



IGCAT Experts Voice



Colombia's fields are inhabited by rural populations and the variety of regions differ from each other, by their cultural traits that make them unique in their dances, their music and of course their food. Diversity stems from the mix between indigenous, Spanish and African cultures, as well as other minor migrations, which have allowed Colombian culture to manifest in an immensely rich cultural heritage that must be preserved with pride and identity. Colombian

territory is inhabited by 84 ethnic groups and a variety of natural ecosystems. It is precisely this diversity of ecosystems that allows for countless culinary preparations, spread over beautiful landscapes, that have the ability to attract visitors.

However, political disputes and social inequalities, along the Colombian history, have been in charge of feeding scenes of violence that have mainly threatened rural areas, generating displacement and abandonment of crops and their way of eating. This situation has contributed to the disappearance of cultural and culinary practices, producing an unconscious break with the rural and ancestral identity. Thus generating admiration for foreign eating patterns, which on many occasions have led to the loss of traditions, and with them of biodiversity due to decreased local biological species crops.

Within this context, the Leo Espinosa Foundation, **FUNLEO** is a key partner for IGCAT, as it seeks to promote Colombian culinary traditions, strengthen cultural identities of communities and build awareness regarding consumption of local, available and safe food. Both IGCAT and FUNLEO support social processes of community empowerment through gastronomy, by leading initiatives involving participants on projects related to the field of

gastronomy. Inspiration bound in tradition allows rural inhabitants to think themselves as producers of new alternatives, through culinary innovation, adding value to traditional products. The way we eat and the way in which the gastronomic sector develops, will play a crucial role for peace and stability in Colombia.

For more viewpoints from IGCAT experts visit igcat.org

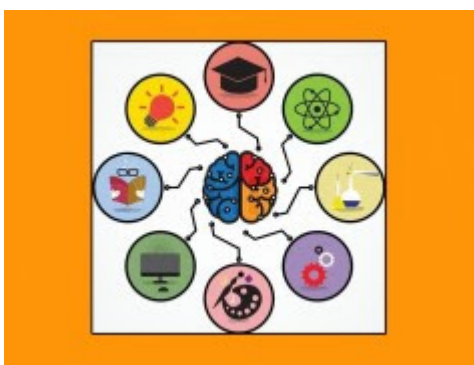
BIOGRAPHY

Laura Hernández Espinosa is currently director of **FUNLEO**, a non-profit organization that works to improve the welfare of Colombians understanding gastronomy as an engine for development. Laura has shown great interest in food studies, for which she has lead, various projects aimed at strengthening food security and nutrition among communities, especially with afro-descendant, indigenous, peasant and women groups.

Along with a degree in International Relations, a Postgraduate in Corporate Social Responsibility and a Masters in Development Studies, she is always in search of answers and actions to walk toward the development of a food culture that values the potential of Colombia's natural and cultural heritage.

IGCAT News

Empowering local communities through interdisciplinary training



IGCAT is an international interdisciplinary network of experts aiming to empower and facilitate local communities to realise the potential of their distinct food, culture, arts, sustainable tourism and other local resources. This network, from different countries and disciplines (cultural and tourism managers, professors, researchers, consultants) contribute to the enrichment and...

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Voices on local food and cultural diversity

The third Annual IGCAT Expert's meeting was held on Tuesday 31 May in **Sant Pol de Mar**, Catalonia, bringing together expert voices from 8 countries from around the globe to share their views on local food and cultural diversity. The meeting included a round table event on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), where different opinions...



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Encouraging entrepreneurs to think outside the box and across sectors



On June 1 2016, Dr. Lidia Varbanova outlined the importance of creativity, innovation and the ability to go beyond borders for entrepreneurship in the arts, cultural and food sectors. The meeting took place with IGCAT educators interested to learn what is needed to provoke and support entrepreneurship. Varbanova applauded...

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Euro-Mediterranean Food Tourism Congress adds a new twist

The Euro-Mediterranean Food Tourism Congress in Tossa de Mar on 1 June, added a new twist this year when it invited IGCAT experts to participate in a programme especially designed to demonstrate culinary tourism in action. IGCAT's participation in the congress started with a warm welcome



from M^a Àngels Pujals, Tourism Councilor of Tossa de Mar, Dr. Jordi Tresserras, LABPATC, University of Barcelona and Dr. Diane Dodd, Executive Director of IGCAT (International

Institute of Gastronomy, Culture, Arts and Tourism) during a guided visit to Sant Benet, a unique Costa Brava Traditional Farm where IGCAT's Experts and Euro-Mediterranean Food Congress participants learnt about Catalan farming techniques.

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European Region of Gastronomy Platform Member's News

8th Partner meeting European Region of Gastronomy Platform



The 8th Partner Meeting of the European Region of Gastronomy Platform, organised by IGCAT and hosted...

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European Regions of Gastronomy 2018 Award Ceremony

The European Region of Gastronomy Award ceremony for 2018 was held this morning at Aarhus Theatre in Central Denmark. The event kicked off with a warm welcome from Bent Hansen, the Chairman of Central Denmark Region and the Mayor of Aarhus, Jacob Bundsgaard. Dr Diane Dodd, President of IGCAT spoke about the need...



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South Aegean, European Region of Gastronomy candidate for 2019



On 21 June, Mr. Giorgos Hatzimarkos, Governor of the Region of the South Aegean travelled to Aarhus to announce the official candidacy of the South Aegean to be named European Region of Gastronomy in 2019. The governor was accompanied by the Vice Governor of Primary Sector, Agriculture and Regional Policy of the South Aegean Region...

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Galway, West of Ireland's food producers win the jury's hearts

IGCAT international experts – Dr. Diane Dodd (Spain), Ilona Sares (Finland) and Davinia Galea (Malta) – visited [Galway, West of Ireland](#) between the 24 and 26 May 2016, to monitor the initial take-off and progress of the programme since its successful bid to host the European Region of Gastronomy in Galway, West of Ireland...



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100 food events to celebrate European Region of Gastronomy 2017



Along with Central Denmark Region, Aarhus has been appointed European Region of Gastronomy 2017. The interest from the city's food entrepreneurs is overwhelming and by now, more than 100 events are already in

the programme. At the moment, Aarhus is experiencing a gastronomical blooming...

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Pottery Symposium and gastronomic performance to take place by the Lake Vaidava, Latvia

From June 26 till July 9 in the manufactory of the Vaidava Ceramics Ltd. near Valmiera, which is also part of the Rīga-Gauja European Region of Gastronomy, the 1st International Pottery Symposium "Claymeal" will be held. It will gather 17 artists from Latvia, Switzerland, the United States, Spain, Georgia, Argentine, Ireland, Norway, Turkey, Jordan, Russia,...



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IGCAT carries out research, collects knowledge and develops projects to support creative solutions in regional and local development.

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