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## Unusual gastronomic establishments in the world as destinations of culinary tourism

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**Abstract:** The paper showcases unusual gastronomic establishments in the world, which attract consumers (including culinary tourists) with the originality of their functioning on the gastronomy market and contribute to the development of culinary tourism. The authors use non-reactive research – the content analysis method, which employs secondary sources from both domestic and foreign literature, as well as industry-specific materials and websites.

The table in the paper provides examples of unique gastronomic establishments in the world, broken down by selected factors. The most frequently encountered distinguishing factors connected with the originality of individual establishments are their interior design and location. The global gastronomy market includes a substantial number of gastronomic establishments inspired by the strive to be different and non-typical, which became quite popular with tourists, including those labelled as culinary tourists.

**Keywords:** culinary tourism, culinary travels, original gastronomic establishments, restaurants

### 1. Introduction

The changing trends in gastronomy and the growth of interest in culinary tourism around the world play a role in creating various kinds of gastronomic establishments. According to P. Anders, an expert in the field of gastronomy, representative of the FNB Corporate ACCOR Polska, an increase may be observed on the global gastronomic services market in the popularity of “informal restaurants”. Many studies show that the motive behind choosing a restaurant by consumers is not only the attractiveness of the dishes served (taste, smell, presentation), but also the peculiar atmosphere of a given establishment, which is created by the decor, staff and guests themselves. Due to the diverse consumer expectations, it is necessary to pay attention to ensuring that the establishment has some unique characteristics.

Another trend in the world gastronomy development is the emergence of individual establishments. Therefore, the search for a variety of catering options among consumers should drive restaurant owners to strive for

uniqueness not only of their culinary offer, but also the decor of their establishments.

An important trend contributing to the development of the world’s gastronomy is the attention paid by restaurant owners to sustainable development, i.e. the ecology. Significant interest may be given to gastronomic establishments that adhere to the principles of sustainable development. It is important that the declarations of restaurant owners are reflected in the practice.

There has been a trend in the gastronomy to surprise potential guests of gastronomic establishments with their unique decor, location or presentation of dishes. According to some gastronomic establishment owners, an alternative culinary experience of their guests should be more than just trying an original dish prepared from unique ingredients. The paper showcases gastronomic establishments including bars and cafes, located in various parts of the world, where the “strangeness” factor is in many ways extreme. This “strangeness” is the main thing affecting the interest in gastronomic

establishments on part of the consumers, both from the immediate vicinity and those engaging in culinary travels, during which they visit selected establishments providing gastronomic services.

Tourism has long been the driving force for gastronomic services. In recent years, however, the roles were reversed and gastronomy started to influence the development of tourism. It is a specific type of travel, the purpose of which, in addition to tourism and exploring the culture of a given country, is to discover the secrets of local cuisine, tasting the unique produce, visiting places related to food and beverage processing and culinary museums, participating in various events connected with the culinary arts (e.g. fairs, festivals, competitions, shows),

experiencing new gastronomic establishments and meeting new chefs, travelling along the culinary trails etc. Culinary tourism is already well established in the world and keeps gaining popularity amongst gourmet tourists. Each year, an increase in thematic tourist attractions connected with the gastronomy is observed on the global tourism market.

The purpose of this paper is to showcase unique gastronomic establishments in the world, which attract consumers (including culinary tourists) with the originality of their functions on the gastronomy market. Establishments of this type contribute to the development of culinary tourism, which uncovers the various aspects gastronomy during thematic tours.

## 2. Description of areas, methods and material studied

The scope of the paper includes:

- showcasing unique gastronomic establishments as a form of culinary tourism,
- providing examples and descriptions of unique gastronomic establishments in the world (Table 1).

The research was conducted using a non-reactive method, i.e. the content analysis method, which in turn uses secondary sources from Polish and foreign literature on the subject, materials obtained from fairs and conferences related to the HoReCa industry, and websites.

## 3. Results and analysis

### 3.1. Visiting unique gastronomic establishments as a form of culinary tourism

Food is an integral part of any journey. According to A. Kowalczyk (2005, 2008a, 2008b), who was the first in Poland to address this issue, the growing interest of tourists in food-related aspects was the reason behind the increasing use of terms such as: gastronomic tourism, food tourism, and culinary tourism. As rightly noted by A. Kowalczyk (2011), it is best to use the term “culinary tourism”, as it most accurately describes the essence of this type of tourism activities.

The concept of culinary tourism was introduced by Lucy M. Long in 1998. The literature in English replaces culinary tourism with food tourism, which is understood by some researchers as a broader, superordinate concept (Hall and Sharples, 2003). In the Polish literature of the subject, the discussed concept is described

as food tourism (*turystyka żywieniowa*), gastronomic tourism (*turystyka gastronomiczna*) or culinary tourism (*turystyka kulinarna*), with the latter term being used the most.

Contemporary literature of the subject includes various definitions of culinary tourism of varying accuracy, depending on the researcher (Orłowski and Woźniczko, 2016). C.M. Hall and R. Mitchell (2000) defined it as “a type of tourism connected with visiting food exhibitions, culinary festivals, restaurants and specific locations, where tasting and experiencing food is the main part of the travel”. Similarly, K. Buczkowska (2008) in her definition of the concept lists i.a. restaurants as the purpose of a culinary journey. In her opinion, culinary tourism means “visiting factories as well as food processing plants and alcohol production establish-

ments – breweries, wineries or distilleries, as well as plantations, fields, orchards, and other local places. The participating tourists have the possibility to observe the process of producing and preparing food and beverages, and sometimes take part in it, as well as to speak with producers and try the delicacies” (Buczowska, 2008; the authors’ own translation).

D. Orłowski and M. Woźniczko (2016) also emphasized the importance of restaurants in culinary travels. They defined culinary tourism as follows: “thematic journeys in order to learn about local, regional and national raw materials, food products, as well as traditional dishes in tourist space of both urban and rural areas. This type of tourism brings satisfaction to its participants by enjoying the pleasure of personally experiencing new smells and flavours, and going back to those already known. This is done through attending culinary events, traversing culinary routes, visiting gastronomic establishments, visiting museums focused on culinary arts, observing technological processes in food processing establishments, while learning how to prepare specific delicacies” (Orłowski and Woźniczko, 2016; the authors’ own translation).

In recent years, culinary tourism has become one of the major trends in the development of tourism around the world. It is part of the cultural tourism category. The relationship between culinary and cultural tourism has three reasons. The first one concerns the inseparability between culinary traditions, nutrition methods and cultural determinants. The second one is related to culinary tourists learning about other cultures, i.e. by encountering unknown produce, consuming new dishes etc. The third one includes tourists embarking on “culinary travels” to new locations (regions, countries), meeting their inhabitants, visiting historical monuments and learning about their history, participating in cultural events etc. (Kowalczyk, 2008a).

Recent studies indicate that culinary tourism is becoming increasingly popular around the world, which is connected with migrations (particularly on an international scale) and the growing number of strictly tourism-related relocations. It often happens that potential tourists (at the place of their residence) come into contact with immigrants and develop interest

in the customs and culinary traditions of other nations, and subsequently undertake tourist journeys to learn about other cuisines in situ and by extension, other countries.

Culinary tourism is a tourism market segment, which has been undergoing dynamic changes since the beginning of the 21st century. Global trends in tourism indicate that culinary tourists more and more often expect from their tourist excursions experiences that satisfy their interests in various aspects of gastronomy (Niemczyk, 2008). It is estimated that 10-15% of the global tourism market is devoted to culinary tourism, which (with adequate promotion of national, regional and local cuisines) may attract tourists and consequently translates into new jobs in tourism and tourist-related economy (Woźniczko et al., 2015).

The development of culinary tourism is supported by many factors, including in particular (Shenoy, 2005; Sala, 2016):

- decline in the popularity of *fast food* establishments and the growing criticism thereof;
- development of thematic gastronomic establishments, offering ethnic and folklore cuisine – in accordance with the *slow food* idea, as well as unique gastronomic establishments;
- progressing individualisation of behaviours of persons travelling on the gastronomy-tourism market;
- establishment of a large group of multicultural tourists;
- popularisation and promotion of various cuisines in the mass media;
- the increasing mobility of societies;
- the increasing importance of traditional, regional and local foods and their preservation.

Culinary travels are based on a multitude of reasons for choosing the various forms of culinary tourism, which are dependent on individual interests of a particular tourist. Culinary motives include a very wide range of activities and locations, but the most important, connected with visiting gastronomic establishments are as follows (Orłowski and Woźniczko, 2012; 2014; 2015):

- visits to famous restaurants run by renowned chefs, or the gastronomic ranking of which is considered to be unique, as they offer e.g. non-typical dishes, molecular gastronomy,

- or have been awarded one or more Michelin stars;
- visits to thematic taverns, guesthouses, inns, auberges, wineries, characterised by the long culinary tradition of a region and located in buildings that often refer to national or regional architecture, and their equipment, gastronomic offer, and staff uniforms are also related to specific characteristics of the building;
- visits to unique gastronomic establishments, distinguished by their original interior design, unusual location, unconventional customer service or dishes, etc.
- travel along culinary tourist routes in the urban or rural environment, with the main motif being a specific food product, dish, alcohol, regional culinary traditions or gastronomic establishments;
- attending formal opening ceremonies of new gastronomic establishments, combi-

ned with a presentation of the cuisine to be served there;

- meetings with a renowned restaurateur or chef, combined with sampling of dishes prepared thereby, and a presentation related to a given dish or dishes, based on a specific ingredient, or even the entire range thereof, e.g. traditional, regional, local or organic produce.

Recognised, thematic and original gastronomic establishments are one of the forms of organised culinary tourism. Today, gastronomy is an important part of the tourist experience. For this reason, in recent years, the role of food and beverages was brought to prominence in the global tourism economy. Interest in the tourist and gastronomy sector has significantly increased and, first and foremost, became one of the most dynamic and creative segments that shape the market of existing or planned attractions of culinary tourism (Orłowski and Woźniczko, 2016).

### 3.2. Unique gastronomic establishments in the world – selected examples

Gastronomy plays an important role in tourist services. Providing food services – basic, supplementary, entertaining and cultural ones, determine the tourism development, improves the quality of the tourism product and contributes to the increased revenue from tourism services. Food is one of the basic elements of the tourist experience and the factor determining the visitor satisfaction, just like other elements of hospitality (Sala, 2008).

Gastronomic services are an integral part of the tourism product of a given area. Their type and structure offered by gastronomic establishments are a derivative of many factors present in areas of tourism reception, including in particular: geographical, climate, economic and cultural conditions. The type of food consumed also depends on the religion of the people in a given region or psychological conditions. Gastronomic services also play a crucial role in improving the competitiveness and quality of the tourism product. They may be used to shape the identity and the image of the tourism region (Sala, 2008).

Gastronomy is a culinary art and knowledge about the food products used and the broadly understood gastronomic base in a given area

(Milewska et al., 2017). The gastronomic base is comprised of gastronomic establishments, their locations, qualitative and quantitative structure.

The most important **criterion for the industry classification of gastronomic establishments is the presence of a hall for consumers**. According to this criterion, the following may be distinguished:

- **gastronomic establishments**, i.e. units distinguished by the premises, organisation, and register, conducting gastronomic activities in the premises, which are available for consumers, having a hall for consumers; based on the scope and type of provided services, two types of establishments may be distinguished, catering (e.g. restaurants, bars, cafeterias, fast food establishments) and supplementary (confectioneries, cafes, teashops, pubs);
- **gastronomic points** are units distinguished by organisation and register in a building or room, which do not have a hall for consumers; based on the scope and type of provided services, two types of gastronomic points can be distinguished: catering (e.g. fish frying restaurants, kebab kiosks or

points, food trucks with hamburgers and Belgian fries) and supplementary (e.g. drink rooms, mobile and stationary ice cream shops, buffets in cinemas, theatres and stadiums).

Furthermore, one can distinguish a segment in gastronomy comprising consumers “interested in the uniqueness of gastronomic establishments”. They put less and less emphasis on

the high quality of dishes or service. Guests looking for experiences related to the originality of a gastronomic establishment pay most attention to the ingenuity and unconventional way of managing or functioning of a restaurant, cafe, or bar. Although some places significantly deviate from the widely adopted standards, they increasingly often attract the “inquisitive” type of culinary tourists.

**Table 1.** Unusual gastronomic establishments in the world – selected examples  
(Sources: prepared by the authors based on websites provides in Internet sources list).

| Examples of gastronomic establishments | Characteristics |
|--|-----------------|
|--|-----------------|

*Interior design as a classification criterion for unusual gastronomic establishments (darkness, toilet, ice, coffin, hospital, inspired by military, ninja, prisons, Barbie dolls, well known cartoons, motives referring to condoms, vampires, a Gothic church)*

#### Dark restaurants – in many places around the world

Dark restaurants where customers consume dishes in total darkness have been popular for many years. The first such place was founded in 1999 in Zurich, the idea was immediately reproduced and other establishments were opened in many cities around the world (in the United States, Asia and Europe).

The most successful was the French chain *Dans le Noir?* founded in 2004 and, according to critics, offers the best dishes of any dark restaurant. The chain operates establishments in Paris, London, Moscow, Beijing, Poznan. Its American equivalent is *the Opaque* (San Francisco, San Diego, Los Angeles, etc.)

The interiors of these establishments are completely dark, without any source of light whatsoever. Customers enter the dining hall in single file with their hands on the shoulder of a person in front. Waiters leading the guests are usually equipped with night-vision goggles, however, several of these restaurants hire blind servers. Customers have their smartphones confiscated, along with illuminated watches and lighters. Customers can sample the served dishes only with their smell, hearing, taste and touch. The senses are sharpened and the taste of dishes intensifies. Customers say that when they do not see their food, they can focus on the sensations coming from the aroma and texture of the served dishes. The biggest attraction is guessing what is on the plate.

Interestingly, dark restaurants make it impossible to overeat, as the focus on the activity of eating itself makes the customers eat only as much as they need to satisfy their hunger. Supposedly, 90% of consumers cannot identify the dish they are eating.

#### Modern Toilet themed restaurant – Kaihsiung (Taiwan)

*Modern Toilet* is the Taiwan restaurant chain with a toilet decor. Customers sit on toilets and eat from tables mounted on bathtubs and sinks. The lamps are made from urinals. Food is served in plastic, miniature toilets, urinals, soapboxes, which the guests can take home with them as souvenirs. Soups are served in toilets, and if they are very hot, the toilet seat will be closed. The dishes often resemble the contents of our intestines in their shape and consistency. Instead of napkins, the guests are given toilet paper.

The first *Modern Toilet* restaurant became so popular that so far 12 such establishments have been opened in Asia. The owner of the first restaurant – Wang Zi-Wei came up with the idea when he had to use the toilet.

Table 1, continued

| Examples of gastronomic establishments | Characteristics |
|--|-----------------|
|--|-----------------|

seasonal ice restaurant **Lainio Snow Village Restaurant Ice** – Lainio (Finland)

Every year at the end of November, an area of 20,000 m<sup>2</sup> in Finland is taken up by the ice- and snow-carved “Snow Village”. One of its main attractions is the giant igloo – the Ice Restaurant. The whole interior of the establishment, walls, tables and chairs are sculpted from ice and beautifully illuminated with different colours. Temperature inside the igloo varies between -2°C and -5°C. The icy establishment can accommodate around 60-70 people. Patrons should remember to dress warmly.

This unusual restaurant is a seasonal establishment, enjoying great popularity among tourists visiting Finland. It only serves cold dishes. Guests can sample regional cuisine, e.g. potato soup with smoked salmon, or Lappish cream.

**ChillOut** ice bar – Dubai (United Arab Emirates)

It is a first bar of this type in the Middle East. Everything from the furniture and chandeliers to tableware is made out of ice. It is a great place to escape from the heat, as the temperature inside is around -6°C. At the entrance, guests can rent a winter jacket, fur cap and gloves.

**Eternity** restaurant – Truskavets (Ukraine)

The Ukraine is a location of a coffin-shaped restaurant. Its owners wanted to advertise their funeral services. Almost 30 m of pinewood was used for the construction of a huge coffin.

This unusual restaurant serves dishes named after funeral customs, on real coffins.

hospital-themed restaurants: **medical restaurant** Taipei (China), **Hospitalis** – Riga (Latvia), **Heart Attack Grill** – Las Vegas (the United States), **The Clinic Cafe** – Singapore (the Republic of Singapore)

The Taipei restaurant is quite unusual. The tables are large hospital beds, equipped with an alcohol IV rack and the waitresses are dressed in nurse uniforms. They walk around the dining hall and ask “medical” questions – depending on the answer, the guests have an appropriate drink, also with a medical name, e.g. vitamin A, tetanus injected into their mouths, and instead of a toilet they have an ER. Most of the customers are male, attracted not only by the unusual decor, but also by beautiful, scantily clad nurses.

The *Hospitals* restaurant in Riga treats its guests like real patients. The waitresses in nurse uniforms serve dishes on stainless steel plates. Instead of cutlery, people eat with surgical instruments. The bartenders wear lab coats and serve drinks in test tubes.

The *Heart Attack Grill* in Las Vegas is also themed after a hospital. The restaurant, which is famous for its colossal hamburgers called “bypass”, is advertised with the slogan “a meal to die for”. People weighing over 350 pounds can eat for free.

In the D.S. Music Restaurant in Taiwan, some chairs were replaced with wheelchairs and nurses feed the customers using syringes.

In Singapore, an establishment stylised after a hospital is equipped with seats, which look like wheelchairs, surgical instruments substitute cutlery and the dining hall is brightly lit.

military-themed **Buns and Guns** restaurant – Beirut (Lebanon)

A restaurant decorated to have a military atmosphere. The walls are adorned with replicas of military rifles and there is a camouflage net on the entire premises. Gunshots can be heard from the speakers and the staff are dressed in military-like uniforms. The motto of the restaurant is: “A sandwich can kill you”. The establishment specialises in fast food. The names of the dishes also relate to the military: “mortars” – huge sandwiches, “grenades” – potatoes, “Stinger missiles” – chicken wings.

Table 1, continued

| Examples of gastronomic establishments   | Characteristics   |
|--|---|
| Ninja restaurant – New York (USA)  | The New York restaurant is themed after the Japanese ninja – so much so that their staff includes real life ninja.  |
| prison hospital themed <b>Alcatraz ER</b> restaurant – Tokyo (Japan)   | <i>Alcatraz ER</i> is a restaurant designed to look like a prison hospital. It is run by a mad scientist, and Japanese cuisine is served by a man in white and delivered straight to the customers' cell. The dishes served there have both strange names and shapes.   |
| Barbie doll themed cafe with a pink interior, <b>Barbie Cafe</b> – Taipei (Taiwan)   | The motif of this establishment is the pink colour and the Barbie doll style. The decor, walls, floors, ceilings, chairs and tables as well as staff uniforms are all pink. Menus and walls are decorated with pictures of Barbie. Dishes are served with a calorie counter.  |
| psychedelic fairy-tale themed <b>Alice in Wonderland</b> restaurant – Tokyo (Japan)  | The Tokyo restaurant was inspired by the novel "Alice in Wonderland". It is rife with elements such as a deck of cards, giant cups and books, all the fantastic and unreal combinations known from the story penned by Charles Lutwidge Dodgson.  |
| condom themed restaurant – <b>Cabbages and Condoms</b> – Bangkok (Thailand)  | Strange restaurants are a dime a dozen in Thailand. In the aforementioned establishment, there are condoms on the floor, condoms on the tables and condoms on the walls. They are even used as a headdress for waiters. The restaurant promotes safe sex and planned parenthood. When leaving, each guest is given a condom as a souvenir. Aside from a list of dishes, the menu includes information about the restaurant and statistics showcasing the positive effects of opening it and teaching the public about contraception. The income is donated to a foundation combating sexually transmitted diseases. |
| dark themed <b>Vampire Cafe</b> – Tokyo (Japan)  | A restaurant for fans of dark atmosphere, Gothic and vampires. It is located in the Ginza district in Tokyo. The whole interior is blood red, with candle holders on every table, several coffins and crimson velvet, complete with a lot of skulls and crosses. Most dishes have vampire sounding names and are served in skulls and small coffins.  |
| cafe with an interior like a Gothic church, <b>Christon Cafe</b> – Tokyo (Japan)   | The cafe resembles a Gothic church. Inside we can find figurines of saints, and a glass image of Holy Mary. It has stained glass windows and organ music playing from the speakers. Customers can down their drink sitting at the altar.  |
| <i>Location as a classification criterion for unusual gastronomic establishments – (underwater, in an old freighter, in a mountain, on a volcano, under a waterfall, in a tree, high on a platform, in prison)</i> |   |
| underwater <b>Ithaa Undersea Restaurant</b> – in the Conrad Maldives Rangali Island, resort Rangali Island (the Maldives)  | The world's first underwater restaurant opened in the Maldives – located 5 m under the Indian Ocean. It is located in a transparent acrylic capsule, allowing guests to admire the riches of the beautiful underwater fauna. It looks like a large aquarium and can accommodate 14 people. It serves fusion cuisine. Customers have to book a table well in advance, as the restaurant is open for business only for an hour a day. Unfortunately, the items on the menu are not of the affordable sort. The prices range from 120 to 150 USD per dish.   |

Table 1, continued

| Examples of gastronomic establishments  | Characteristics  |
|---|--|
| underwater <b>Al-Mahara</b> restaurant – Dubai (United Arab Emirates)   | <p><i>Al-Mahara</i> is Arabic for clamshell. The name fits perfectly, as the restaurant is considered the best seafood establishment in Dubai. The menu includes boiled clams with cucumbers in apple sauce and an impressive selection of wines (in 2014 <i>Al-Mahara</i> won the Wine Spectator Award of Excellence). A wall-size aquarium allows customers to relax, immerse themselves in another world and forget the bustle of the big city on the other side of the wall. Granted, the restaurant is not really underwater, but the illusion it creates is worth any oceanarium. It is located in the ultra-luxurious Burj Al Arab hotel, which is shaped like a huge sail (321 m) and built on an artificial island. Burj Al Arab is part of the Jumeirach Hotels &amp; Resort chain.</p>  |
| <b>Hold Cargo</b> restaurant in an old freighter – Durban (South Africa)  | <p>In the city of Durban in South Africa, a unique restaurant was opened near Bells Beach, called <i>Hold Cargo</i>. It is located inside a big, rusty, old freighter. The decor is quite unorthodox – rusty walls, beams and stairs, however the tables are very elegant and waiting for tourists. The restaurant is also a giant aquarium, which lets dining guests observe sharks.</p>  |
| <b>Fangweng</b> – Yichang (China), a restaurant in the mountains,   | <p>The restaurant offers not only a nice meal, but also beautiful vistas stretching along the Xiling Gorge.</p>  |
| mountaintop <b>Huashan Teahouse</b> – Weinan (China)  | <p>To get a cup of Chinese tea customers have to tip-toe around a mountain on boards nailed to its slope, securing themselves on chain railings, and then climb one of the most steep stairs in the world. <i>Huashan Teahouse</i> is a place for people with nerves of steel and physically fit.</p>  |
| „Sky restaurant” <b>Dinner in the sky</b> – Brussels (Belgium), large agglomerations in many countries in the world | <p>Serving meals at altitude was an idea of the Belgian “Events in the sky” company, which began operations in 2006. The <i>Dinner in the sky</i> gastronomy, quickly became the fashionable outside Belgium. The company served customers in over 30 countries (e.g. USA, Canada, Portugal, Spain, France, England, Poland). An “event in the sky” can be organised in any place: town squares, parks, palace gardens, stadiums, hotel grounds, golf courses. A crane lifts a specially designed platform with a table, chairs and up to 22 people and 5 staff members (cook, waiter, entertainer) to a height of 50 m. The table is covered by a special roof, shielding the guests from rain. The customers are fastened with belts to their chairs, which rotate 180 degrees. The minimum height required for the participants is 150 cm. Sometimes, a second crane is supplied, which hoists up another platform for a DJ, musical band, or actors, who entertain the guests.</p> <p>In Poland, meals in the sky are organised by Total Events Sp. z o. o. The offer includes several options: coffee break in the sky, cocktail in the sky, a candlelit dinner in the sky. The aerial gastronomic platform is present at the recurring culinary festival, Europe on a Fork (Europa na widelcu) in Wrocław<sup>1</sup>.</p> |
| <b>At.mosphere</b> restaurant in the sky in Burj Khalifa – Dubai (United Arab Emirates)                             | <p>The tallest skyscraper in the world (828 m) – Burj Khalifa houses an establishment on its 122<sup>nd</sup> floor (440 m), which was included in the Guinness Book of World Records as the highest gastronomic establishment on Earth.</p>   |
| <b>El Diablo</b> – a restaurant on a volcano, Lanzarote Island, El Isote de Hilario (Spain)                         | <p>On the Island of Lanzarote in the Canaries, in the Timanfaya National Park, an establishment was opened atop a volcano, using geothermal heat</p>   |

<sup>1</sup> More information in M. Woźniczko, D. Orłowski (2017).

Table 1, continued

| Examples of gastronomic establishments | Characteristics |
|--|-----------------|
|--|-----------------|

from deep within the Earth. It was designed by César Manrique. At the entrance of the tuff building, a natural grill was placed, using heat from inside the volcano. Six metres down, the temperature reaches 400°C and the rocks found a few centimetres under the ground are around 100°C. Therefore, food preparation does not require any fuel whatsoever. Volcanic cones can be seen through the windows.

#### Labassin Waterfall Restaurant – San Pablo (Filippines)

Villa Escudero is a coconut plantation open for visitors. The main attraction for many are, however, not the coconuts, but a meal at the foot of a waterfall at the local restaurant. Regional dishes served on bamboo tables draw in scores of tourists. Guests can draw water from a crystal clear spring, into special cups they receive at the entrance. The tables are arranged at the foot of a waterfall, allowing customers to soak their feet in the rushing water.

This is an unusual attraction for tourists, gourmets, but also ornithologists, as the San Pablo resort is home to over 600 bird species (180 of which encountered only there). The guests can listen to the birds singing.

#### Yellow Restaurant Treehouse – Auckland New Zealand.

The restaurant designed by Peter Eising and Lucy Gauntlet is located in a very picturesque area. It was built 10 m aboveground, in the branches of a 40 m Sequoia. Thanks to its open design, the guests can admire beautiful natural landscapes during their meal, as well as enjoy natural sunlight and fresh air. The restaurant can accommodate around 30 people, however, a reservation has to be made well in advance, as it enjoys tremendous popularity.

underground restaurants in salt mines – **Karczma Górnicza** in the resort Uzdrowisko Kopalnia Soli “Wieliczka”<sup>2</sup> - Wieliczka (Poland); **Grota** restaurant in Uzdrowisko Kopalnia Soli “Bochnia” – Bochnia (Poland)

The historic “Wieliczka” salt mine is the location of *Karczma Górnicza* in the Witold Budryk chamber, 125 m underground, accessible by elevator. Tourists in search of powerful experience, can visit the establishment and sample Polish cuisine, prepared with the use of salt from the mine.

The historic “Bochnia” salt mine – the oldest such place in Poland – is the location of the deepest restaurant in the world, at an astounding 250 m. The “Grota” restaurant operates in the resort Uzdrowisko Kopalnia Soli “Bochnia” in Bochnia. The establishment is in the immediate vicinity of the Sutoris Shaft. Its interior and decor are connected with mining traditions of the lands around Bochnia, cultivated since the medieval times. An interesting element of the interior are replicas of unique, elongated barrels originally used to transport salt. The undisputed charm of this place is primarily the salt-carved scenery and unique microclimate. It hosts conferences, banquets, lavish receptions, small get-togethers, as well as concerts and theatrical performances. The establishment can accommodate around 500 people.

The menu is composed of Polish dishes. Visitors wishing to improve their health are served a special menu, and persons observing various diets may choose one of the four available special menus (gluten-free, easily digestible, milk-free, or vegetarian), which shall be observed throughout their stay.

#### Donna Gina hotel restaurant carved into rock – Polignano a Mare (Italy)

In the south-eastern part of the Italian Peninsula, there is a cliff side town of Polignano a Mare – a paradise for cavers. The biggest grotto in the area

<sup>2</sup> The “Wieliczka” salt mine in Wieliczka is one of the most precious cultural and spiritual monuments in Poland. Every year, it is visited by over a million tourists from around the world. It is also a world-renowned monument, as one of the first twelve UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Currently, the “Wieliczka” salt mine is a combination of centuries-old tradition with modernity, centuries-old history and an underground city with complex infrastructure.

Table 1, continued

| Examples of gastronomic establishments                                     | Characteristics   |
|--|---|
|  | houses the Grotta Palazzese hotel. The hotel restaurant, carved into a stone wall, draws customers not only with a rich menu, but also a magnificent vista of the Adriatic Sea.   |
| <b>Fortezza Medicea</b> – a prison restaurant, Volterra (Italy)            |   |
|  | <p>The restaurant is located in the high-security Italian prison <i>Fortezza Medicea</i> in the town of Volterra near Pisa. It is open for guests. The staff – cooks, waiters and musicians are all inmates; the chef serves a life sentence for murder. Meals are consumed under the careful eye of armed guards. However, the twenty man team prepares delicious food. The menu is dominated by Italian cuisine having little in common with stereotypical prison chow.</p> <p>Reservations should be made several weeks in advance. Before the visit, guests undergo a thorough background check, and before they leave, they are carefully searched. The restaurant is a very successful experiment in the resocialization process.</p> |
|  |   |
|  | <p><i>The form of waiting service as a classification criterion for unusual gastronomic establishments (no staff, shortest waiters, waitresses dressed as maids, waiters disguised as robots) and specific, non-typical staff (unique waiters – macaques, robots, children as cooks)</i></p>  |
| automated restaurant <b>s’Baggers</b> – Nuremberg (Germany);               |   |
|  | <p><i>S’Baggers</i> is an advanced technology centre, where all services (except cooking) are performed by automated food dispensers. Waiters are not needed. Every table is equipped with touchscreens used for placing orders. Dishes are served by a special sliding-down spiral, connecting the kitchen with tables. Payments are made via a card terminal mounted next to the menu. The restaurant combines technological novelties with delicious food.</p>   |
| computerized <b>Inamo</b> restaurant – London (UK)                         |   |
|  | <p>The owners of the London-based <i>Inamo</i> bet on new technologies. Guests place their orders directly with the cooks. Tables double as tablets, where people can place orders, contact the head of the restaurant, as well as change the virtual tableware, browse the Internet, or play one of the video games, while they wait for their meals.</p>  |
| <b>Hobbit Restaurant</b> with the shortest waiters – Manila (Philippines)  |   |
|  | <p>The <i>Hobbit Restaurant</i> may be found in the capital of the Philippines – Manila. The food is served by the shortest waiters in the world. Its decor resembles a hole in the ground described by J.R.R Tolkien in the ‘Hobbit’. In this small restaurant, you can enjoy a good meal, listen to lively music and meet the fictional short people.</p>   |
| <b>Maid Cafe</b> with waitresses dressed up as house maids – Tokyo (Japan) |   |
|  | <p>The <i>Maid Cafe</i> stand out thanks to its waitresses dressed up as maids, who treat the customer like the master of the house, who just came back home. The beautiful maids are a staple in both manga and anime. The waitress uniforms in this restaurant vary, but most are based on the French maid trope. You can even ask your waitress to write something with ketchup on your dish, which is usually <i>omuraisu</i> – Japanese omelette with rice and chicken.</p>  |
| waiters dressed as robots – <b>Robot Restaurant</b> – Tokyo (Japan)        |   |
|  | <p>Food is consumed with deafening music, to which men dressed as robots dance, accompanied by scantily clad women – a seemingly ideal proposition. Lights, lasers, music, robots and food. It may be hard to imagine, but the establishment enjoys great popularity.</p>   |

Table 1, continued

| Examples of gastronomic establishments  | Characteristics  |
|---|--|
| <b>Kayabukiya Tavern</b> – a restaurant with monkey waiters, Utsunomiya (Japan)   | <p>On the Honshu island, in the city of Utsunomiya, there is a restaurant waited by two monkeys: Yatchan and Fukuchan. The macaques dressed in chequered shirts and shorts efficiently deliver food and drinks to the guests. They serve alcohol, give away hot towels for washing hands and, in exchange, receive tips of peanuts. The monkeys are most often encountered in the early evening because, in accordance with guidelines of animal rights activists, they cannot work for more than two hours a day. It is said that the animals like their jobs very much. The owner of the restaurant even says that they are better workers than his son.</p> |
| <b>Robot</b> – a restaurant with robots, Hong Kong (People's Republic of China);  | <p>In the <i>Robot</i> restaurant in Hong Kong, actual robots make the rounds between tables. It is the first establishment of this kind, where orders are taken and filled by robots. The chef is a robot. Another robot gets to the tables and takes orders, and the third one delivers the prepared dishes. A fully charged battery lasts from 5 to 10 hours, and the robots are equipped with speech synthesizers, which makes them even more life-like.</p>   |
| <b>Kinderkookkafé</b> – a restaurant run by children, Amsterdam (the Netherlands)   | <p>This family restaurant in Amsterdam is almost entirely run by children. Food is prepared and served by children (under the watchful eye of adults). The establishment serves as a dayroom and cooking school. Parents drop their children off in the afternoon, and return after a few hours to take them back home and sample the dishes they have prepared.</p>   |
| <i>Type of consumers as a classification criterion of unusual gastronomic establishments – (nudists, cat lovers, twins, derailed rich people)</i> |  |
| <b>Clothing Optional Dinners</b> – a nudist restaurant New York (the United States)   | <p>In Manhattan, there are periodically organised dinners for nudists – “co-dinners”, where even waiters walk around naked.</p> <p>Once a month, in individual American restaurants, people can enjoy a meal, while sitting at a table naked. These restaurants become not only a place to eat, but also a centre for nudist-related events – cabarets, bingo, and literary meetings. Dinners for nudists were the idea of American nakedness amateurs, who wanted to be able to spend time together, also during the winter.</p>  |
| <b>Cat Café Nekorobi</b> – a cafe for cat lovers, Tokyo (Japan)   | <p>This cafe should be popular among cat lovers, who would like their pets to go with them everywhere, even when they go out for coffee. In the company of twelve animals living permanently on the premises, customers can have a drink of one of several kinds of coffee, tea, or cold drinks, e.g. green tea, or an instant miso soup.</p>  |
| <b>Twin Stars Dj Cafe Bar</b> , Moscow (Russia)   | <p>An establishment for twins. The <i>Twin Stars Dj Cafe</i> staff consist of pairs of twins. The owner admits that he got the inspiration for the club from the Soviet movie “Kingdom of Crooked Mirrors”.</p>  |
| for a specific group of consumers – „the derailed rich”, a very controversial restaurant without a name, Tokyo (Japan)                            | <p>It is said to be located in the Tokyo Roppongi district and is one of the most controversial restaurants in the world. It does not have a name and ad-</p>  |

Table 1, continued

| Examples of gastronomic establishments  | Characteristics   |
|---|---|
|   | <p>mits only a chosen few. Prices range between 2000 and 8000 USD. People who wish to eat there need first to acquire a club membership, where the main requirement is an annual income of over 175,000 USD.</p> <p>Before being served, customers can make love with an animal (e.g. a chicken, pig, dog, goat), which they will later consume. The restaurant does not disclose many details about it.</p>  |
| <p><i>The use of dishes in the original way as a division criterion for unusual gastronomic establishments – (food served on a woman's body or on a mannequin; the main original product – garlic, animal penis, dog meat; a "SPA restaurant" – baths in food products and ingredients: ramen, brewery ingredients)</i></p> |   |
| <p><b>Nyotaimori</b> – body sushi restaurant, Tokyo (Japan)</p>   | <p>"Nyotaimori" is the custom of serving sushi and sashimi on a naked female body. The practice of "body sushi" is not common, however, you can find several places, which serve food in this manner. Before the meal is being served, the woman washes her skin with an odourless soap and cold water to lower its temperature by a few degrees (one of the drawbacks of serving sushi on a human body is that it warms up, which is considered a flaw by gourmands). A less popular variant is serving the dish on a man's body (in Japanese, this is called "nantaimori").</p>   |
| <p><b>Cannibalistic Sushi</b> – a restaurant for cannibals, Tokyo (Japan)</p>   | <p>It serves "nyotaimori" – inspired cannibalistic sushi. It is served in an artificial body. A mannequin resembling a woman, is laid on an operating table. Guests play the role of cannibals – they get a scalpel and cut the "body" open, which then "bleeds" a special red sauce. Inside there are sushi pieces arranged to resemble internal organs.</p>   |
| <p><b>The Stinking Rose</b> – a restaurant for garlic lovers (dishes served with garlic added) San Francisco (the United States)</p>  | <p>This restaurant serves pesto with garlic and a side of garlic bread as an appetizer, chicken in garlic as the main course, and garlic ice-cream along with a garlic Martini for dessert. <i>The Stinking Rose</i> in San Francisco caters solely to garlic enthusiasts.</p>  |
| <p><b>Guolizhuang Penis Restaurant</b> – a restaurant serving animal penises, Beijing (People's Republic of China)</p>  | <p>A high-end restaurant with a menu consisting mainly of dishes made from animal penises. Customers can order penises of e.g. a horse, a pig, a goat, a rooster, a dog, a seal, a donkey. According to traditional Chinese medicine, we are what we eat. It is believed that this kind of food enhances the male libido, along with other effects. The menu explains in detail the effects of various penises on the menu. A donkey's penis is good for the skin, a horse's penis helps with blood circulation, and a snake's penis increases male potency. Ladies are also welcome to order from the menu, however they should be careful when eating testicles. Their testosterone content is said to impair fertility. A horse's penis, for example, is served with testicles in chilli sauce. The restaurant is not cheap. Such morsels fetch quite a price.</p> |
| <p><b>Dog Restaurant</b> – an establishment offering dishes prepared from dog meat from special kennels, Seoul (South Korea)</p>  | <p>A special restaurant that prepares dogs – they are consumed by ca. 20% of the Koreans. These are not regular dogs, however, they come from special farms, just like chickens in Poland or snails in France. The dishes are quite expensive – around 120 PLN.</p>   |

Table 1, continued

| Examples of gastronomic establishments  | Characteristics  |
|---|--|
| Yunessan Spa House – an establishment offering a bath in noodle soup, Hakone (Japan)                | It is not exactly a restaurant, as it serves ramen in bathtubs. The Japanese claim that taking a bath in ramen improves the colour and condition of the skin and helps a person relax.   |
| a “beer restaurant” with a SPA in the <b>Pivní lázně Bahenec</b> hotel – Pisek (the Czech Republic) | The “Beer Restaurant” with a SPA is located in the three-star hotel Wellness Bahenec, situated 810 m ASL in the city of Pisek in the Silesian Beskids near the Polish-Czech border. Beer connoisseurs can use the Finnish sauna and a beer bath, and then relax on a straw recliner. The beer bath is beneficial for health, increases the amount of B vitamins in the body and helps one to relax. The bath serves Budwaiser beer. The composition of any beer bath is a strictly guarded secret. Customers can also take a milk or mud bath. |

The above examples show that there are some gastronomic establishments in the world with unique operational profiles. Their originality is connected with various factors that determine their functioning in the HoReCa industry. Most of the unique establishments are located in Asia. Atypical locations, strange interior design or unique service attract travellers,

including culinary tourists, for whom a visit in one of these establishments is a great attraction in and of itself.

Considering the type of unusual gastronomic establishments in the world, restaurants are prevalent. Such places are very popular due to their unique nature, shocking ideas, but the food they serve is usually nothing special.

#### 4. Discussion and conclusions

In recent years, one of the most important trends in the global tourism development is culinary tourism, which is part of cultural tourism. It is considered one of the most important segments of the global tourism economy and deserves special attention, as participation therein is a certain indicator of the culture level of a given nation. This type of “delicious tourism” provides tourists with unforgettable visual, olfactory, gustatory and tactile sensations, as the food can be experienced on many different levels.

There is a trend in modern gastronomy indicating that a polished menu is not enough for a prospering gastronomic establishment anywhere in the world. Guests who expect an element of surprise from gastronomic services they engage outside their home, prefer atypical establishments.

Restaurateurs, in their attempts to attract customers, strive for diversity in both the location of the premises and the form of dishes served.

The most frequently encountered distinguishing factors connected with the originality of individual gastronomic establishments in the world are their interior design and location. This group of establishments is dominated by restaurants. Most of the strange establishments providing gastronomic services operate in Asian countries.

In summary, atypical inspirations are nowadays the norm in the gastronomy industry. Tourists interested in the “different”, including “tourist gourmands”, will find many different gastronomic establishments around the world, which enjoy great popularity.

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