



Fine fare in fair surrounds

LET YOUR STOMACH LEAD YOU TO DISCOVER THE FLAVOURS AND FAVOURS OF FOUR GREAT GOURMET CITIES

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➤ Paris and its cheese, bread and soups... Pizza, pasta, calzone in Rome... Meats, wurst, pretzels in Bavaria... These may be some of the first thoughts when travellers consider European food highlights. While these are worthy choices for any visitor, there is another group of cities that more than hold their own among the flashy stars of dining on the continent.

They may be less frequently visited but they're more than worth their

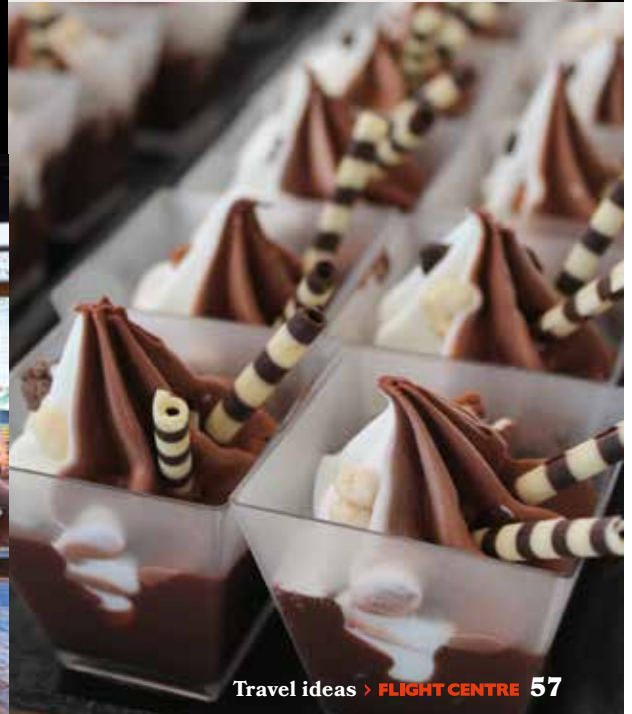
weight in Yorkshire puddings in terms of food and dining. Whether it be Lyon's *bouchons*, where you can taste authentic regional cuisine; bite-sized *pintxos* in the Basque Country city of San Sebastian; the contrast of London's top-end restaurants, curry houses and Sunday roasts; or seeking out mortadella and Parmigiano-Reggiano in Bologna, Italy, these underappreciated foodie cities offer more than enough to slake the appetites of the hungriest travellers. ➤





CLOCKWISE FROM OPPOSITE

- > San Sebastian's *pintxos* can be found in nearly every bar – and come in all flavours.
- > Fresh French breads, found in *boulangeries* around Lyon.
- > Street art of Lyon's famous chef, Paul Bocuse, looks over the city.
- > The food in San Sebastian ranges from Michelin-starred eateries to *pintxos*, served in bars.
- > Bologna's gelato museum more than satisfies visitors' cravings.
- > Bar crawls in San Sebastian are common, with people seeking out dinner and drinks.
- > The English roast is an oldie but a goodie, often served with beef and Yorkshire pudding.





› CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Diners enjoy the balmy evenings of San Sebastian outside a bar; *pintxos* are the staple way to dine in this city's bars; diners select their *pintxos*.

Supping in San Sebastian

Come to San Sebastian hungry and the city is your oyster. Located in the Basque Country of northern Spain, it's best known for its food, even though there's plenty more to do here (beaches, architecture, history...). You'll see it when you walk down the street and notice just how many small bars, eateries and restaurants crowd the avenues.

There's a unique style of eating in bars here, called *pintxos*. Tiny morsels of delicious food (each eatery has its own speciality) are arrayed on the bar. Eat them one by one – both hot and cold *pintxos* are available – and pay for what you've eaten at the end. There's even a word for an evening's journey from bar to bar feasting on *pintxos*: *txikiteo*. The *pintxos* are usually paired with *txakoli*, a light, sparkling wine which is a speciality of the Basque Country.

Other specialities of the Basque people that visitors will see in restaurants include

salt-cod omelettes, giant T-bone steaks (or *txuleta*), hake fish in green sauce, spider crab and eel. And the Basque people are all about seasonality and fresh ingredients.

WHERE TO GET IT:

➤ **High-end restaurant:** San Sebastian has a lot of Michelin stars, ranking the restaurants here among the best in the world. Two highly rated restaurants are Arzak and Mugaritz, ranked seventh- and 21st-best restaurant in the world, respectively.

➤ **Street food:** A typical night out in San Sebastian will have you wandering between bars to seek out new flavours of *pintxos*. Examples include bread topped with tomatoes and olive oil.

➤ **Culinary tradition:** Ensure you eat plenty of seafood here, if only because it's so fresh. Txulotxo has water views and an excellent range of dishes using ocean produce.



Lyonnaise for days

The lights and renown of France's capital may be the main attraction for international visitors but within the country it's another story when it comes to food. When in Lyon, you won't be able to help noticing the name of one particular French chef based in this city in the southeast of the country: Paul Bocuse. Bocuse is lauded as one of France's best-ever chefs and operates his restaurant l'Auberge du Pont de Collonges to the north of Lyon and four brasseries (l'Est, l'Ouest, Le Nord and Le Sud) in the city itself. He's renowned for his 'nouvelle cuisine' approach – a fresher and lighter style than classical French.

It's said that it's possible to spot Bocuse in Lyon's famous indoor market, Les Halles de Lyon Paul Bocuse (many food institutions use the chef's name), where you can shop at stalls like Boulangerie Jocteur and Bellota Bellota delicatessen and know you're getting the same quality as the renowned chef.

A further Lyonnaise food institution is the wealth of *bouchons* that line the streets. You'll find these restaurants only in Lyon, and the food served is traditional French and Lyonnaise, like *saucisson* (sausage), *andouillette* (sausage made from pig intestines) and *gâteau de volaille* (chicken liver cake). While the fare tends to be richer and fattier, the emphasis here is on atmosphere, and you may even be able to strike up a connection with the owner of the establishment.

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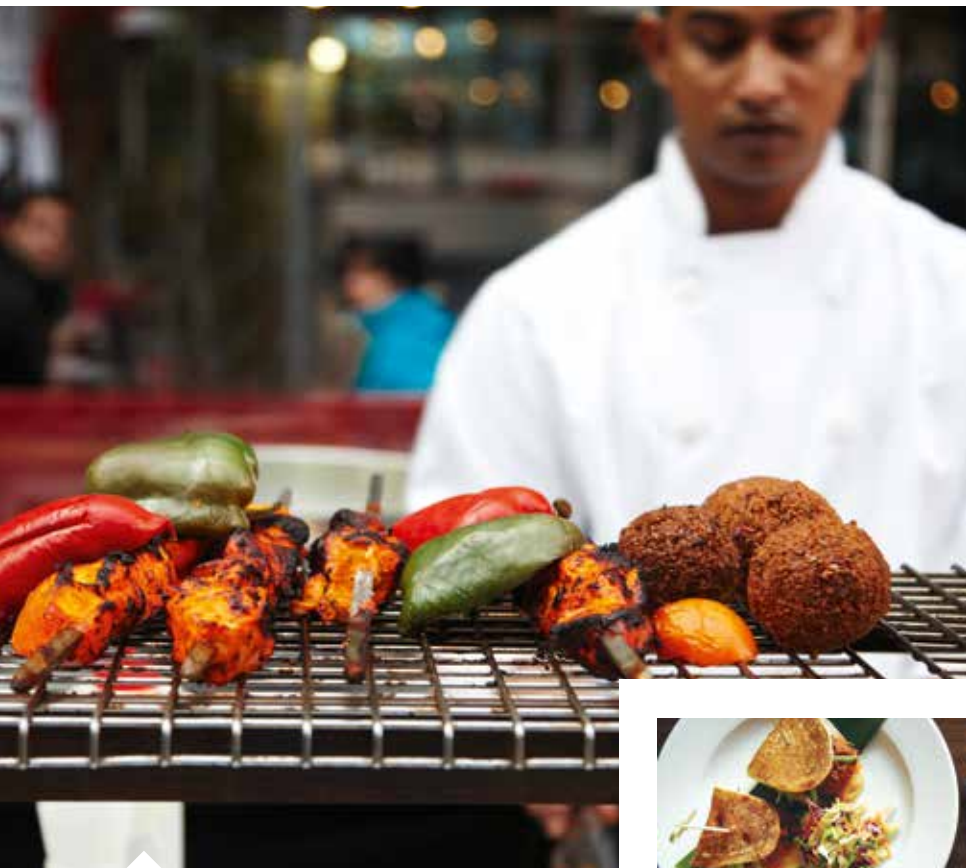
WHERE TO GET IT:

➤ **High-end restaurant:** Bocuse's restaurant l'Auberge du Pont de Collonges has held three Michelin stars since 1965. It's recommended to book online in advance. The foie gras and the truffle soup are especially celebrated.

➤ **Street food:** Lyon's markets burst with fresh food – the city is located in a produce-rich region, after all. Try Les Halles de Lyon Paul Bocuse, which features 56 specialty provedores and restaurants stocking cheese, bread, wine, meats and more. Other markets include Marché Saint-Antoine (open every day except Monday) and Marché de la Croix Rousse (open Thursdays).

➤ **Culinary tradition:** *Andouillette* is a French speciality and is popular in Lyon – made from pigs' intestines, it has a rich, nutty flavour. You can try *andouillette* in many of Lyon's *bouchons*. Find an authentic *bouchon* at lesbouchonslyonnais.org. >

> THIS PAGE FROM LEFT: Bellotta Bellotta delicatessen in Les Halles de Lyon Paul Bocuse; French *saucisson*, or sausage, at the market.



The London gamut

London is a city where cultures meet as millions dine out each evening at restaurants that take their influences from anywhere and everywhere around the world – and it's a culinary scene of creativity and renown, from the dizzying heights of celebrity cuisine to grungy, relaxed, comforting meals.

There's a reason he's imported for each season of *MasterChef Australia* – Heston Blumenthal is even more famous and celebrated in his home country. Blumenthal runs The Fat Duck, where you can expect all the culinary sorcery for which this chef is known (but expect to pay for it, with The Itinerary, or set menu, costing £255 – at least A\$440 – per person).

Don't let that be alienating; at the other, no-less-rewarding end of the scale are ethnic eateries taking influence from the far reaches of the once-world-dominating British Empire and hearty pub meals that are a hallmark of the British Isles. In particular, there is a strong Indian influence on the food scene in London, with chicken tikka (chicken roasted in a creamy, spicy sauce) having been taken on as somewhat of a national dish. Brick Lane near Shoreditch is the most famous place to go in search of this cuisine, being packed with curry houses offering korma, rogan josh and vindaloo paired with naan and *lassi* (a salty-sweet yoghurt drink).



WHERE TO GET IT:

➤ **High-end restaurant:** Much more reasonably priced than The Fat Duck is Dinner By Heston in Knightsbridge, which is à la carte (but still inventive) in more laid-back surroundings.

➤ **Street food:** Head to Brick Lane and choose a curry house, or for something a little more upmarket try Gunpowder around the corner – a new eatery that takes a more inventive approach to Indian cuisine. Old Spitalfields Market is close by, too.

➤ **Culinary tradition:** Every pub should do a delicious Sunday roast with Yorkshire pudding (a bread-like side) – usually you'll have a choice of meats, such as beef, pork or chicken. Higher-end pubs may do lamb or duck. Try the Prince Bonaparte in Bayswater.

➤ **CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** Food grilling at a restaurant in London's Old Spitalfields Market; a Brick Lane cook makes aromatic curries; a friendly local waves from his delicatessen counter in Bologna; serving up icy treats at the Gelato Museum in Bologna; upmarket Indian near Brick Lane at Gunpowder.



All in Bologna

It may be one of Italy's lesser-known cities for tourists, but you're certain to have heard of at least one culinary invention from Bologna: spaghetti Bolognese. While this dish may be simply considered 'Italian' in other countries, it originates from, and is a specialty, of the northern Emilia-Romagna region of which Bologna is the capital. The food here has even earned the city the moniker 'la grassa' (the fat one).

Cured meats, cream, tomato and cheese are all central to Bolognese cuisine. In fact, another of the city's food exports is mortadella, which was developed into the American version Bologna sausage, or 'baloney' (but don't call it that here).

Another Italian culinary hallmark is celebrated at the Gelato Museum, where you can learn all about the history of this chilly refreshment, book into a gelato lesson to make your own and, finally, eat gelato.

Perhaps the food here is so celebrated (and delicious) because the Emilia-Romagna region is home to so many products that are central to Italian cuisine: Parmigiano-Reggiano (parmesan cheese), balsamic vinegar (from Modena), prosciutto (cured ham from Parma) and *ragù* (red, meat-based sauce).

'Disneyland for foodies': how does that sound? Eataly World, to open in 2017 from Italian provedore chain Eataly, has earned that nickname and promises to offer a culinary wonderland, including classrooms, restaurants, markets, stores and even demo fields and breeding farms.


No wonder Bologna is praised within Italy as the country's food capital.



WHERE TO GET IT:

➤ **High-end restaurant:** Pappagallo, known throughout Italy, is situated in the centre of town and serves authentic Bolognese-style dishes. It's located right near the city's famous two-leaning-towers landmark.

➤ **Street food:** One of the best Italian food traditions is the *aperitivo*. It's done all across Italy but is a tradition of Bologna so seek out this mini meal that takes place before dinner and is often accompanied by bitter drinks.

➤ **Culinary tradition:** Find a small *osteria* or *trattoria* for some authentic Italian, Bolognese style, but head away from the main tourist areas. Trattoria Serghei and Trattoria Anna Maria (both north of the centre), Osteria Marsalino (try the strawberry risotto) and Trattoria Battibecco are all great options .