

# 10 unusual foods people eat in Europe

**Language Focus:** 22 words, **Level:** Intermediate - Advanced

Just about every country, region, and culture has its own unusual foods. Often, these foods can seem **gross** or weird to people who are not from the region. Yet in many cases these unusual foods are actually tasty **delicacies**.

With its long history and varied cultures, Europe is home to some of the strangest foods in the world. The immense differences in climate, **ranging from** the arctic climate of Scandinavia to the warm and **mild** Mediterranean weather found in Southern Europe, have led to **widely** differing agricultural practices.

This, in turn, has led to a variety of different food cultures. So let's take a look at ten of the weirdest foods found in Europe.

## 1. Surstömning

Arguably the most **pungent** specialty from Europe is Sweden's Surstömning, or **rotten** fish. The fish is **fermented** for 1 to 2 months before being canned. The smell released after opening a can is so strong that many airlines ban it.

## 2. Casu Marzu

Many cheeses are heavily fermented, but Casu Marzu from Sardinia **takes fermenting to a new level**. The cheese contains live **maggots**, and is made by letting sheep's milk cheese rot outside.

## 3. Andouillette sausage

France is famous for its fine cuisine, but you might want to skip the Andouillette sausage. This sausage contains parts of the colon and intestines of pigs, and is described by many as smelling like pig **offal**.

## 4. Smalahove

**If you happen to** find yourself in Norway around Christmas time, you might find yourself being served Smalahove, or **boiled** lamb's head. The brain is removed, and then the head is salted and boiled. Eyes are usually eaten first as they're the most **tender**.

## 5. Lappkok

Reindeer are a popular Christmas symbol, and *Rudolf the Red Nosed Reindeer* is often considered Santa's best friend. That doesn't stop people in Finland and parts of Sweden from enjoying Lappkok, a **dumpling** made of reindeer blood and **bone marrow** mixed in with wheat.

## 6. Haggis

Haggis might be the most well-known food on this list as it is the national dish of Scotland. Haggis is basically a pudding made of oatmeal, sheep's stomach, heart, **lungs**, and other organs.

## 7. Black Pudding

Somewhat similar to Haggis, black pudding is made of animal blood, most often pig's blood, mixed in with oatmeal and a variety of herbs and spices. Black pudding is usually eaten in Ireland and the UK.

## 8. Kokoretsi

Greek food is quite popular around the world. Many people, however, wouldn't want to eat Kokoretsi. This dish is made of lamb or goat intestines wrapped around the animal's internal organs, including hearts, lungs, and **kidneys**.

## 9. Nozki

Nozki is a unique dish from Poland. The word Nozki literally translates to "cold feet", and the dish is made of pig's feet cooked in herbs and spices, and set in gelatin. The dish is generally **well-regarded** for its **savory** taste.

## 10. Paardenrookvlees

*"Paardenrookvlees" is quite the mouthful!* isn't it?

Paardenrookvlees refers to horse meat, and is often eaten in the Netherlands and elsewhere across Europe. In fact, **smoked** horse meat is a common sandwich filling in these countries.

## Language Focus : Vocabulary + Expressions

1. **Gross** - (adj) extremely unpleasant, disgusting, horrible, ugly, repulsive.
  - *My sister thinks the smell of cigarettes is **gross**.*
  - *The girl was beautiful but she said she felt **gross** in the bikini.*
  
2. **Delicacies** (pl Noun) - a food choice that is hard to find and expensive and considered good to eat
  - *Strange animal parts are considered **delicacies** in some countries*
  
3. **ranging from** - to be between two type of limits, for example...numbers, age, colour, price etc.  
**To range from .....to.....** (phrase)
  - *There were people of all ages at the event **ranging from** children of 5 years old to older people in their 80's*
  
4. **Mild** - (adj) not strong, intense or extreme
  - *I prefer a curry that is **mild**. I don't like spicy food.*  
*\*dish from India that uses chilli and is normally hot and spicy.*
  
5. **Widely** - (adverb) very or very much / by a large amount of people
  - *Charles Darwin's theory of evolution is **widely** accepted by scientists.*
  
6. **Pungent** - (adj) strong smelling / strong or sharp smell
  - *There was a **pungent** smell of smoke and whiskey in the house the morning after the party.*
  - *There is a **pungent** smell of chemicals in the factory.*
  
7. **rotten** - (adj) if food is rotten it is decomposed or decomposing and smells bad
  - *If you eat food that is **rotten** you could get sick.*
  
8. **Fermented** - (adj) if sth is 'fermented' it has live bacteria in it which changes its state
  - **Fermented** foods are good for you.
  
9. **"takes fermenting to a new level"** - to improve or develop fermenting further  
**\*To take sth to a new level** - (expression) to take sth that is already successful and improve or develop it greatly
  - *The new CEO said he wants to take the company **to a new level**.*
  
10. **Maggots** - (pl noun) small larva that come from a fly's eggs that appear on rotten

food.

- *If you leave food out and the flies come there will be **maggots** on it in two days.*

11. **Offal** - internal organs of an animal used as food

- *Most people don't like foods that contains animal **offal**.*

12. **If you happen to** - if by chance you.....

**\*To happen to do sth** - to do sth by chance

- ***If you happen to** meet John at the club tell him I will call him tomorrow.*

13. **Boiled** - (adj) cooked in heated water which starts to bubble

- *My favourite type of eggs are **boiled** eggs.*

14. **Tender** - (adj) (talking about food) soft, easy to cut, bite and chew.

- *The meat was beautiful. It was so **tender**.*

15. **Dumpling** - (noun) type of food from Asia.

- *We ate **dumpling** in the Chinese restaurant.*

16. **bone marrow** - (noun) tissue inside the bones in a body/animal

- ***Bone marrow** soup is becoming very popular health food.*

17. **Lungs** - (pl noun) part of the body that is used for breathing

- *After the race his **lungs** felt like they were new.*

18 **Kidneys** - (pl noun) organs in the body

- *The sick man needed a **kidney** transplant.*

19 **Well-regarded** - (compound adjective) if sth is well-regarded then people have a good opinion of it (can be used for people too)

**\*Well-regarded....as** (adj + prep)

- *Miles Davis is **well-regarded** as a Jazz musician.*
- *The restaurant is **well-regarded** by people in the city.*

20. **Savory** - (adj) if sth is savory it tastes good and has a lot of flavour, usually it is salty an not a sweet dish

- *Do you prefer sweet or **savory** food?*

21. **is quite the mouthful** - means sth is long and hard to pronounce

- *His name **was quite the mouthful** so I just called him Tim.*

22. **Smoked** - (adj) a way something is cooked using smoke

- ***Smoked** fish is popular in Sweden.*

## Language Focus: Exercises

### Complete the sentences: EXERCISES

Complete these sentences with a **highlighted** word or phrase from the article.

1. This year the winter in the UK was ..... .It didn't even snow. (*not strong or intense*)
2. The restaurant serves lots of ..... dishes. (*not sweet, salty, tasty*)
3. The man ..... the water to make tea. (*heated*)
4. The famous guitar player Jimi Hendrix *took* blues music ..... (*developed it greatly*)
5. Frogs legs are considered a ..... in France. (*hard to find and expensive and considered good to eat*)
6. The apple was ..... so I threw it in the bin. (*bad*)
7. Japanese people eat a lot of ..... food. (*has good bacteria*)
8. Some words in German are .....! (*long and hard to pronounce*)
9. The price for a new BMW ..... 25,000 euros to 120,000 euros. (*between two prices*)
10. If you ..... find a wallet in the park it is mine. I lost it when I was running there. (*by chance*)

# ANSWERS SHEET

## Complete the sentences: **ANSWERS**

1. This year the winter in the UK was **mild**. It didn't even snow. (*not strong or intense*)
2. The restaurant serves lots of **savoury** dishes. (*not sweet, salty, tasty*)
3. The man **boiled** the water to make tea. (*heated*)
4. The famous guitar player Jimi Hendrix *took* blues music **to a new level**. (*developed it greatly*)
5. Frogs legs are considered a **delicacy** in France. (*hard to find and expensive and considered good to eat*)
6. The apple was **rotten** so I threw it in the bin. (*bad*)
7. Japanese people eat a lot of **fermented** food. (*has good bacteria*)
8. Some words in German are **quite the mouthful to say!** (*long and hard to pronounce*)
9. The price for a new BMW **ranges from** 25,000 euros to 120,000 euros. (*between two prices*)
10. If you **happen to** find a wallet in the park it is mine. I lost it when I was running there. (*by chance*)