



CATALONIA EUROPEAN REGION OF GASTRONOMY 2016

**Press Pack**

01/28/2016

## Contents

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Catalonia awarded European Region of Gastronomy 2016 | P. 3  |
| European Region of Gastronomy                        | P. 4  |
| We are earth, we are sea, we are gastronomy          | P. 5  |
| Envisaged actions                                    | P. 6  |
| Willingness to adhere and transfer of knowledge      | P. 14 |
| Carme Rusalleda ambassador to CREG '16               | P. 15 |

## **CATALONIA DESIGNATED EUROPEAN REGION OF GASTRONOMY 2016**

Catalonia has been designated European Region of Gastronomy 2016. This title proves the quality of its heritage in the fields of food and tourism, and symbolises the excellent quality of its products, gastronomy and traditions.

The Title “European Region of Gastronomy” places Catalonia as an avant-garde region concerning food and tourism. The excellent work of Catalan producers, restaurants, research centres, schools, media, entities and chefs, including **Carme Ruscalleda, ambassador to the title**, have turned Catalan gastronomy and food products into an international reference.

### **History**

In Catalonia, gastronomy is a strategic sector that represents 20% of the GDP, generates 50.000 M Euros per year and employs more than 500,000 people. Catalonia, proud of its cultural heritage and **aiming at promoting its food products and gastronomy as relevant elements of the country’s identity, as well as key agents in the promotion of tourism**, has met the challenge of presenting a bid to the title of European Region of Gastronomy.

This is a pioneering project in Europe aiming to stimulate, collect and disseminate knowledge in order to contribute to a better quality of life in European regions by promoting food cultures and supporting innovation in gastronomy.

To be eligible for the title, Catalonia presented a bid based on 3 focus areas - **product, territory and gastronomy**, features that differentiate its identity and position its local food products as an exponent of the territory and the basis for a cuisine that brings a specific trait to Catalan culture. Thus, on **July 2nd 2015**, Catalonia was officially awarded the title of European Region of Gastronomy, sharing the title with Minho.

The Catalan bid wants to articulate a global and mainstream proposal, to define strategic lines and actions in order to consolidate and reinforce the sector in the coming years and to

establish a framework of measurable indicators of and by the sector. Those aims will be reached with the coaching of experts from the sector and through working sessions with the participation of the sector and of members of the General Committee.

The major **promoters** of this plan are the General Committee, led by the Catalan Government (*Generalitat de Catalunya*), with the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, Food and Natural Environment, and the Ministry of Business and Knowledge, which includes the Catalan Tourist Board); the General Committee integrated by all stakeholders working in the area of gastronomy in Catalonia; and Table of Experts, a consultancy and coaching entity.

#### **EUROPEAN REGION OF GASTRONOMY**

The European Region of Gastronomy is an **initiative promoted by a platform of European regions and managed by the International Institute of Gastronomy, Culture, Arts and Tourism (IGCAT)**. This award is delivered to 2-3 regions of the network every year, that, together or separately, develop a consistent program of events and partnerships and help the regions gain visibility, viability, social cohesion and sustainability.

The award aims to **contribute to a better quality of life in the European regions, to highlight the various food cultures, to promote education to improve health and sustainability and to stimulate gastronomic stimulation**. These aims and objectives are reached through a variety of activities and events and a platform for the exchange of knowledge with the support of the European institutions, coordinated by an independent entity that can contribute to the collection and dissemination of the knowledge resulting from the participant regions' activities.

This entity of coordination and management is the **IGCAT** (Institute of International Gastronomy, Culture, Art and Tourism), an association of experts in the field of gastronomy, culture, art, tourism and other related sectors that works for a progressive and appropriate development of those domains.

## **WE ARE EARTH, WE ARE SEA, WE ARE GASTRONOMY**

**Catalonia European Region of Gastronomy** is a lively project struggling to be as inclusive as possible, with entities, stakeholders and people from the country that are working to promote Catalan gastronomy. The project is based on the **triad of product, territory and gastronomy**. This is the axis that differentiates the Catalan bid and that allowed to win the title of European Region of Gastronomy. This axis has been elaborated from three different focus areas: gastronomy, landscape and innovation. The aim is to make gastronomy an identity element allowing differentiation and specificity of the territory.

We are earth, we are sea, we are gastronomy because Catalan agri-food and gastronomy comprise more than 20 different territories with 20 relevant gastronomies that make up the identity of Catalonia.

That is how the slogan **“We are earth, we are sea, we are gastronomy”** came up, a summary of the real identity of this land.

Therefore, this objective will be present in all the activities developed by the CREG in 2016. It will try to reflect the **triad of product, territory and gastronomy** with a large and diverse fabric of initiatives, quality productions and elaborations, fairs and markets, routes and tourism experiences, gastronomic feasts and campaigns, cuisine groups, guilds, etc., as well as centres of research and education, equipments, professional organisations and other associations. Thus it will reinforce Catalan identity as territory with rich gastronomy, landscape and creative innovation and, moreover, it will give it greater visibility in Catalonia, in Europe and all over the world.

## Envisaged actions

In order to comply with the previously highlighted goals, CREG'16 is concretized in a series of actions that will take place during the year 2016, divided in two sectors: agri-food and tourism.

On the one hand, in reference to the agri-food sector, the following activities are highlighted:

The symposium “**Local product, gastronomy and regional development**” is a gastronomic plan that will consist on the analysis and planning of our land’s gastronomy. For this purpose, the Catalan gastronomy will be divided in the following work areas: The gastronomy, a snapshot of a strategic economic sector in Catalonia; Gastronomy and heritage (identity) in Catalonia; Gastronomy as a backbone of our land and as an element of sustainable development linked to the touristic sector; Gastronomy and health: how to ensure that everybody eats better; Gastronomy, training and innovation; The projection of Gastronomy; and Strategic alliances of international scope.

This plan will be carried out by experts in each area; they will establish the state of the art and the goals that can be achieved, as well as the roadmap to achieve the results that, later, will be gathered in a document that will be made public.

The **networking seminars** will foster knowledge and will allow Catalan food producers to establish commercial relations (with differentiated quality and proximity insignias, etc.) with members of the hotel and restaurant industries and distributors. Different business meetings will be organized, where the wealth of the Catalan gastronomic heritage and local products will be highlighted, so that they are incorporated in the menus of the different venues. A meeting of reference is foreseen for the products with a proximity seal; and for the remaining products there will be at least one meeting for each territorial demarcation.

Participation at various **agri-food local and international fairs** will be fostered with the aim of promoting knowledge, consumption and marketing of quality and proximity Catalan agri-food products.

#### INTERNATIONAL FAIRS

Fruit Logistica. Berlin (Germany) 3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> February

Biofach. Nuremberg (Germany) 10<sup>th</sup> -13<sup>th</sup> February

Gulfood. Dubai (Arab Emirates) 21<sup>st</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> February

Foodex. Tokyo (Japan) 8<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> March

Prowein. Düsseldorf (Germany) 13<sup>th</sup> -16<sup>th</sup> March

ProWine Asia. Singapore 12<sup>th</sup> -15<sup>th</sup> April

Seafood. Brussels (Belgium) 19<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> April

Alimentaria Barcelona 25<sup>th</sup> -28<sup>th</sup> April

Sial China. Shanghai (China) 4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> May

Sial Paris. (France) 16<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> October

Fruit Attraction. (Madrid) 26<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> October

#### B2B ACTIONS

New York wine and gourmet industry, Washington DC (USA). First week of February

Seoul (Korea). May

Fruit Business Forum – Fruit and vegetable garden B2B with importers of third markets in Barcelona.

Central America – from March 7<sup>th</sup> to March 11<sup>th</sup>, Multiproduct B2B with importers from Costa Rica, Guatemala, Panama and Dominican Republic.

Meat Business Forum

Econetworking

Another foreseen action is the establishment of a **Food public procurement plan** that, according to last June's government agreement, urges to incorporate specific clauses in the agri-food procurement of the Catalan Government Administration and its public sector in order to favour quality and proximity products.

Specifically, these clauses are meant to promote a healthy and good quality nutrition, obtained through processes that are environmentally friendly, which will favour territorial balance and will foster cuisine as a cultural identity landmark.

The strategic relevance of this industry in our land will be stressed by its economic role, by its contribution to the territory balance and by the preservation of the landscape and the environment. The agreement gives effect to the Catalonia Parliament mandate and to the Catalan Government commitment to preserve the key role of public procurement to favour general interest social goals.

In year 2016 the public presentation of the Plan will be made to all the Departments and related players to promote its development and implementation.

An activity that will count on the participation of the platform's partner regions, 'European Regions of Gastronomy', will be the **First Young Chefs international contest: 'European Young Chef Award 2016'**. The event will coincide with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Tourism University College of Sant Pol de Mar and with the 30 uninterrupted years of the 'Catalonia contest of young cuisine'.

At the territory level, **Workshops on new technologies and gastronomy** will be organized, which will consist on theoretical and practical seminars about how to disseminate the food and gastronomic heritage in order to invigorate the local economy by means of the new technologies. The aim of this action is to inform end consumers about certain tools such as the Wikipedia, social networks and/or the different mobile applications.

In order to introduce young people to cuisine, Catalonia, together with the regions Midtjylland (Denmark), Hertogenbosch (The Netherlands), Riga (Latvia), Sibiu (Rumania), Bergamo-Lombardy (Italy) and Alto Minho (Portugal), has processed the application to the Interregional European Program for the **'EUREGa!' project**.

The purpose of **EUREGa!** (European Regions of Gastronomy) is to promote the wealth and diversity of European gastronomy as a unique heritage that, at the same time, generates wealth for these regions and for the European Union as a whole. The project proposes to implement actions to improve this sector in the 7 participant regions, and to establish synergies among them in order to generate a medium and long term positive impact directed to preserve and promote the gastronomic heritage as an element of wealth and quality for the citizenship as a whole.

The foreseen action for Catalonia within the **EUREGa!** framework is to communicate to young people the benefits of the habit of cooking, and to empower them to incorporate it as part of their lifestyle. The project will be carried out with the participation of different experts on food and nutrition aspects, such as university professors, nutritionists and producers, applying research and innovation to this field.

In addition, several awards will be organized. First of all, the **Young food artisan innovator award**, that will reward the effort of young food artisans in the recuperation, innovation, diversification and design of artisan products. The aim of this award is to foster actions such as research and development of new food artisan products, the incorporation of new techniques in the elaboration of food artisan products, the improvement of the products' image, and the implementation of new marketing ways for elaborated artisan products.

Secondly, the **Food technologic innovation award** aims at rewarding agricultural companies of the agro-industry sector and acknowledging young entrepreneurs with an innovation spirit who have incorporated new technologies, processes that achieve relevant

improvements in competitiveness, in the preservation of the environment and in good practices that guarantee the quality and safety of the productions.

The last award, the **RuralApps**, consists on rewarding the companies that contribute to the improvement of the agricultural, food or rural industries, with the development of mobile applications. This award contemplates the modalities Ruralapps-citizenship and Ruralapps-professional.

The **Technologic transfer Yearly Plan, PATT 2016**, is a tool coordinated by DARP (Department of Agriculture, Farming and Fishing of the Catalan Government), participated by a great number of territorial and sector players, with the aim of offering to the Catalan agricultural, farmer, agro-industrial, forest and rural world a unique offer when it comes to transferring knowledge actions. The strategic lines of work (which are materialized in more than 1,000 actions distributed throughout the Catalan territory) for 2016 include: Common agricultural policy, Efficient management of water-energy, Management and sustainable use of natural resources and forests, Agri-food innovation, Quality and safety in the food chain, Treatment of farms waste, and Valuing local food products as exponents of the territory and as a basis for gastronomy.

The **Festival of nutrition and gastronomy** within the framework of the exhibit 'Nutrition, a vital impulse', shown at Barcelona's Museum of Natural Sciences during the month of May, 2016. A popular celebration will take place with the aim of communicating to the citizenship the values of the Catalan gastronomic culture, highlighting the importance of nutrition, food and healthy lifestyles with the aim of improving people's quality of life.

**Plan of fruit consumption at schools.** It consists on contributing to promoting healthy nutrition habits among children, associating such habits to the Mediterranean diet, and reducing the levels of child obesity. The plan of fruit and vegetable consumption at schools is part of the European Union's strategy to reverse the trend of decreasing consumption of fruits and vegetables and to educate children, so that they will acquire new nutritional

habits. The initiative consists on distributing for free fresh fruits and vegetables to school children. Each month, during a week, three pieces of fruit will be distributed during 6 months. The fruit given away will depend on the season of the year, the proximity of the school to the production centre, and the quality. It needs to be consumed during breakfast and/or mid-afternoon snack. More than 1,200 schools will participate, and it will reach more than 250,000 children.

**Boosting proximity sales in restaurants.** It consists on promoting the Catalan restaurants and gastronomic establishments that have achieved the seal Sale of Proximity as an acknowledgement of their commitment to offering proximity products in their menus. Pull down leaflets will be published containing information of the restaurants and producers that that are suppliers, in the different regions, and will be sent to the restaurants, tourism offices, territorial delegations, and DARP territorial offices.

**Bio Week.** The Bio week for organic food nutrition is an initiative that groups several actions with the common goal of promoting and fostering the organic food production and nutrition. The actions include gastronomic menus, seminars, markets, training, articles, etc.

**Campaign to promote the products with DOP (Protected Designation of Origin) / IGP (Protected Geographical Indications).** Continuity to the campaign initiated by DARP will be given to promote the consumption of products with a quality distinctive during the Christmas holidays of 2015. The 20-second TV advertisement of the DOP/IGP seal and the 3,14-minute video for digital supports recorded at Món San Benet, with the participation of the music band Blaumut, promoting the seal of the Catalan DOP/IGPs will be broadcasted during 2016.

Regarding **tourism**, we find other activities, among which we can highlight the designation of **2016** as the '**Gastronomy and wine tourism year**' in Catalonia. This designation was announced on October 1<sup>st</sup> during the Tourism Night, and it shows that gastronomy is the

cultural inheritance of Catalonia and, therefore, one of its main goals is to promote it through several initiatives:

- **Welcome to 'farmer'**. From June 17<sup>th</sup> to June 19<sup>th</sup> an open doors weekend will take place at 'farmer', where the Catalan public will be able to visit the agricultural holdings, know the production methods, and buy products directly from the producer. Special promotions will also be offered to spend the weekend at rural houses and gastronomic hotels, among others, and to taste the local cuisine with special menus at restaurants offering proximity cuisine.
- **Getaway market**. May 7<sup>th</sup> to May 8<sup>th</sup>. The Catalan Tourism Board, in collaboration with the local tourist boards, organizes an action in the street directed to the public with the aim of selling touristic interior and mountain getaways in Catalonia, incorporating as well wine and gastronomic tourism. There will also be workshops, experiences and product tasting.
- **Masterchef: *showcooking***. Collaboration with the TV program to address Catalan gastronomy.
- **Dinner of the stars**. On the occasion of the celebration of the World Day of Tourism in Catalonia, the Catalan Tourist Board will organize, on September 27<sup>th</sup>, at the Oval Room of the Catalonia Museum of National Art, an event that will gather more than 600 professionals from the Catalan touristic industry and international opinion leaders. The event will take place with the maximum number of Catalan cooks, members of Cooking Associations, Catalan Cuisine or Slow Food. The maximum number of Catalan Michelin Stars in history will be there, and some of them will cook the cocktail. During the event, the Catalonia 2016 Tourism Awards will be given. The aim of this event is to showcase tourism, one of the most important industries in our economy.
- **Celler de Can Roca exhibit at the Palau Robert. September 2016-April 2017**. The General Sub-directorate of Communication from the Presidency Department will organize an exhibit of the Celler de Can Roca Restaurant at the Palau Robert, and at the city of Girona, which will later travel internationally. The Catalana Tourist Board will collaborate.

- **The workshop “Buy Catalonia”. September 27<sup>th</sup> to October 1<sup>st</sup>.** The Catalan Tourist Board will organize Buy Catalonia, a multi-market and multi-product workshop that will focus on gastronomic and wine tourism. Tour-operators from several markets will participate in this action: Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Benelux, Slovakia, Spain, the United States, France, Israel, Italy, Nordic countries, Eastern European countries, the United Kingdom, and Southeast Asia. Several farm-trips in the territory will be part of the workshop.
- **IWINETC Wine Tourism Conference.** International Wine Tourism Conference. This conference will be held on April 5<sup>th</sup>-April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016, at the Hotel Barcelona Golf. The Catalan Tourist Board will be the Premier Sponsor together with de Barcelona Provincial Council, and will also participate in organizing the familiarization trips. It is estimated that about 60 tourism operators will participate, together with 20 representatives of the press.
- **“Catalonia We are Gastronomy” Tour 2016.** Action to promote wine and gastronomic tourism at the following priority markets: France (Bordeaux), United Kingdom (London), Spain (Madrid), Germany (Frankfurt), Sweden (Stockholm) and Italy (Milan). The action will consist on an immersion on the recreation of the stands of a market, where the participants can ‘buy’ products that they will later learn to elaborate. A Showcooking will be included, directed by a Catalan chef from a Cousine Group. The participants will be the leaders of each market (travel agents, press).

## **WILLINGNESS OF ADHESION AND TRANSMISSION OF KNOWLEDGE**

The inclusive willingness of GREG is reflected by the spirit of **having the support of specific entities and players in the territory** and making them feel also as owners of the title since, without them, it would not have been possible.

Currently, 370 entities have signed the adhesion document to the CREG. It shows big support and recognition of the award. They aim at a longer list as the CREG becomes well-known. The entities include, among others, the General Council of Vall d'Aran, the Catalan Academy of Gastronomy, the Campus de l'Alimentació of University of Barcelona, the University of Girona, the Observatory of Nutrition of the University of Barcelona, Slow Food Barcelona, Girona Tourist Board, the School of Hotel Management and Tourism of Cambrils, the School of Hotel Management and Tourism of Lleida.

**The aim is as well to share knowledge and exchange experiences with the rest of participants on the 'European Regions of Gastronomy' platform.** Catalonia, as a pioneer of the title, is a benchmark and has the mission to transmit all its knowledge to the future regions.

## CARME RUSCALLEDA AMBAIXADORA DEL CREG '16



**Carme Rusalleda** was born in the Maresme (Sant Pol de Mar, Barcelona, 1952), in an area considered a paradise of colour thanks to the vegetable crops, legumes and fruit. She has been able to reflect this broad palette of colours in the dishes she paints every day in her restaurant [Sant Pau], an establishment she opened in 1988 with her husband, **Toni Balman**.

Although her passion for cooking came to her suddenly, as a child she was always “being a nuisance” around the stove. When she was young, she worked in her family’s charcuterie<sup>1</sup>.

Today her restaurants have **5 Michelin Stars**, 3 for the Sant Pau in Sant Pol de Mar i 2 for her restaurant in Tokio, making Carme Rusalleda the first Spanish female-cook to receive this recognition and one of the only four women who hold this title worldwide.

Deeply rooted in Catalonia, her source for inspiration has always been the Mediterranean environment of her native Sant Pol, a privileged area thanks to the variety of products from the vegetable gardens of the Maresme region.

Indeed, one of her most successful books is “Cooking to be happy”, where she explains that individuals have different moods depending on what they eat<sup>2</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup> [Hola.com](http://www.hola.com/biografias/carme-rusalleda/biografia/) (http://www.hola.com/biografias/carme-rusalleda/biografia/)

<sup>2</sup> [El País.com](http://elpais.com/elpais/2015/01/16/eps/1421413847_281833.html) (http://elpais.com/elpais/2015/01/16/eps/1421413847\_281833.html)