



Aseer Awarded 2024

IGCAT



WORLD REGION OF GASTRONOMY

Celebrating local food cultures
to empower communities, spark
innovation, and support
a healthier planet

BROCHURE |

ABOUT IGCAT


IGCAT (Institute of Gastronomy, Culture, Arts & Tourism) aims to empower local communities by raising awareness of the importance of protecting and promoting distinct regional food, culture, arts and natural assets as part of sustainable and balanced tourism and development strategies.

This is essential to safeguard our planet, health, wellness and local economies.

IGCAT is a non-profit institute established in 2012, working with regional stakeholder consortia in the fields of gastronomy, culture, arts and tourism.

It counts on the expertise of a worldwide network of experts and works in partnership with specialised intergovernmental organisations.

IGCAT believes in the
power of cross-sectoral
collaboration to transform
regions around the World

A stylized, dark grey leaf graphic is positioned in the bottom right corner of the dark grey background. It consists of three leaves of varying sizes, with the largest leaf at the top and two smaller ones below it, all pointing towards the right.

IGCAT

ABOUT THE WORLD REGION OF GASTRONOMY AWARD



THE WORLD REGION OF GASTRONOMY AWARD

The **World Region of Gastronomy Award** celebrates regions on all continents that embrace their culinary heritage as a driver of sustainable development, strengthening the deep connections between food, the environment hospitality, tourism, culture and health.

It highlights the power of food as a force for positive change, ensuring that gastronomic traditions and innovations thrive whilst protecting the planet and enriching lives for generations to come.

It is more than recognition; it is a call to action for regions across the world to collaborate, exchange knowledge, and champion sustainable food systems. By uniting diverse stakeholders - from small-scale producers to policymakers, chefs to educators - the initiative fosters economic resilience, cultural pride, and environmental stewardship.

By empowering communities to safeguard biodiversity, preserve traditional foodways, and innovate for a more sustainable future, the World Region of Gastronomy Award highlights the essential role of gastronomy in shaping a better world.



THE WORLD REGION OF GASTRONOMY AWARDS AIMS

01

INSPIRE CULINARY AND CULTURAL EDUCATION

Reconnecting people of all ages with their food heritage and the importance of sustainable practices

04

CREATE SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

Supporting creativity, entrepreneurship, and responsible gastronomic innovation

02

SUPPORT KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND COLLABORATION

Connecting rural and urban communities, fostering global connections and best practices in sustainable gastronomy

03

STRENGTHEN FOOD SECURITY, RESILIENCE & COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

Promoting local food systems and access to healthy, nutritious diets around the world

05

ADVANCE SUSTAINABILITY IN TOURISM, HOSPITALITY & AGRICULTURE

Encouraging regenerative practices, responsible consumption and production



THE WORLD REGION OF GASTRONOMY AWARDS **IMPACT**



GLOBAL RECOGNITION

Showcases the region's distinct cultural and culinary assets by giving global visibility and putting the international spotlight on the region.



SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Promotes sustainable tourism by enhancing the quality of local food products and strengthening linkages with the hospitality industry, offering more authentic and enriching visitor experiences.



GASTRONOMIC PRESERVATION

Safeguards culinary traditions by celebrating and preserving local food heritage, ensuring that traditional knowledge, flavours and practices are passed to future generations.

THE WORLD REGION OF GASTRONOMY AWARDS **IMPACT**



LOCAL FOOD EMPOWERMENT

Encourages the use, promotion and innovation of local food products to strengthen the region's gastronomy and to increase its resilience.



CATALYST FOR DEVELOPMENT

Is a catalyst for development through the regional stakeholder group which fosters public-private and cross-sectoral partnerships and collaboration and improves access to funding and investment.



REGIONAL IDENTITY & PRIDE

Builds regional identity and pride in the local communities by celebrating their distinct culture and food assets.

THE WORLD REGION OF GASTRONOMY AWARDS IMPACT



INNOVATION & LEARNING

Put a focus on innovation and learning to support smart and inclusive growth and thus provide new skills and new opportunities for SMEs and micro enterprises.



ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Contributes to environmental protection and promotes sustainable food systems by protecting biodiversity, supporting bee populations, promoting regenerative agricultural practices and reducing single-use plastics.



FOOD AWARENESS & EDUCATION

Creates awareness of wider food issues for healthy living and sustainability both through educational programmes and wider citizen engagement projects.

PARTICIPATION BENEFITS



PARTICIPATION

BENEFITS

By engaging in this initiative, regions multiply their connections, increase their international visibility, exchange knowledge, and contribute to a stronger, more equitable and more sustainable World

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PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING THE AWARD



FOCUS AREAS

FEEDING THE PLANET

In support of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, IGCAT aims to stimulate debate about the production of sufficient and healthy food for everyone. There is enough food to feed the world if we protect the planet's biodiversity.

It is estimated that by 2050 the world's population will have exceeded 9 billion people (currently it is more than 7 billion) and considering that we currently have a critical situation in which more than 25,000 people die from hunger every day, we need urgent discussion and action related to food security, global trade, food distribution, emergency aid, food waste and food production.

In order to support food production, we need to take care of bee populations which are responsible for pollinating 70% of the plants that supply our food. Food kilometres, sustainable farming practices, importance of pollinators and food waste are just some of the areas that our awarded and candidate regions have addressed. Through sharing knowledge, supporting project ideas and giving each other access to templates and tools, we are contributing to our collective future food security.



World	Region	of	Gastronomy	Platform	members	commit	to:
a.							Develop awareness-raising events on the importance of food varieties, traditional farming methods and the importance of bees;
b.							Encourage programmes for communities to become self-sufficient in food supply and to keep food waste to a minimum;
c.							Instill pride in cultural diversity and food traditions through events and activities to celebrate regional uniqueness;
d.							Educate about the perils of pesticides on the ecosystem, especially for bee populations, and other related areas;
e.							Draw up long-term development plans that consider preventative measures to avoid the loss of local plant and animal varieties, as well as traditional food knowledge.

INNOVATION, CREATIVITY AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES

A region's artists, landscape, crafts, and traditional or contemporary culture are the distinctive selling points for a variety of new creative services and experiences.



World	Region	of	Gastronomy	Platform	members	commit	to:
a.			Develop events for visitors and citizens that raise awareness about unique local food and cultural diversity;				
b.			Protect and promote traditional food and craft production through business development hubs;				
c.			Explore contemporary visitor experiences;				
d.			Take steps to increase the amount of protected GI products in the region ("A Geographical Indication (GI) is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin" (World Intellectual Property Organization - WIPO. Geographical Indications. An introduction) (accessed 29_05_2017);				
e.			Develop and use digital tools such as apps and online platforms that facilitate the promotion and valorization of the region's cultural and food diversity, as well as encourage responsible consumerism;				
f.			Support adult learning and encourage new skills such as storytelling, creative design, sustainable packaging, cross-marketing and export of local producers' products and services.				

FOCUS AREAS

EDUCATING FOR OUR FUTURE

Ensuring good food for everyone starts with understanding the importance of local and healthy food options.

Nourishing children and adults through culinary and cultural education for responsible production and consumption improves people's health, encourages sustainable development, and instills pride in local food cultures. It is also a vital way to ensure that good food can reach everybody.

The World Regions of Gastronomy prioritize collaboration with education and knowledge sectors. These collaborations are vital for the dissemination of information on the importance of regional gastronomy for the future health and well-being of citizens.



World Region of Gastronomy Platform members commit to:

- a. Increase children's access to creative subjects, gardening and cookery both in and outside of school, thus raising awareness and pride in schools about the region's cultural and food uniqueness;
- b. Make steps to ensure where possible that public procurement procedures prioritize healthy options (including locally sourced and natural foods);
- c. Encourage cooperation with the agricultural and educational sectors, so that local food knowledge is shared;
- d. Ensure children have access to at least one healthy meal per day and make efforts to regulate sugar and salt content;
- e. Improve knowledge about plastic and food waste as well as encouraging responsible behaviour towards recycling, ensuring that good food can reach everybody.

FOCUS AREAS

BALANCED AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Regional gastronomy provides a wealth of diversity, not just in terms of different foods, but also in the many ways of eating, presenting, and serving those foods. Traditions developed over centuries form the vital 'DNA' of food cultures and represent important potential sources of innovation in the service and hospitality industries.

Raising awareness about the advantages of integrating local food, recipes and traditions into tourism offerings and collaborating with food and cultural events services in the region will contribute to greater environmental, economic and cultural sustainability.

Visitors are the best ambassadors for a region thanks to social media and can increase the client base for food export. Smart strategies give the region unprecedented visibility for a fraction of the costs of traditional promotional methods. Supporting quality gastronomy tourism initiatives have the added advantage of ensuring that tourism income can reach rural areas where it is often greatly needed.



World	Region	of	Gastronomy	Platform	members	commit	to:
a.			Promote opportunities for the emergence of quality and creative food experiences devoted to surprise visitors, as well as meet sustainability and educational goals;				
b.			Support new cultural and food festivals and markets with a focus on local and healthy food, and increase the variety of local foods in existing festivals and public events;				
c.			Encourage chefs in restaurants and hotels to use and promote local products, innovate on traditional recipes, and share stories about the region;				
d.			Consider policies that prioritize tourism objectives to meet quality rather than quantity targets and thus aim to ensure a balanced approach to tourism;				
e.			Increase the sale and export of local food gifts by encouraging innovative and locally designed products such as kitchenware, ceramics, and recipe books;				
f.			Encourage hoteliers and restaurateurs to move towards regenerative food suppliers.				

LINKING URBAN AND RURAL

People in urban settings are less aware of where their food comes from and are disconnected from the food-related rituals that have sustained their communities for centuries.

We focus on initiatives that provide opportunities to bridge rural and urban environments, connect citizens and foster social cohesion.



- a. Carry out programmes to demonstrate and educate citizens on where their food comes from;
- b. Increase the amount of land dedicated to clean, natural and traditional farming;
- c. Provide opportunities for urban gardening programmes and projects;
- d. Support the development of infrastructure needed to encourage urban dwellers and visitors to explore the rural landscape and reconnect to nature in a sustainable and responsible manner;
- e. Encourage private and public initiatives to become energy independent by using their own energy management systems;
- f. Support seed bank schemes to protect endangered plant species and resuscitate resilient heirloom crops.

WELL-BEING AND HEALTHIER LIVING

By using creativity to showcase wholesome and healthy regional and local food, we contribute to a more holistic approach to well-being.



World	Region	of	Gastronomy	Platform	members	commit	to:
a.			Showcase regional and local foods that are wholesome and healthy through sustainable events, customs and celebrations;				
b.			Encourage well-being related practices and promote investigation into traditional cures and remedies, based on local plants and skills;				
c.			Promote campaigns to eliminate single-use plastics and find local sustainable alternatives for food packaging;				
d.			Build awareness about the importance of honey and ensure wild flowers are preserved for healthy bee populations;				
e.			Encourage green spaces and the planting of trees to keep air clean and support a vibrant and nourishing environment.				

JOINT PROJECTS



WORLD FOOD GIFT CHALLENGE



TOP FOODIE WEBSITES



FOOD FILM MENU



YOUNG CHEF AWARD



JOINT PROJECT

WORLD FOOD GIFT CHALLENGE

The World Food Gift Challenge is an international competition to award and give visibility to high quality, artisanal food and food-related crafts gifts from the World Regions of Gastronomy.

Through the World Food Gift Challenge, regions can support their local small- and medium-sized producers of traditional products and highlight the stories that link those products to the region, therefore creating an added-value for their territory.

The World Food Gift Challenge allows local producers in the regions to capitalise on the ever-increasing demand from visitors for exceptional local food and food-related craft gifts, paired with their search for authenticity and uniqueness, and enhanced attention for sustainable products.

The World Food Gift Challenge includes two different categories: **food gifts** and **craft gifts** (cooking utensils or equipment) related to the regions' culinary traditions.





Participating products are selected by the regions through local Food Gift contests based on their authentic, natural qualities that mix fine ingredients or quality raw materials with the skills, passion, and care on the part of their manufacturer/s. They are not mass-produced, but developed and delivered on a small scale. Special attention is devoted to their packaging, both in terms of sustainability and ability to communicate the story of the product and the producer.

A registration fee is requested to regions to cover IGCAT's coordination, marketing, and publicity for the event.

Considering high relative costs for local crafts producers, regions are encouraged to set aside a significant budget to support SME's (particularly young entrepreneurs) with design, storytelling, innovation, market testing, packaging and production. This should be a package to encourage producers to market the food region through their products.



All documents related to the World Food Gift Challenge are [available here](#).

A training of trainers module is available for regions hoping to develop a local competition.

[WorldFoodGiftChallenge.org](https://www.worldfoodgiftchallenge.org)

IGCAT encourage hosts of the World Food Gift Challenge to provide forums and exchanges for learning about design, branding, packaging, marketing, distribution etc.

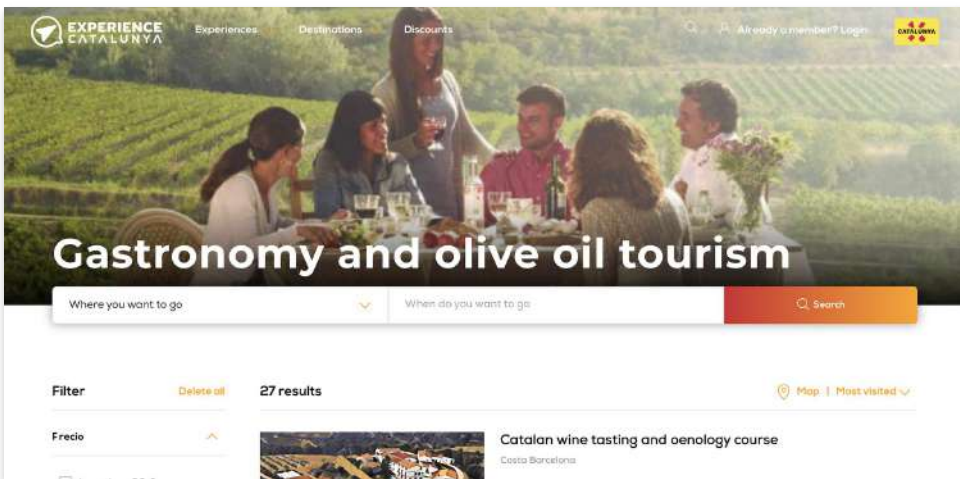
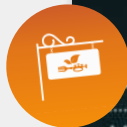
JOINT PROJECT

TOP FOODIE WEBSITES

The Top Foodie Websites Award is a recognition given by IGCAT for the best website providing unique creative, cultural and gastronomical experiences for local and international visitors in the World Regions of Gastronomy.

By means of this project, IGCAT hopes to encourage creative, artistic and sensory experimentation to build new and unique food experiences, as well as strengthen the connection between the territory and actors within the territory that are working to develop sustainable tourism and visitor initiatives.

A jury formed from IGCAT Experts will select the best websites according to a set of rigorous criteria to evaluate different aspects such as sustainability, cross-sectoral cooperation, educational component, uniqueness, inclusiveness and many more.



Eligible websites may provide a variety of experiences including (but not exclusive to): Food/wine tasting; Farm/factory visit; Food/wine or related demonstration or cookery class; Participatory craft-related experience; Food/wine route; Food/wine market or fair; Museum/heritage site related to food.

Websites that encourage cross-sectorial collaboration to create exceptional experiences will be favoured along with those that include unusual or emblematic venues, a theme or story, participatory or sensory experiences and/or provide enchanting experiences.

By publishing an annual list of Top Foodie Websites from the candidate and awarded World Regions of Gastronomy, IGCAT will:

- Increase international visitors access to quality food and cultural experiences;
- Give international visibility to niche food and culture experiences;
- Reward portals and apps that support micro-businesses;
- Contribute to sustainable territorial development.



All documents related to the Top Foodie Websites are [available in this link](#).

A webinar on **Top Foodie Websites Best Practices** is also [available here](#).

TopFoodieWebsites.org

JOINT PROJECT

FOOD FILM MENU

The incredible diversity of food, food cultures, food traditions and food knowledge has influenced cultural, architectural and landscape heritage across the world. As more and more people move to globalized diets it is vitally important to revalue and re-promote our food as cultural heritage for future growth and development.

IGCAT has identified the important role of audio-visual tools in promoting local food products, local food recipes and traditions related to regional gastronomy.

As a result, IGCAT has developed the international Food Film Menu, a collection of short films and videos showcasing footage from awarded and candidate World Regions of Gastronomy, with the purpose to provide visual representations of the cultural and culinary heritage of the regions by local filmmakers.



This project supports interactive and innovative ways of giving visibility to the participating regions and their food heritage by developing creative audio-visual content that can be shared across the regions and used for promotional purposes.

Every year IGCAT launches a call for videos in candidate and awarded World Regions of Gastronomy, and select the best videos to showcase on IGCAT's website and distribute to film and food festivals across the globe. These videos will also be used yearly to promote the World Regions of Gastronomy and to create additional marketing campaigns.

The international Food Film Menu gives visibility to the multiple creators involved from production to consumption focusing on locality, sustainability and authenticity, guaranteeing cross-collaboration and dialogue with the audio-visual and creative sectors.

Given all regions are concerned about aging food producers, Candidate and Awarded World Regions of Gastronomy are encouraged to submit films that focus on young farmers, fishermen and or food producers. The aim is to encourage young people to see these professions as a lifestyle choice.



All documents related to the **Food Film Menu** are [available in this guide](#).

[Food Film Menu Webpage](#).

FUTURE JOINT PROJECT

YOUNG CHEF AWARDS

Once a critical mass of regions on each continent are reached, IGCAT plans to launch the a Young Chef Award for each continent.

In the meantime, and to build up to this, it is strongly recommended that local and regional competitions take place in each region in collaboration with a local hospitality or culinary arts school. In the future, the finalists from all regions ideally will be able to represent the region in an international competition in their continent.

This competition is is a powerful tool to raise young chefs' awareness on the importance of preserving the food and cultural diversity of their regions throughout their professional career, by promoting innovations on traditional cuisine; highlighting sustainable food cultures; and supporting local food products. It also challenges future chefs to contribute to a reduction of the negative impacts of waste on the environment by assessing the young chefs' kitchen-waste management practices. The aim is to inject pride, safeguard old recipes and raise awareness about risk of losing local food knowledge.



THE WORLD BEE DAY INITIATIVE ON 20 MAY

World Regions of Gastronomy should explore ways to promote World Bee Day.

The Association of Beekeepers' in Slovenia 2021 proposed that the United Nations (UN) adopt 20 May as a day to draw attention to the essential role bees and other pollinators play in keeping people and the planet healthy.

Saimaa 2024 have produced business cards and pencils with seeds to encourage people to plant them for bees and other pollinators. Habitat loss, damage and climate change are having a huge impact on bee populations so it is urgent that we encourage bee populations to thrive once more.

01

INVOLVE THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Ask schools or community groups to create Bee Hotels.

02

MAINTAIN GREEN PUBLIC SPACES

Leave green public spaces to grow wild and sow wild flowers (bees love long grass and wildflowers).

03

SHARE SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

Promote sustainable honey and sustainable beekeeping practices.

04

FOSTER HONEY EDUCATION

Educate on how to know good honey from processed honey.





WORLD REGION OF **GASTRONOMY**

- AWARDED BY -

I G C A T

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
GASTRONOMY, CULTURE, ARTS AND TOURISM