

# LE SALTIMBANQUE RESTAURANT

Submitted by : EURAKOM

An aerial photograph of a rugged coastline with rocky cliffs and clear turquoise water. A large, semi-transparent blue circle is overlaid on the right side of the image. In the center, a white circle contains the text 'CIRCULAR ALBANIA TOURISM'.

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## SECTION 1: BASIC INFORMATION

- Title of the Best Practice: Le Saltimbanque restaurant
- Website of the Practice: <https://www.lesaltimbanque.fr/fr/>
- Social Media links : [https://www.instagram.com/lesaltimbanque\\_sebporquet/](https://www.instagram.com/lesaltimbanque_sebporquet/)
- Location: Eaucourt-sur-Somme (France)

## SECTION 2: PRACTICE OVERVIEW

### • Short Description of the Practice :

Le Saltimbanque is a French restaurant awarded a Michelin Green Star for its commitment to sustainability, owned by chef Sébastien Porquet, who describes it as a “rustic yet modern restaurant.” Instead of a fixed or even seasonal menu, the restaurant serves a daily surprise menu that is composed each day according to what is freshly available. Ingredients come from a wide network of local producers, which strengthens local supply chains and supports biodiversity. The surprise menu creates a sense of discovery for guests, and it is also a deliberate, radical stance for sustainability. By avoiding out-of-season imported produce the restaurant reduces emissions from production, transport and packaging, and cuts food waste through adaptive planning. At the same time, working with fresh, local ingredients enhances meal quality and builds guest trust in provenance and ethics, making the culinary experience both memorable and environmentally responsible.

- **Implementation Period:** 2019 - ongoing

- **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.**

Le Saltimbanque's surprise menu is a perfect embodiment of sustainable food systems and the EU's Farm-to-Fork goals because it builds meals around what is grown and supplied locally, day by day, rather than proposing out-of-season and non-local dishes. The supply chain is short, flexible, and enables cutting transport and packaging impact, supporting and empowering local producers. It also embodies the Farm-to-Fork initiative's aim to reduce the food system's environmental footprint and support local agriculture. The surprise, adaptive menu also prevents over-ordering and large inventories, helping to minimise food waste, as well as supporting resilience and local supply chains and producers, another Farm-to-Fork's priority. Because the menu follows what is on the farm and seasonal produce, the model actively promotes biodiversity and an eco-friendly, sustainable local production, a core principle of circular economy.

- **Explain how this activity fits within the tourism sector.**

The surprise menu fits naturally into the tourism sector by turning a meal into an authentic, place-based experience that appeals to travellers seeking for new experiences. Culinary encounters are a major part of travel and a window onto local culture, so offering a thoughtful, locally rooted dining experience attracts visitors who prioritise authenticity. Rather than a standard restaurant visit, dining becomes a narrative about the community, its producers and the region, strengthening destination storytelling and giving tourism partners a distinctive product to promote. A sense of wonder arises as guests encounter a different meal on each visit, and the adaptive menu invites interaction with the chef and the farm, creating memorable moments that encourage positive reviews, repeat visits and a willingness to pay a premium. The adaptive menu invites interaction with the chef and the farm, creating memorable moments.



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

Surprise menus can offer rich learning value for VET training and professional capacity building by turning sourcing, adaptability and guest interaction into core skills. Students can learn how to identify and source local products, map regional producers, and build relationships with producers and suppliers. Working with a changing daily menu develops adaptability skills, teaching trainees how to compose cohesive dishes from limited or unexpected ingredients. Surprise menus can also strengthen storytelling and marketing skills, as students translate provenance and farming practices into compelling guest narratives. Developing a surprise menu can fit project-based learning with farm visits, or workshops animated by chefs, which can build networks between schools, chefs and local producers. Ultimately, students can acquire technical, commercial and soft skills such as creativity, negotiation, resilience and communication, all of which are needed to promote regional products and deliver memorable, sustainable culinary tourism experiences. Additionally, the practice can strengthen professional capacity by inspiring chefs and managers to implement sustainable sourcing, seasonality-based menu design, waste reduction and product valorisation. It builds skills in supplier relations, preservation techniques and guest communication about provenance, improving operational resilience and equipping hospitality professionals to implement circular food systems.

### **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
- ☒ Skills and capacity gaps
- ☒ Seasonality
- ☐ Skills and capacity gaps
- ☐ Low awareness of CE
- ☐ Behavioural resistance
- ☐ Financial or funding constraints
- ☐ Other : \_\_\_\_\_

- **How were these challenges overcome?**

Surprise menus can help address several challenges that hospitality professionals often face. Their adaptive nature already reduces waste by purchasing only what is needed for the day, hence significantly reducing food waste. Regarding skills and capacity gaps, hospitality students can gain valuable abilities such as planning menus around seasonal constraints, adapting quickly to changing availability, and sourcing local products. Learning directly from experienced chefs, taking part in farm visits, and acquiring preservation techniques all strengthen both culinary and supply-chain skills.

- **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:**

The surprise menu model supports several key circular economy strategies. First, it relies on short supply chains and local sourcing. Ingredients come exclusively from nearby producers, whether it comes to the produce used in the kitchen or to the cutlery that is made by local craftsmen, keeping production and consumption local while cutting emissions from transport and packaging. Local producers are featured on the restaurants' website, giving them visibility and recognition while demonstrating the close relationships the chef has with them.

The practice tackles waste prevention, as the daily menu is based on what is freshly available, purchasing only what is needed and using whole products creatively. This approach boosts resource efficiency by maximising the value of seasonal produce at its peak, while reducing energy use for storage or refrigeration.

Finally, the model reinforces local economic loops by reinvesting in the community's agricultural network, strengthening regional resilience, and creating a positive cycle between producers and the hospitality sector.

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

This practice is innovative because it transforms what could be seen as a common kitchen constraint, cooking with what is on hand, into a refined, marketable, and sustainable culinary experience. Instead of adapting recipes quietly in the background, the restaurant can turn the lack of a fixed menu into a central part of its identity, creating anticipation and engagement for guests. The surprise menu combines local sourcing, seasonal cooking, and minimal waste with a narrative that guests can connect to, making sustainability visible and desirable.

#### **SECTION 4: COLLABORATION**

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

At its core is a close relationship with local producers, from farmers to market gardeners, and even local fishermen, who all supply fresh, seasonal produce directly to the restaurant. These trusted partners are integral to the daily creation of the menu, ensuring quality while reinforcing short supply chains. By purchasing directly and often in small quantities, the restaurant supports and empowers the local community, which maintains a mutually beneficial cycle of trust and reliability. This practice can inspire collaboration between restaurants and vocational schools specialising in hospitality or gastronomy. Students could participate in sourcing visits, supplier negotiations, and menu planning workshops, gaining practical skills in local procurement and adaptive menu design.

## SECTION 5: RESULTS AND REPLICABILITY

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

Le Saltimbanque's approach has achieved strong, measurable results. The restaurant has been awarded the Michelin Green Star for sustainability, a distinction reserved for establishments that successfully combine exceptional culinary quality with a deep commitment to ecological responsibility. This recognition confirms that the surprise menu concept is more than a novelty; it is a proven model that balances gastronomic excellence and sustainability. The restaurant's longevity is another indicator of success, operating for since 2019 and consistently earning excellent reviews from both locals and visitors. This long-term performance demonstrates that sustainability and profitability can go hand in hand, while also enhancing the restaurant's role as a model for other hospitality businesses seeking to integrate circular economy principles into their operations.

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

Albania's diverse regions, from its coastal fishing communities to its inland farms and countryside, offer a wide variety of seasonal, high-quality ingredients that could be perfect to develop adaptive menus. This approach allows restaurants, guesthouses, and hotels to showcase the uniqueness of their terroir while keeping costs and environmental impact low. It could give visitors a sense of discovery and connection to the place, turning a meal into a story about Albanian producers, landscapes, and traditions. This could not only strengthen destination branding but also support local farmers, fishers, and artisans, ensuring that tourism revenues stay within the community.

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

Le Saltimbanque's surprise-menu model has strong expansion potential for Albanian tourism because its core elements like short supply chains and adaptive menus are highly transferable and even more valuable in contexts seeking authenticity and resilience. The core ideas to export are the adaptive, surprise tasting menu built on daily seasonal ingredients and farm produce that can be complemented by combining it with a personalised experience with a signature breakfast in their "Auberge du Moulin" guesthouse, and additional features such as an electric vehicle charging point. These can be adapted and scaled to Albanian contexts in several ways. Small hotels and guesthouses can try sourcing locally and adopt a surprise menu approach that would highlight local produce. Rural or coastal properties can partner with local fishermen and farmers to stabilise supplies and create seasonal offers, and diversify their offer by offering a guesthouse experience or a visit of the local farms, strengthening the partnership between the business and its partners.

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

A first step would be to map local suppliers and producers, who are essential to this practice. It is important to know them well, agree on seasonal calendars and flexible volumes, and build trusted, direct relationships. Staff need to be trained in menu design, improvisation, and preservation techniques like pickling, drying and confits. It is recommended to communicate the concept clearly to guests at the time of booking and on arrival, and to manage expectations about surprises and dietary needs. The surprise menu will also appeal to some guests who come solely to experience something new and unexpected. Therefore, this is a good early marketing strategy. It is also important to offer guest-facing experiences, like harvest demos or chef talks, to strengthen storytelling and justify higher pricing than standard restaurants: people seek authenticity and tend to have a more experience-based mindset when traveling nowadays, so managing this aspect and giving a special experience to clients is an important part of the process. Having a holistic vision of sustainability can strengthen business. Le Saltimbanque's strength is its diversity as the business also offers a guesthouse experience with a special breakfast, electric charging stations for recharging, a small shop where clients of the restaurant can purchase local products from producers and artisans. A business could be inspired by this idea of diversity and offer other perks or experiences: workshops, guesthouses, kitchen tours and more.



## SECTION 6: PICTURES

- Pictures of the practice:





## Project Partners



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