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## What's cooking?

Nicki Symington, editor of Food and Travel, dishes up a culinary guide to the EU's eastern capitals

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**Feeling Hungary ... try poppy seed strudel in Budapest's many cafes.**  
Photo: Corbis

**Czech Republic: Prague****What's for breakfast?**

Ham, cheese, sausage and rye bread. Alternatively, if you have the stomach for it at that time of the day, hotdogs and beer. If you don't, then Café Louvre (+4202 2493 0949) serves Czech, continental and full-English breakfasts.

**What's for lunch?**

Try some excellent local fish dishes, such as the spicy fish soup or grilled perch with pesto. Rybarsky Klub (U sovoevych mlyunu 1, +4202 5753 3170).

**What's for dinner?**

Anything from soup to sushi. If you are feeling flush, why not take the gourmet option at Kampa Park (+4202 5753 2685) with a rack of lamb with pumpkin purée, or sashimi of scallops with hot truffle oil.

**The local tippie**

World-class beer (the Czech Republic is the home of Pilsner, after all) or the herb-based spirit becherovka.

**Estonia: Tallinn****What's for breakfast?**

Porridge, black bread, cold cuts and cheese are the traditional breakfast foods. However, increasingly coffee and Danish is filling the hole. Bogapott (Pikk Jalg 9, +372 631 3181) does both.

**What's for lunch?**

Excellent fish and seafood, pickles, potatoes, and bread. Paat (Rohuneeme tee 53, +372 609 0840) is a newish addition to Tallinn's restaurant scene, serving modern Estonian cuisine (grilled halibut).

**What's for dinner?**

Game, in season. Roast duck, wild boar and elk are often on the menu at Vanaema Juures (Rataskaevu 10, +372 626 9080).

**The local tippie**

Try the Estonian lemon vodka at Moskva, formerly a Soviet café, now a hip bar/restaurant (Vabaduse Valjak 10; +372 640 4692).

**Hungary: Budapest****What's for breakfast?**

Coffee and pastries (poppy seed strudel or featherlight doughnuts) at Café Gerbeaud (Vorosmarty Square 7, +361 429 9000) in Pest. You may well be offered a shot of palinka (local brandy) to start the day. Drink it in your coffee or straight up.

**What's for lunch?**

Sizzled duck breast with paprika at Taban Terrace in Buda (Apród utca 10, +361 201 1086). Or pizza, pasta, Peking Chinese at one of the hundreds of restaurants that have opened up in the past two years.

**What's for dinner?**

For grown-up modern reconstructed Hungarian cuisine, Gundel (Allatkerti ut 2, +361 468 4040) is the place. Excellent fish dishes such as pike-perch in a (but not swamped by) light creamy froth.

**The local tippie**

Lots of excellent wines, especially from Tokaj and Villany. Try Borbárosag Restaurant (Csarnok Square 5, +361 219 0902) in Pest (the name means "wine jury") or one of the growing number of wine bars.

**Latvia: Riga****What's for breakfast?**

Pancakes with fruit, local sausages and eggs, and lots of coffee. Dzirnavaš (Dzirnavaš 76, +371 728 6204) serves a big breakfast buffet. Or for coffee and pastries, try the tiny Kafijas Veikals (Maza Pils 6, +371 722 4216).

**What's for lunch?**

Smorgasbord, with hams, smoked eel, pickled herring, piragi (bacon-filled

dumplings), and cucumber salad. Alus Ordenis (Rai'a 15, +371 781 4190).

**What's for dinner?**

Pork ribs, beetroot salad, green beans in a cream sauce and local Aldaris beer, all in generous portions. Staburags (Caka 55, +371 729 9787).

**The local tittle**

Home-brewed ale at the Lido microbrewery (Krasta iela 76, +371 750 4420). The inky Riga Black Balsam is a local firewater.

**Lithuania: Vilnius****What's for breakfast?**

Bacon, eggs cooked any way that you like, and pancakes with fruit jam. At Dvaras (Tilto 3, +370 210 7370), the pancakes come hot from the griddle.

**What's for lunch?**

Hearty vegetable soup, wild mushroom salad or veal with ceps at Aukstaiciai (Antokolskio 13, +370 212 0169). Look out for the beer snack menu.

**What's for dinner?**

Cepelinai, a sort of oval potato-dough filled with beef or mushrooms and served with kastinis - a ubiquitous buttery sour-cream sauce. Local Kalnapilis beer comes in clay jugs. Lokys (Stikliu 8, +370 262 9046)

**The local tittle**

Avilys (Gedimino 5, +370 212 1900), a microbrewery, serves excellent home-brewed beer. For vodka cocktails in an altogether hipper environment, go to Gero Viskio Baras (Pilies 34, +370 262 9819).

**Poland: Warsaw****What's for breakfast?**

"Milky soup" - a sort of liquid porridge - cold cuts, cheese, honey and crusty rolls. Washed down with tea and lemon. The Pod Barbakanem milk bar (ul Mostowa 27) is one of the oldest and best.

**What's for lunch?**

Slodki Slony (ul Mokotoska 45, +4822 622 4934) does excellent pierogis - delicious dumplings filled with mushrooms, cabbage or cheese. Stay for the best baked cheesecake in town.

**What's for dinner?**

Go rustic at Dom Restauracyjny Gessler (Rynek Starego Miasta 21, + 4822 831 1661). The roast duck stuffed with apples is not only very traditional, it's delicious.

**The local tittle**

Vodka. Zytia is the best stuff. But for a range of 115 clear and flavoured

varieties, go to the hip new Sense Café (ul Nowy Swiat 19, +4922 826 65 70).

### **Slovakia: Bratislava**

#### **What's for breakfast?**

The usual cold cuts and cheese, with bread and jam-filled doughnuts. Café Vienna (Nim SNP 15; +4217 529 640).

#### **What's for lunch?**

Bryndzove halusky - gnocchi with sheep's cheese and bacon - is tangy and substantial. Pri Kaplnke (Rolnicka 31, +4217 437 111 61) is famous for its lovely terrace with charming staff.

#### **What's for dinner?**

Forgo the noodles and smoked meats and treat yourself to some husacia pecienka, Slovak foie gras, at Leberfinger (Viedenski cesta 257, +4217 623 175).

#### **The local tippie**

Slivovice, a plum brandy, and borovicka, a gin-like spirit, are the local tipples.

### **Slovenia: Ljubljana**

#### **What's for breakfast?**

Jam doughnuts and coffee or yoghurt and fruit. Or pick up an apple or ricotta-filled turn-over at a burek stand, such as the one on Prazakova ulica.

#### **What's for lunch?**

For the best beef goulash in town, head for Sestica (Slovenska cesta 40, +386 251 9575).

#### **What's for dinner?**

Grab a salad or a wild-mushroom risotto at a gostilne or dining pub such as the Vinoteka Sokol (Ciril-Metodov trg 18, Ljubljana, +386 439 68 55).

#### **The local tippie**

You can taste your way through the best Slovene wines and zganje - fruit-flavoured eaux de vie - at Vinoteka Movja (Mestni trg 1).

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