

Eat well, live well!

Food and drink in Europe's historic thermal towns



Award-winning and world famous

Eating well is an essential part of being well!

Traditionally our spa towns have great restaurants serving healthy delicious foods, often cooked with fresh local ingredients. Look out for fine dining experiences in our renowned luxury and thermal hotels, where you might follow in the footsteps of some famous visitors of the past!

The joy of discovering a town is often wrapped up with experiencing the regional food and the specialties of the region, but also traditional products from the area. In our spa towns you will find some unique products made with the thermal waters, as well as delicious fresh produce sold in the local Farmers Markets. The relaxing pace of life fits perfectly with the slow food movement and enjoying local products while enjoying a stay is part of a more sustainable way of living that is at the top of many people's agendas!



★ THERMAL KNOWLEDGE ★

In our Spanish member town Caldes de Montbui several local specialities are made with the thermal waters, including:

Fideu (short pasta noodles) – made with local waters since the 1700s.

Calderina – local beer made with the thermal waters.

Thermal broth – brewed with thermal water and local meats and vegetables, cooked in a huge cauldron next to the Roman Baths and Fonte del Lleó, the thermal source, in the weeks before Christmas.

Carquinyolis – Traditionally the almonds used in this sweet biscuit are left to blanch in the thermal waters.



The Culinary Highlights

– a selection

ITALY

★ Acqui Terme (Piemont Region)

Truly outstanding: The vine growing hills of the Lower Monferrato are listed as a UNESCO Intangible Heritage Site.

★ Salsomaggiore Terme (Province of Parma, Emilia-Romana Region)

The undisputed number one fine food is Parmigiano Reggiano (PDO), which can also be bought directly from the various dairies located in the hills around Salsomaggiore. Moreover, since 2015 a special commission has selected 11 De.C.O products, a territorial certification that attests the local origin of an agri-food product, guarantees its quality, its tradition, and its production in the municipal area.

★ Montecatini Terme (Tuscany)

“Cialde de Montecatini” – an artisan wafer biscuit, extremely light, tasty and healthy has been enjoyed by spa guests since the 19th century.

SPAIN & PORTUGAL

★ Ourense (Province) & Galicia

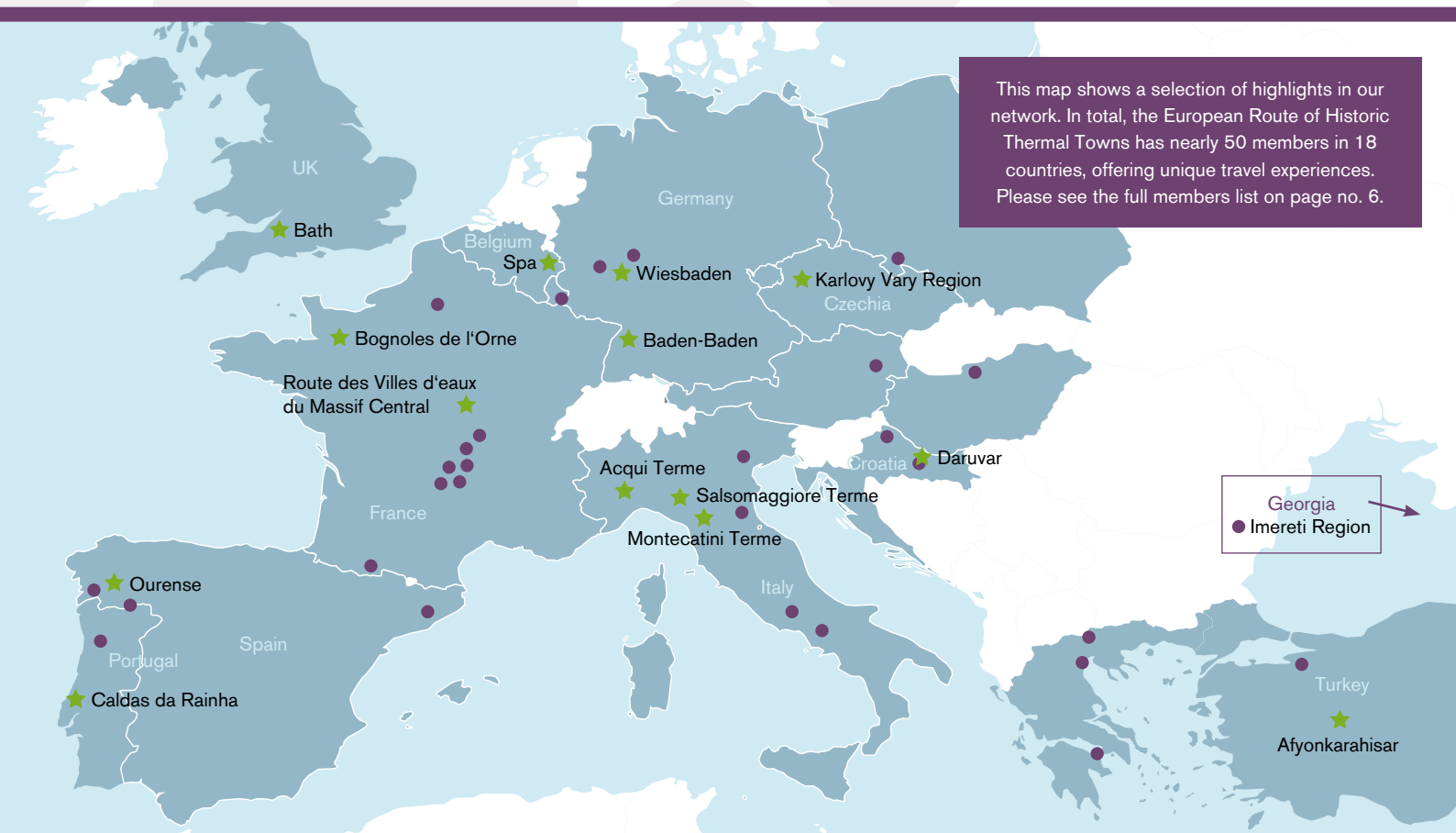
Pulpo a la Gallega: Galician style octopus and the most iconic dish in the whole of the region. Empanadas Gallegas: A type of Galician empanada, these large pies are pastry cases filled with a variety of ingredients.

Queimada (also known as “Witch’s brew”): Not just a simple drink however, this is a whole experience! Made from Aguardiente liquor, sugar, coffee beans, lemon peel and cinnamon sticks, it is set on fire and stirred until all the sugar has melted.

Papas de Padrón: they originate from the area of Padrón, found in Galicia, southwest of the city Santiago de Compostela. The residents of the area are so proud of these small vegetables that they hold a festival in their honour each August.

★ Caldas da Rainha

Portugal’s only daily outdoor farmers’ market takes place here!



TURKEY

★ Afyonkarahisar

The cuisine of the city is mainly based on meat and dough, and its sausage and cream have become global brands.

The cream, known as “kaymak” is mostly used with “ekmek kadayifi”, a delicious sweet dessert, thought to have originated in Afyonkarahisar but now popular throughout Turkey, especially during the Şeker Bayramı (festival of sweets) which marks the end of Ramadan. Made with a special bread soaked in sugar syrup and topped with pistachios and cream, it's very popular with tourists!

A dry-fermented, spicy sausage known as “sujuk” or “afyon sucugu” is one of the indispensable flavours of Turkish breakfast culture, and is one of Afyonkarahisar's best-known specialities.

★ THERMAL KNOWLEDGE ★

Some of our waters, such as Spa and Vichy are international brands. In other towns differently packaged bottles indicate water from different springs, which may taste different, have different properties and could be good for you in different ways. You may even be offered different waters to go with certain dishes, just like a fine wine!

★ INSIDER TIP! ★

You can imagine that Christmas time in our thermal towns is very special – the range of tasty food and traditional dishes at various Christmas markets and places.

CROATIA

★ Daruvar

Founded in 1840, Daruvar Brewery has been brewing in a traditional way, and today brews the famous Croatian beer “Staročesko”. The Daruvar wine route consists of seven points on an itinerary that takes in the countryside around Daruvar – vineyards and taverns/wine cellars for tasting and discoveries.

CZECHIA (KARLOVY VARY REGION)

★ Mariánské Lázně

“Mariánskolázeňské oplatky” are wafers with an unusually large and round shape, produced since 1856.

★ Karlovy Vary

The famous “Becherovka” is made with thermal waters and local herbs. It is also used in thermal coffee in Karlovy Vary Hall of the Sources – waiting to be tasted!

GERMANY

★ Baden-Baden

The Black Forest and one of the best German wine regions surround this thermal town in the Southwest of the country. Rebland, the region's name, is a reference to the vineyards that flourish there, producing an intense holiday feeling.

★ Wiesbaden

Wiesbaden is within the wine region of Rheingau, known for its romantic scenery at the Rhine river with river cruise ships passing by the castles and monasteries. The town's vineyard, on the “Neroberg” hill is where the Riesling grapes grow for the region's famous white wine.





BELGIUM

★ Spa

Spa mineral water has been bottled since the end of the 16th century and is very common in Western Europe, but is also exported to the rest of the world. And of course, not to be missed is the great taste of Belgian chocolates!

FRANCE

★ Bagnoles-des-L'Orne

Nestled in the ten thousand acres of the beautiful Andaines forest, this adorable and charming town boasts no fewer than 1600 varieties of mushrooms, a boon for collectors and cooks alike!

★ La Route des Villes d'Eaux – Auvergne

With its five PDO cheeses, its classified wines, its ancestral specialities, its mineral waters and even its lentils, the Auvergne region is a paradise for all gourmets.

The „Cheese Route“ invites to go and meet producers or ripeners in farms and dairies.

Wine lovers will be delighted to discover the Côtes d'Auvergne, with its 5 crus: Châteaugay, Chanturgue, Pinot, Boudes and Madargue. In the Auvergne, liqueurs and aperitifs are often made from wild plants, such as gentian, a large yellow flower from high pastures which is a key ingredient.

UK

★ Bath

It is must-do for many visitors: take afternoon tea in the Pump Room.

Sally Lunn bun: According to legend, the recipe was brought to Bath by Sally Lunn, a Huguenot refugee, in 1680 and her brioche-style buns soon became fashionable.

Cultural Route of the Council of Europe

EHTTA is responsible for managing the European Route of Historic Thermal Towns, a Cultural Route of the Council of Europe since 2010. Launched by the Council of Europe in 1987, "the Cultural Routes demonstrate by means of a journey through space and time how the heritage of the different countries and cultures of Europe contributes to a shared and living cultural heritage".

The European Route of Historic Thermal Towns European Historic Thermal Towns Association (EHTTA)

Member Towns Acqui Terme | Bad Ems | Bad Homburg | Bad Kissingen | Baden bei Wien | Baden-Baden | Bagnoles de l'Orne | Bath | Bursa Metropolitan Municipality | Caldas da Rainha | Caldes de Montbui | Castrocara Terme e Terra del Sole | Châtel-Guyon | Daruvar | Enghien-les-Bains | Fiuggi | La Bourboule | Łądek-Zdrój | Le Mont Dore | Lipik | Loutra Pozar | Loutraki-Perachora | Luchon | Mondariz Balneario | Mondorf-les-Bains | Montecatini Terme | Montegrotto Terme | Ourense | Royat-Chamalières | Salsomaggiore Terme | São Pedro do Sul | Spa | Telesse-Terre | Vichy | Varaždinske Toplice | Wiesbaden

International Partner Poços de Caldas

Associate Members Governorship of Afyonkarahisar | Budapest Spas cPlc | Chaves-Verin Eurocity | Clermont Auvergne Metropole | Fédération Thermale et Climatique Française (F.T.C.F.) | Galicia Region | Hellenic Association of Municipalities with Thermal Springs (H.A.M.T.S) | Imereti Region | Karlovy Vary Region | Province of Ourense | Route des Villes d'Eaux du Massif Central

About us:

Europe's Historic Thermal Towns, all based around healing mineral-water springs, have been centres of health, well-being, culture and tourism for centuries, and their development over the years has led to a rich and varied architectural heritage. Discover the stories, buildings, culture and festivals, and of course the waters themselves in a tour through the European Route of Historic Thermal Towns with its almost 50 towns in 18 countries.

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