to develop the concept of a unique tourist trail in Wielkopolska voivodship, based on the topic of pork. Wielkopolska is a pioneer in pig breeding in Poland. In addition, the Złotnicka White pig breed is unique in this area. In the work on the concept of the trail, the method was based on the available method, but in this respect, the authors used only the first stage, i.e., research. The authors presented regulations regarding the traditional and regional food quality system in force in the EU and Poland. In addition, the authors reviewed the source literature on the culinary route and its definition, as well as looking at how local products are used to create the concept of the culinary route.

1.1. Culinary Trails

Culinary tourism is being recognized as an important part of the tourist market. Tourists are seeking authentic and unique experiences and the consumption of local food and beverages brings the tourist closer to the host culture [42]. An example of passing on these impressions and emotions to tourists are the culinary routes that belong to the thematic cultural routes.

A trail is a particular kind of a tourism product (linear, band-shaped or zonal), which consists of a number of places or sites relating to a superior idea, linked with one another by means of a mapped out, usually marked route (walking, sailing, driving, etc.) and a variety of tourist infrastructure located along the trail [43]. It is spatially determined, which means that it is a joint effect of the natural environment and historical-cultural heritage of a given area; it can also be produced and consumed at only one place in the world [44]. Thus, it is a marked route which includes some accompanying infrastructure, designated and specially prepared for practicing a specific form of tourism. It connects places, individual sites, destinations and other elements of space, as well as linking natural and cultural assets. It is also a route designated for specific forms of physical and active recreation [45]. Thus, it is a conglomerate of numerous goods and services used by tourists during their trip.

Some researchers believe that a tourist trail may also be unmarked; according to them, a tourist trail is route mapped out in the tourism space (not always marked), fulfilling the visitors' needs and leading them to the most attractive places. It involves respecting a number of regulations, including those regarding security and protection of assets [46].

Cultural routes show the evolution of ideas with respect to the vision of cultural properties, as well as the growing importance of values related to their setting and territorial scale, and reveals the macrostructure of heritage on different levels. This concept introduces a model for a new ethics of conservation that considers these values as a common heritage that goes beyond national borders and requires joint efforts [47].

The development of themed routes as tourist attractions has gained prominence in recent years. One key aim of these routes, apart from attracting tourists to an area, is to tie-up several attractions that would independently not have the potential to attract spending time and money. Using a synergy effect promises to have greater pulling power, and it also disperses visitors' money among a larger number of recipients [48]. Trails seem to be a particularly good opportunity for less mature areas with high cultural resources that appeal to special tourists' interest, who often not only stay longer but also spent more to pursue their particular interest [48].

The trail can be found in a variety of landscapes, both urban and rural. They differ significantly in terms of length, number of facilities, topics adopted and tourist attraction, as well as varying in scale from local to international [46]. During the last two decades, specially designed tourist routes have come more into focus all over the world—especially themed routes like Wine Tours, Beer Route and Malt Whisky Trail [49]. Such routes include theme (cultural or tourist-cultural) trails [50]. Their essence is the content, i.e., the leading theme—cultural or nature-related—and not the type of tourism.

Taking into account the typical elements of a thematic tourist trail, it is possible to propose a model of functioning of a thematic trail, indicating its essential elements. This will be the main element of the trail: the product and the overarching idea combining the elements that make up the trail. The product must be characteristic of the region:

- Origin in the region. The product should be made with techniques typical of the region and based on local traditions;
- Range. The product must be characteristic of a specific place or region. The following dependence is crucial: the smaller the range, the greater the tourist attractiveness of the product. This results from a simple assumption: the more unique the good, the more willing a tourist will be to take a trip to benefit from it;
- Producer. Attractiveness is a derivative of locality. If a product is manufactured by a local community, the community is provided with the profits and economic benefit. This also translates into their greater care to preserve and cultivate this value because, besides the deposit of tradition, it is also their source of income. The ideal situation is when the owner and distributor of a product is, at the same time, its manufacturer, and the main place of distribution is the place of production. It can therefore be assumed that the more local the product is, the higher its authenticity;
- Raw material. The product's attractiveness is greater if the raw material used for production is local or regional [51].

Every cultural route should fulfill authenticity criteria demonstrably and credibly, expressing its value in terms of both its natural and cultural environment, and concerning both its defining elements and its distinctive features of a material and immaterial nature [47].

A theme trail has a focal point—a cultural asset or an element of the cultural heritage. Creating tourist trails with a leading theme makes it possible to combine sites and destinations into a logical basis for making a new tourism product. The need to search for new tourist themes and attractions is a challenge for tourism organizers and local authorities, who must develop new conceptions and implement ideas for new tourist trails. It is interesting that as many as 59% of tourists interested in culinary topics decide to search for regional products by following a culinary trail [52].

Theme trails undoubtedly include culinary trails, which convey the culinary heritage content of a given region (Table 1). Considering the leading theme, we may distinguish trails which refer to the overall culinary heritage of a given region and those which are focused on one particular product [50].

Table 1. Attractions of the culinary trail.

Places	Events	People	Meals and Regional Products
taverns; inns; shops with regional products; shops with organic food; objects related to food production technology; vineyards; breweries; bread making places	culinary festivals; fairs and markets with regional food; culinary workshop and degustation; cooking art shows; vintage and other harvests	producers; craftsmen; farmers, etc., dealing with the production of regional food products; people storing the memory of traditional food processing technologies and others	existing in a given area or included in local or European programs for the protection of food products

The literature review showed that the following three types of culinary trails can be identified:

- Restaurant trails—usually urban trails leading to the best gastronomic establishments, offering various ethnic cuisines from all over the world (e.g., The Culinary Trail of Gdynia Centre, Białystok Culinary Trail, Culinary Poznań);
- Regional culinary heritage trails—they enable tourists to get to know the tradition of the local culinary products in a given region (e.g., Livonian Culinary Route, Baltic Sea Culinary Routes, Le Strade dei Vini e dei Sapori, Śląskie Smaki and Podkarpackie Smaki Culinary Trails);
- Monographic trails—dedicated to selected products or dishes, e.g., cheese (e.g., Route de Fromage, Emmentaler Käsestrasse, Szlak Oscypkowy), fruit (e.g., Steirishe Apfelstrasse, La Route du Cassis, Małopolski Szlak Owocowy, Śliwkowy Szlak), wines (e.g., Route des Vins d’Alsace, Deutsche Weinstraße, Moravské vinařské stezky, Małopolski Szlak Winny), or animal products (e.g., Strada del Culatello di Zibello, Kujawsko-Pomorski Gęsinowy Szlak Kulinary, Szlak Karpia);
- Multi-theme trails with a culinary component—combining several groups of tourist attractions (e.g., historical monuments, folklore, nature, cuisine) into one integrated product, in which local gastronomy plays a particularly important role, becoming an attractive commodity on the market (e.g., Strada del Prosciutto e dei vini dei Colli di Parma, Szlak Tradycji i Smaku na Ziemi Chełmińskiej).

Food often becomes the main factor behind tourists’ choice of the destination to visit [43]. Culinary tourism is also closely connected with the cultural heritage of the region. Regional traditions and products become an investment for the future and help to develop professional activity, also in rural areas.

1.2. Local Product and Tourism

Local food production is a subject that is becoming more and more popular because it is associated with high quality ingredients. Coelho et al. [53] define it as food produced in close proximity to where the consumers live. They point out that culturally significant food is sometimes treated as local food. What is more, local food is often equated to such terms as traditional food or regional food. The latter term, though, has specific labeling [54].

Unique food products are a very important element of European food business, culture, identity and heritage. The interest of tourists in local food is a factor in local development in the field of agri-food and craft, and also contributes to the improvement of culinary culture and heritage [55]. Understanding the uniqueness of food in Europe is a key factor in promoting the competitiveness of craft food industries, both locally and internationally. Such activities contribute to the promotion of sustainable agriculture and rural development, protecting them against depopulation [56].

Local products do not come out of nowhere. They are closely related to the territory and its natural heritage as well as to the culture and skills of the people living there. Local processing is a very important element of sustainable rural development. Local conditions are unique due to natural conditions: climate, soil, landform, vegetation, animals (e.g., specific varieties and species occurring only in a given area), as well as people's skills, knowledge and "taste memory" and also as cultural heritage passed down from generation to generation (customs, names, rites). Local products are characterized by *terroir*, a French term derived from *terre* (land) [57]. This defines the special characteristics of the place in interaction with plant genetics in agricultural products [58]. This term applies to specific geographical (special emphasis is placed on the sun and microclimate: rain, wind, humidity, temperature changes, etc.) and geological (soil, rocks, altitude, hill slope or terrain). Recently, a new form of tourism has appeared—*terroir* tourism, combining this form of activity with a unique area. Its important attributes are precisely the features of the region, place or area [58,59].

These abovementioned elements are so-called "added value" which are important for both producers and consumers. Local products are produced naturally, on a small scale, from locally available raw materials. Local products have a much broader dimension as they inspire the economic development of rural areas, diversify farmers' incomes, stimulate the development of micro-entrepreneurship in the countryside, develop rural tourism and tourism. Consumers are motivated to buy these products, not only by their quality but also by the fact that they are better for the environment and have less negative impact on climate change, promote biodiversity and protect biological heritage [60].

There is a growing demand for specific agricultural products [61]. Producing and selling food products may not only provide highly nutritious food, but also become an important factor of the economic development of many European regions, thus contributing to the diversification of rural areas and preventing their depopulation [62]. Integrating local cuisine and tourism within the framework of one development strategy may enhance the growth of the local economy [63]. It has been found out that the amount of money spent on food makes up one-third of all tourist travel costs [64]. The International Culinary Tourism Association states that, on average, that food travelers spend around \$1200 per trip, with over one-third (36% or \$425) of their travel budget going towards food-related activities. Those considered to be "deliberate" food travelers (i.e., where culinary activities are the key reason for the trip) tend to spend a significantly higher amount of their overall travel budget (around 50%) on food-related activities [14]. According to the Białogowska, 5 million tourists come to Italy every year to spend a cooking holiday there, and 12% of Americans travel only for this particular reason to try foreign cuisine [65].

In EU countries, the production, protection and promotion of high quality food are playing an increasingly important role. One of the most popular ways of implementing the quality policy is awarding the quality label to agricultural products and foodstuffs coming from specific regions and manufactured using traditional methods.

There is a global practice of protecting the geographical names of food products which represent unique features and are historically rooted at the place where they are produced [66]. In order to obtain the status of high quality regional or traditional products, a European labeling system has been developed. On the one hand, it is to inform the consumers that they deal with high quality products, and on the other hand, to protect the manufacturers from the competition of fake products [61]. The market profitability of certified products is based, first of all, on the consumers' interest and willingness to buy goods, the production of which is limited territorially and which quality stems from the place of their origin [67].

Until recently, the regulations regarding traditional and regional food were not consistent and lacked the transparency of EU solutions, which was repeatedly reported by manufacturers. Therefore, the European Commission decided to introduce new legislative and organizational solutions. As a result, the European Parliament and the Council of Europe issued Resolution 1151/2012, dated on 21 November 2012, concerning the quality schemes for agricultural products and foodstuffs [68]. The aim of that resolution was to support the manufacturers of agricultural and food products, especially as regards to labeling food with symbols which signify specific geographical regions or guaranteed traditional specialties. Nowadays, the European Union regulations create favorable conditions for the development of production of local products [69].

A regional product can be defined as a product put on one of three EU lists which entitle the manufacturers of agricultural products or foodstuffs to apply for the following labels: Protected Designation of Origin (PDO), Protected Geographical Indications (PGI), and Traditional Specialty Guaranteed (TSG).

The total number of products registered in the EU is 1366, including 41 from Poland [70].

The products placed on the EU list remain under comprehensive protection, e.g., against forgery or an improper use of protected names. Production of this food involves a larger amount of work and has to fulfil many additional requirements (compared to conventional articles) as regards to the resources which are traditionally used in production and display specific qualitative features [71], the place and course of the production process, and technology, as well as the features of the ready-made product [72].

The indigenous and quality agricultural food that are produced in a territory provide remarkable economic potential for the abovementioned activity. Thus, the consumption of certified quality local food can be an important component for the economic development of the territory where they are produced [73]. Local markets give farmers and local food producers the opportunity to diversify and promote their food in tourism. These markets are becoming more and more the object of interest of tourists wishing to get to know these kinds of products. Traditional food and cuisine can become an excellent tourist attraction in rural areas, and local cuisine can be an integral part of travel. Food serves both entertainment and cultural activities. More and more people travel for culinary reasons [3], and local products and cooking are an attractive factor for destinations [36]. In Poland, the List of Traditional Products is maintained by the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development. One can apply for a place on the list for products if their product has been produced for at least 25 years and is connected with local customs and traditions. The products on the list include cheeses and other dairy products, fresh meat and meat products, fishery products (e.g., fish), nuts, seeds, cereals, vegetables and fruit (processed and fresh), bakers' wares and confectionery, oils and fats (butter, margarine, etc.), honey, ready-made dishes, drinks (alcoholic and non-alcoholic), as well as other products. Registering a traditional product allows its producer to obtain derogations from some production process requirements, if it is needed to maintain the quality and originality of the product. The list shows the richness and diversity of Polish culinary traditions.

The products placed on the list are not specially labeled, but they are very popular among consumers and manufacturers, which can be seen by the fact that it currently contains 1953 items (as of 25 February 2020). As regards to the number of registered products, it varies from 44 in Warmińsko-Mazurskie voivodship to 240 in Podkarpackie voivodship (in Wielkopolska voivodship –

95). Meat products are the most numerous, making up to 22.5% of the total number of traditional food in Poland and 34.7% in Wielkopolska voivodship.

2. Materials and Methods

The theoretical framework of this article includes a literature review, content analysis, case study, observation, authors' own experience, and methodology for creating a thematic trail for tourists.

The source of material used to write this article contained secondary data, such as the number of products registered in the EU on the EU website [70], as well as quantitative data on traditional products presented at the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development website in Poland.

Based on the methodology of creating the thematic route [45,47,50,51,74,75], the authors developed the theoretical concept of the 'The Best Pork of Wielkopolska' culinary route. The methodology of the culinary route—the cultural route—requires a special research methodology. Given its width and value as a whole, as well as the territorial dimension, this methodology requires the establishment of a system of coordinated and integrally managed activities, which include the following: 1. Research, 2. Financing, 3. Protection-evaluation-conservation/protection, 4. Sustainable use-connection with tourist activities, 5. Management and 6. Public participation [47].

In case of the theoretical route discussed so far, only the first stage was used, i.e., the study. The concept of the culinary trail has been prepared on the basis of literature research and a local query, as well as the authors' observations.

3. Results

3.1. Poland Case Study

In Poland, the development of culinary trails started in 2007, and in 2015, there were already about 30 of them [76]. Presently, the offer is much wider and more varied.

Poland is recognized as one of the most culinary-attractive European countries [77]. Culinary heritage and natural values conducive to the production of traditional and regional products are the country's wealth and public good, which should not only be nurtured and protected, but also used for the development of tourism. Products of meat origin, which are local, unique and available in a specific area can form the basis for the development of culinary tourist routes.

Wielkopolska is a region often visited by domestic and foreign tourists. According to statistical data, the voivodship is visited by over 2 million tourists, including 18.3% of foreign tourists. Certainly, the culinary trail offer 'The Best Pork of Wielkopolska' would find willing travelers to use it.

3.2. Pork Meat as an Element of the Cultural Heritage of Wielkopolska

Wielkopolska is a region with rich culinary traditions, due to the interpenetration of the cultures of various nations and social strata, as well as the influence of agrarian culture and the urbanization process. Apart from onions and potatoes, one of the products typical of this area is pig or pork. The inhabitants of the region have been making products based on this type of meat for a long time.

In 2019, the pig population in Poland was 10,780 million animals [78]. In the Wielkopolska voivodship, there were 3913 million pigs, which made up 36.3% of the pig population in the country. Thus, it can be assumed that the Wielkopolska voivodship is the leader in pig breeding.

Among many pigs' breeds in Poland, three native breeds are included into the Farm Animals Genetic Resources Protection Program: Puławska pig, Żłotnicka spotted pig and Żłotnicka White pig. The last type is kept in Poland in about 30 herds, including 17 in Wielkopolska voivodship.

The Żłotnicka White pig was formed by Professor Stefan Alexandrowicz at the Agricultural Experimental Station in Żłotniki, which at the time belonged to the Academy of Agriculture in Poznań (presently the University of Life Sciences in Poznań). The Żłotnicka White pigs are medium-sized pigs bred for meat. This local breed is well adjusted to the local natural conditions, relatively resistant to illnesses and not very demanding in terms of feeding. Its great advantage is the very good quality of

meat, which has a darker color than the meat of high-output breeds. What is most important, the meat contains intramuscular fat (marbling) responsible for the taste [79]. These qualities make the meat suitable for regional food making. Two such products: Wielkopolska Złotnicka pork and roast leg from Złotnicka White pig were placed on the List of Traditional Products from Wielkopolska voivodship in 2006 and 2007.

Compared to other regions in Poland, Wielkopolska voivodship is the leader in pig breeding and production. Wielkopolska pork products include: white, black and tongue salceson (brawn—type of offal products made of pork head with the addition of fat, offal, blood, trimmings of meat, skins and spices. Depending on what is added: white—made with a mixture of meats, without blood and black—which contains blood; the third kind is tongue salceson with tongue as a major meat component), sausages (are a meat product made from ground meat with salt and spices), kaszanka (cured meat product made of groats and pig’s blood together with offal), ham (raw, cured and cooked or smoked pork ham), bułczanka (the most important raw material is ground wheat roll and pig’s blood as well as dewlap and head meat; stuffed intestines need to be thrown into the cauldron and brewed), leberka (cured meat product from ground offal, mainly from pork liver, pork head fat and fat, and basic spices), smoked meats (smoking takes place naturally in smokehouses of deciduous trees), roast legs (whole baked ham with fat and skin), and a variety of cold meats. The meat plays an important role in Wielkopolska, and pig-slaughtering was still a long-awaited holiday until a few decades ago.

Considering the cultural and culinary heritage of Wielkopolska voivodship, attempts have been made to develop a new tourist product, called ‘The Best Pork of Wielkopolska’ Culinary Trail. The elements found along the trail will include pork products’ manufacturers, agritourist farms where pigs are bred and pork dishes are prepared, restaurants serving pork dishes, as well as a variety of festivals and events promoting this particular type of meat (Table 2).

Table 2. Culinary attractions of the culinary trail ‘The Best Pork of Wielkopolska’.

Places	Events	People	Meals and Regional Products
Kuślin Jansowo Training and Recreation Center; Olenderski Open-Air Museum Olandia Prusim; Museum of Meat Management in Sielinko; Butcher Plant in Bukowiec, near Opalenica; Kopanica; Siedlec; The Village Museum of Agriculture and Agri-food Industry in Szreniawa; Meat Factory Szajek Granowo	Wielkopolska Agricultural Fair in Sielinko; Pig’s Day in Siedlec	Łowyń Organic Agricultural— Agritourism Farm “Tamarynowa settlement”; Łagwy Farm near Opalenica	Nowy Tomyśl sausage; Wielkopolska Złotnicka pork; roasted leg of Złotnicka pig; Kruszewnia rural sausage; Kruszewnia rural brawn; Kruszewnia liver sausage, Wielkopolska roll; Wielkopolska white blanched sausage; Polish smoked sausage; Grodzisk sausage; Grodzisk liver sausage; Grodzisk tongue brawn; Grodzisk ‘bułczanka’; Rychtalska black pudding; Wielkopolska ‘leberka’

Figure 2 shows the destinations located on the culinary trail, ‘The Best Pork of Wielkopolska’. The trail begins at the Museum of Agriculture and Agricultural and Food Industry in Szreniawa and ends at the Museum of Meat-Processing Equipment in Sielinek. Tourists can choose a short route consisting of five places (1–5) or two longer routes (1–3–6–8–4–5 or 1–4–8–11–5). Alternatively, they can start exploring anywhere on the trail.

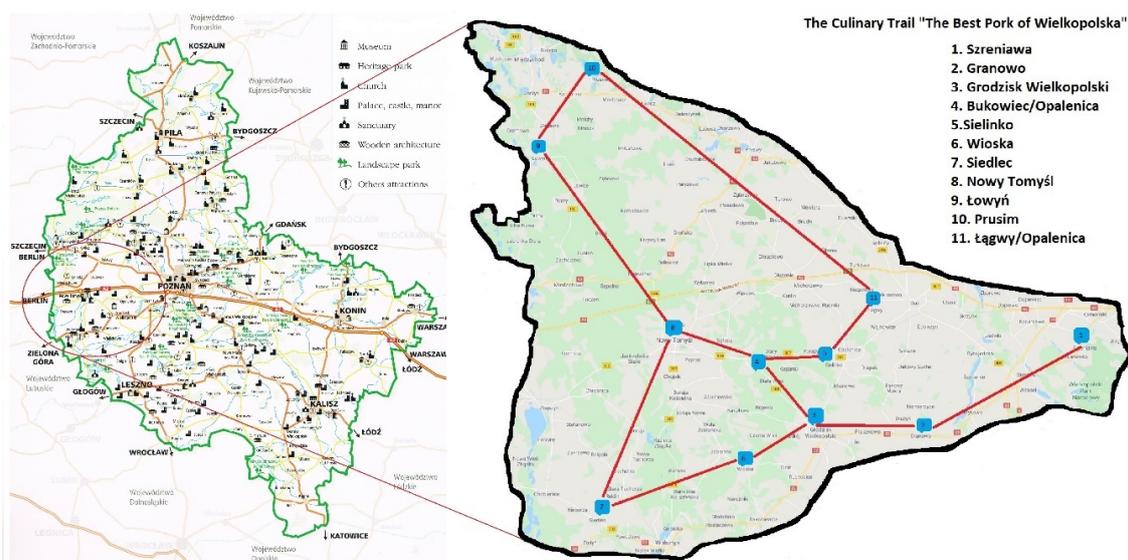


Figure 2. The map of the culinary trail ‘The Best Pork of Wielkopolska’.

Considering the condition of the accommodation base located in the close vicinity of the route (up to 1 h by car), it should be emphasized that it is rich. It consists of 80 tourist accommodation establishments of various accommodation standards, which offer over 5.6 thousand beds. Moreover, tourist accommodation is offered by the agritourism supplier, who has almost 1.4 thousand beds in 110 farms. It is worth noting that according to statistical data, in 2019, the accommodation offer of local tourist facilities was used by almost 150,000 tourists, who were granted over 365.4 thousand nights. Certainly, the number of tourists using accommodation is much higher, because the statistics do not include accommodation provided on agritourism farms.

Below, the authors present individual stages of ‘The Best Pork of Wielkopolska’ Culinary Trail and the places (Table 3) related to pork meat, where traditional pork products can be purchased.

Table 3. Places on the culinary trail ‘The Best Pork of Wielkopolska’.

Places on the Trail	Products Related to Pork
Szreniawa	exhibition of live Złotniki pigs, Museum of Agriculture and Agricultural and Food Industry
Granowo	meat shops, possible purchase of Wielkopolska blanched white sausage and other pork products (e.g., Szajek Meat-Processing Company’s store)
Grodzisk Wielkopolski	meat shops, possible purchase of Wielkopolska blanched white sausage, Grodzisk sausage, Grodzisk liver sausage, Grodzisk tongue brawn, Grodzisk ‘bułczanka’
Bukowiec/Opalenica	plant, butcher’s shop (Słociński Meat-Processing Company), possible purchase of pork products
Sielinko	Museum of Meat-Processing Equipment
Wioska	Krzysztof Zielinski’s Meat-Processing Company, possible purchase of pork products
Siedlec	‘Sobkowiak’ Meat-Processing Company, possible purchase of pork products, Pig Day (pork meat competition, traditional pork products)

Table 3. Cont.

Places on the Trail	Products Related to Pork
Nowy Tomyśl	meat shops, possible purchase of Wielkopolska blanched white sausage, roasted leg of Złotnicka pig, Nowy Tomyśl matured sausage, Wielkopolska 'leberka' Hop-wickerwork fair: stands with pork sausages
Łowyń	agritourism farm, own sausages based on meat from Złotnicka pig, and pork neck, pork chop or pork tenderloin, Network of Culinary Heritage of Wielkopolska
Prusim, Olandia	accommodation facility, restaurant: the menu is based on products from regional suppliers, including Złotniki pork from Gorzyń, Wielkopolska Culinary Heritage Network
Łagwy/Opalenica	farm, own sausages based on pork

Apart from the places mentioned above, the authors included other interesting sites which they believed would make the tourist attraction of the trail complete (Table 4). Culinary attractions cannot “stand alone”; adding other tourist attractions connected with a given area will increase the tourists' satisfaction with their experiences during their journey along the trail.

Table 4. Other tourist attractions on the trail.

Place	Attractions
Trzebaw	Deli Park—education and entertainment park
Granowo	St. Marcin Wooden church
Łek Mały	Wielkopolska pyramids (kurgan)
Grodzisk Wielkopolski	Grodzisk Draisine railway St. Jadwiga Parish Church
Wioska	The Land of Bogil's Fun
Rakoniewice	Wielkopolska Museum of Firefighting Museum of Steam Locomotives
Wolsztyn	Robert Koch Museum Open-Air Museum of Folk Architecture of Western Wielkopolska
Obra	Monastery Church of the Oblates, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary and Saint James the Apostle Church
Nowy Tomyśl	Wicker and Hop Growing Museum; the largest wicker basket
Wąsowo	Palace and landscape park and Wąsowo Farm
Mniszki	Regional and Natural Education Center
Opalenica	The first motorcycle factory in Poland with the symbolic name “LECH” Historic Town Hall
Górzno/Opalenica	Rope park
Brody	Wooden church of St. Andrzej from 1673, next to the belfry from the 17th century
Chalin	Nature Education Center
Lusowo	Museum of Wielkopolska Insurgents

When creating a new tourist product, which is the route being described, it is worth considering what tourists can do in a given place and what types of active participation can be offered to them. By including different places in the trail concepts, tourists can be encouraged to come again. For this purpose, you can use, for example, holidays, celebrations, etc., by offering tourists a set of such attractions, in which you can provide more experience and emotions, and therefore, many more local residents will be able to participate in the creation of this tourist product and capitalize from it.

Based on the analysis of the set of attractions, it is easier to decide whether the trail-shaped route will be designed for tourists passing through the area, or for one-day visitors, or rather for traveling or staying tourism. This affects the further stages of work on the development of this

product. The attraction force of customers is stronger when a complementary bundle of attractions with distinctive features is offered, i.e., attractions package.

All the components of a tourist product have some impact on the scale of tourism, but attractions are its driving force.

4. Discussion

Each country and region has a unique culinary heritage [7,8,20,41,80–84], which affects its image and perceptions by tourists. Recent decades have clearly seen changes in the tourism market resulting from the interest of consumers (tourists) in culinary traditions. Getting to know the culinary heritage and the cuisine of the destination visited is one of the important motives influencing the undertaking of tourist peregrination [35,80,85–87]. Food, including local food, is a motive for many tourists for coming to a given country or region [85]. This is why the gastronomic offer is a very important element of the promotion of tourist services. To this end, local resources, i.e., regional and traditional products, should be used. As Richards [86] emphasizes, culinary experiences do not only include food but also acquire knowledge about the food and gastronomy of a given place. Tourists are more and more eager to get involved in food production and preparation. Undoubtedly, food experiences are becoming a distinction in an increasingly crowded market. Many potential visitors, e.g., from Italy, want to try traditional dishes, regional specialties and fresh local products [88]. There is more and more evidence that tourists consciously seek culinary sensations [16,35,38,86,89–91]. As Garner and Ayola [89] prove, consumers are willing to travel many miles to buy high quality food products.

Local and regional products certainly deliver such good impressions on culinary experiences. On the basis of these traditional products, various trails are created: trail of wine in Israel [92] or in Poland [57,93], trail of beer in Germany [12], in Canada [42], trail of apples in Germany or Austria [50], trail of olives in Spain [73], or culinary events: beer festival in Czech Republic [94] truffle festival in Australia [95] or rice festival in France [12]. However, there are no pathways based on meat products based on native breeds of animals [20]. The use of native animal breeds as a food product in the tourist offering is an important distinguishing feature in the tourist market. On the other hand, it gives the opportunity to provide economic support to local producers by selling manufactured food and gaining knowledge about the heritage of the local market. The use of local products is of particular importance for the development of agritourism that takes place on an active farm [96]. It is in agritourism that traditional food products are an important key to attracting new tourists and awarding the offer of an agritourism farm [97]. What is more, local products can constitute an innovation in agritourism offerings [98].

5. Conclusions

Gastronomy is an important element of the tourist experience because the taste of a product or dish tried out during the trip is remembered for a long time and is something that a tourist will look for. Local food production is a combination of the unique properties of the natural environment, knowledge of the local community, and historical and cultural resources generated by historical and cultural events that create the unique character of this place. These activities are a part of the concept of sustainable development of both agriculture and culinary tourism, which meet the current needs of residents and tourists without limiting future generations the ability to meet their needs. The production and sale of traditional food with high nutritional value contributes to the economic development of many regions and the diversification of rural areas. Extensive activities involving local products become an investment for the future and support local entrepreneurship. Culinary tourism related to local food products brings not only economic, cultural and environmental benefits but can also be considered as a sustainable model for the economic development of local communities.

Food is an important factor in the choice of destination by tourists; an example of which is the development of culinary tourism closely related to the cultural heritage of the region. Based on this heritage, you can create various tourist products, e.g., culinary trails.

It is because of the culinary traditions of Wielkopolska voivodship, and above all, the combination of this region with the breeding and production of pigs, that attempts have been made to create the Culinary Trail ‘The Best Pork of Wielkopolska’. The Złotnicka White pig is a pig breed that is closely associated with this region and it is also a native breed of animal kept in conservative breeding. Individual objects that make up the theoretical concept of the trail are local producers of pork products, agritourism farms where pigs are raised and pork dishes are prepared, restaurants serving pork dishes, as well as various festivals and events promoting this particular type of meat.

The prepared trail concept is a type of multi-thematic trail with a culinary component that combines several groups of tourist attractions into one integrated product in which local products and gastronomy play a particularly important role, becoming an attractive commodity on the market. Currently, individual elements are available on the market, but the added value of the trail is the combination of the entire production cycle chain from the farmer to the final consumer—the tourist. As a result, more stakeholders are included in this product and the attraction force of this product will then be greater. The prepared trail proposal can be used in other places where a specific food product is located and where others attractions can enter the offering. Advantages of this potential tourist product may include: local pork, varied Polish cuisine, traditional hospitality, quality of services, target atmosphere, Polish agriculture, nature, ecology, freshness, and above all, global interest in regional cuisines. In addition, the sale of products directly from the farmer and the producer means that he does not have to pay the margin to the broker who delivers the product to the market; all the proceeds from this sale go to his pocket.

Undoubtedly, tourists are increasingly looking for places where they can discover and experience the culinary heritage of the region visited. This trail can revive regional dishes, culinary heritage and increase the pride of residents and the authentic tourist experience.

The proposed concept is a contribution to further, in-depth research on the creation of culinary routes based on local meat products. This can be a role model for other regions in Poland and the EU.

To sum up, it should be emphasized that the presented idea of the trail is part of the activities of supporting local food producers and processors to maintain production during and after the resolution of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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