

31 October - 2 November 2021: New Dates Announced for World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism

8 June, 2021 - *The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Basque Culinary Center (BCC), VISITFLANDERS and the city of Bruges have announced new dates for the 6th UNWTO World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism.*

Held under the theme 'Gastronomy Tourism: Promoting Rural Tourism and Regional Development', the Forum will take place **31 October - 2 November 2021 in Bruges, Belgium.**

The event will focus on the contribution of gastronomy tourism to social and economic integration. It will also highlight its untapped potential for job creation, regional cohesion and sustainable growth. Building on UNWTO's work on advancing innovation across the tourism sector, the Forum also represents a unique opportunity for experts from across the growing field of gastronomy tourism to share new ideas and best practices and place the two sectors at the center of plans for recovery.

In order to welcome and connect participants from around the world, the Forum will be held in a hybrid format. This way, delegates meeting in the Concertgebouw of Bruges will be joined virtually by participants from every global region via a special online platform.

UNWTO Secretary-General, Zurab Pololikashvili says: "There is no better time than now to re-shape the future for food and tourism. Gastronomy continues to prove its ability to help destinations diversify and to stimulate economic development in destinations all around the world. This is especially true for rural communities where it can help preserve the identity and authenticity of local traditions."

Joxe Mari Aizega, Director of the Basque Culinary Center, remarked that "We are currently in a particularly challenging and unique time, and rural communities, innovation and creativity will be key to transition successfully towards a new scenario. That is the reason why it is necessary to increase the contribution of the entire value chain of gastronomy for the future, generating a suitable institutional framework through specific policies. This kind of forums are essential to encourage projects that generate and develop sustainable gastronomic initiatives that transform and have a positive impact on the sector".

Flemish Minister of Tourism, Zuhair Demir says: "We are very much looking forward to welcome participants, both live and online, to explore culinary Bruges during the Forum in November. This is a great opportunity for destinations to exchange experiences facing challenging times and putting gastronomy and tourism at the centre of recovery plans. Flanders, as one of Europe's gastronomic hubs, is ready to lead the way for a sustainable future of gastronomy tourism."

The Forum has been co-organized by UNWTO and the BCC since 2015 with the aim of promoting the exchange of experiences between experts in tourism and gastronomy, identify good practices and promote gastronomy tourism as a driver of sustainable development

More information:

[6th UNWTO World Tourism Forum on Gastronomy Tourism](#)

About BCC

Basque Culinary Center represents a unique ecosystem where training, innovation, research and entrepreneurship coexist with the aim of developing and propelling gastronomy, which is understood as reasoned knowledge about what and how we eat. Its mission is rooted in values such as passion, innovation, excellence and social commitment. Located in San Sebastian since September 2011, Basque Culinary Center is a pioneer institution conformed by the Faculty of Gastronomic Sciences, and the Centre for Research and Innovation in the field of gastronomy.

In 2021 Basque Culinary Center celebrates its 10th anniversary. Since its origin, the institution has developed its 360° vision of Gastronomy through different initiatives and projects. This year, we celebrate our achievements and the challenges to come, always rooted in our values: passion, orientation towards excellence, innovation and social commitment.

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