

BEST PRACTICE SLOW FOOD POP-UP RESTAURANT

Submitted by : ITKAM



CIRCULAR
ALBANIA
TOURISM



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SECTION 1: BASIC INFORMATION

- Title of the Best Practice: Slow Food Pop Up Restaurant
- Website of the Practice: <https://sachsen.tourismusnetzwerk.info/best-practice-pool/slow-food-pop-up-restaurant/>
- Social Media links: <https://www.facebook.com/gaumenkitzel>
- Location: Coswiger Str. 23, 01445 Radebeul, Germany

SECTION 2: PRACTICE OVERVIEW

- Short Description of the Practice

The "Slow Food Pop-Up Restaurant" was a one-week culinary initiative in Bautzen's historic Hotel Alte Gerberei, running from the 3rd to the 9th of March 2025. The project was a collaboration between the Hotel Alte Gerberei and the Hamann family of Restaurant Gaumenkitzel. Under the direction of the chef of Restaurant Gaumenkitzel, guests were treated to an exclusive 4-course menu crafted entirely from regional Oberlausitz ingredients. The main goal was to showcase sustainable, fair, and local gastronomy while highlighting the rich culinary traditions of the Oberlausitz region. All the Ingredients were sourced from trusted local producers. The menu, also available in a vegetarian version, paired traditional flavours with modern techniques. By merging fine dining with regional identity, the initiative promoted local value creation and slow-food principles.

- Implementation Period: 03/03/2025-09/03/2025
- Status:

☐ Planned ☐ Pilot phase ☒ Fully implemented ☐ Ongoing and evolving

- **Thematic Areas Addressed:**

☒ Farm to Fork / Sustainable Food Systems

☐ Waste Management

☐ Resource Efficiency

☐ Other: _____

- **Describe how the practice aligns with the selected Thematic Areas.**

The practice aligns with the thematics of farm to fork and sustainable food systems, as the products used for the event are sourced locally (almost 100%) and from small farmers. The practice aims to promote regional delicacies and boost sales of regional products, together with higher touristic demand. The four-course menu also consists of a vegetarian option and is accompanied by complimentary regional wines. In addition, the practice aligns with the principles of good, clean and fair food, which are typical of the Slow Food philosophy. These aspects altogether help raise awareness about food origins, seasonality and the impact of food choices on sustainability.

Explain how this activity fits within the tourism sector

This initiative is hosted by the Hotel Alte Gerberei, which provides the venue and overnight accommodation, encouraging culinary tourism with a stay. This pop-up format offers a temporary and exclusive dining experience. The use of regional, sustainable ingredients appeals to travellers interested in local cuisine, strengthening the farm-to-table narrative by connecting them to local farmers and producers. Furthermore, the pop-up idea represents a classic example of tourism event management being a temporary event, which requires collaboration within the hotel, restaurant and producers.

- **What learning value for VET training, curriculum development or capacity-building of professionals does the practice offer?**

It offers real-life applications of skills: from tourism to culinary and hospitality skills. It creates an opportunity for culinary VET students, hospitality trainees, and event management professionals to experiment in real life with designing and delivering a short-term gastronomic concept with a strong regional identity and a sustainable sourcing approach. Students can learn menu planning with seasonal, local ingredients. Followed by building relationships with local producers and adapting standard hospitality processes for temporary, high-profile events. The practice also encourages the integration of slow food principles such as ethical food sourcing and sustainable food systems. These are accompanied by marketing processes to better communicate value-added tourism products to both locals and travellers. Lastly, an innovative hospitality model is demonstrated, which could inspire the creation of new similar concepts in the entrepreneurial event management.

SECTION 3: CHALLENGES AND ALIGNMENT WITH CIRCULAR ECONOMY PRINCIPLES

- **What challenges or barriers were addressed (based on the report findings)?**

- ☐ Waste management and disposal
- ☐ Energy/resource use
- ☒ Infrastructure limitations
- ☒ Seasonality
- ☒ Skills and capacity gaps
- ☒ Low awareness of CE
- ☒ Behavioural resistance
- ☐ Financial or funding constraints
- ☐ Other : _____

- **How were these challenges overcome?**

The innovative pop-up format partnering the hotel and the restaurant provides a new business model which encourages flexibility, adaptability and problem-solving. Therefore, it serves as a low-risk, but high-impact model. The staff of both the hotel and the restaurant had the opportunity to exchange skills and knowledge. The event also addressed seasonality as an issue by being organised in March, attracting visitors and residents to the hotel in the off-season in Oberlausitz. The area, in fact, is not necessarily known for being a culinary attraction or a tourist location, but the event successfully promoted it as a sustainable and culinary destination. The practice showcased the possibility for sustainable tourism and dining to the guests, raising awareness by highlighting local sourcing and zero-kilometre products. Finally, the event successfully used available infrastructures for an innovative concept.

- **Which circular economy strategies does this practice address?**

- ☐ Waste reduction / reuse / recycling
- ☐ Renewable energy / energy efficiency
- ☐ Water conservation
- ☐ Circular product/service design
- ☒ Sustainable food systems / short food chains
- ☐ Eco-certifications or green standards
- ☐ Repair, refurbishment, or reuse of infrastructure/furnishings
- ☐ Digital tools for circularity or sustainability

- **Describe why this practice can be considered as a 'best practice' and how it contributes to one or more circular economy principles:**

This practice successfully integrates core circular economy principles in a two-sided format, benefiting both visitors and the local community. Sustainable food systems are promoted through short supply chains and regional sourcing. The environmental impact of transportation is heavily reduced, preserving natural systems and creating local value (menu aligned with seasonal availability and direct market access for local small producers). The pop-up format makes the practice easily replicable in other regions, especially in rural hospitality spaces. It encourages hotels and restaurants to collaborate, share resources and develop temporary, low-waste service models, easily adaptable to seasonality and consumer demand.

- **Describe why this practice can be considered as innovative. What new, creative or underused approach brings added value to circular tourism development?**

The innovative side of this practice is the pop-up format, which transforms existing infrastructure into a multi-functional, temporary culinary venue. The resource use is reduced, while the existing assets are used extensively. Next, the menu is composed of almost 100% regional ingredients, with full transparency around their origin, creating a short and traceable food chain. The guests are educated about sustainable consumption and high-quality gastronomy with regional identity.

SECTION 4: COLLABORATION

- **Describe any collaboration that were involved in the development of this practice? Did this practice involve local authorities or other groups?**

This practice required the collaboration between the restaurant Gaumenkitzel and the hotel Alte Gerberei. Here, the Hotel served as the host for the pop-up concept, providing the physical venue, accommodation services and logistical support, enabling the transformation of the hotel itself into a temporary restaurant space. The restaurant Gaumenkitzel served as the culinary leader and concept developer, bringing expertise in Slow Food principles and sustainable, regional sourcing. Lastly, local food producers supplied the regional ingredients, which are: Höf Mörl, Heide und Teichland and Hammermühle.

SECTION 5: RESULTS AND REPLICABILITY

- **What measurable results or outcomes were achieved?**

Nearly 100% of food ingredients used in the 4-course menu were sourced from regional suppliers. It could also be assumed that short-term roles in the kitchen and service during the pop-up week were created, for which the staff engaged in on-the-job training in sustainable sourcing and service delivery. There could have been increased occupancy at the hotel due to the high exclusivity of the event and its ability to draw guests all the way from other regions, introducing them to regional food culture and sustainable consumption practices.

- **Why is this practice relevant to the Albanian tourism context?**

This practice is highly relevant to the Albanian tourism context, because it offers practical and adaptable solutions to several key challenges in rural development, seasonality and sustainable tourism diversification. Many regions in Albania are rich in traditional food culture and small-scale farms, but lack structured tourism offers. The pop-up concept would allow such communities to showcase local gastronomy without needing permanent infrastructure, making it ideal for underdeveloped areas. This practice could also drive new visitors during the off-season, which implies reduced economic activity linked to tourism. The low-cost characteristic of the event would be relevant here, where the lack of resources for full-service restaurants would not be a problem. Furthermore, the potential farm-to-fork connections would encourage direct sourcing, short food supply chains and stronger producer-tourism partnerships, therefore supporting local producers. The professional chefs for the pop-up could also help fill the skill gaps between local staff and operators.

- **What is the practice's potential for further expansion? How can it be applied or adapted to other Albanian tourism destinations or businesses?**

With minimal investment and strong local collaboration, it could be applied in rural and mountain regions and in coastal, seasonal areas. The pop-up restaurants could be hosted in destinations like Permet, Puka or Gjirokaster, in guesthouses or agritourism businesses. Also, coastal regions like Vlora, Himara or Saranda could use the model to extend the tourism season, promoting food festivals or wine trails. Local hotels, wineries and operators could partner with chefs to attract visitors and gain training experience.

- **What advice would you give others looking to implement a similar initiative?**

Some advice for others looking to implement such practice would be to start small and with strong local partnerships, trying to repurpose existing venues, using what you already have. It would be ideal also to keep the products seasonal and regional, while integrating storytelling and education.



Project Partners



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