

Sausage Makes the World Go Round

"There is Thuringian, Nuremberg, Sonneberg, Coburg, Franconian, Kulmbach, Hofer, Westphalian, North Hesse, Pfälzer, Red, Silesian, Sulzfeld, St. Gallen, Merguez (originally from Morocco) and Würzburg sausage. " Wow – sausage really gets around!

But a sausage is only genuine when it's made from coarsely-ground lean pork with no filler, which is packed in a sheep casing just 7- to 9-cm long and weighing not more than 25 grams. Only then can it be called an original Nuremberg (Rost-) Bratwurst.

The evolution of the Nuremberg bratwurst is intimately linked to the city council's concern for the public welfare of the citizens of this Free Imperial City. With the issue of its so-called "Guten Policey" an early-modern food inspection authority was called into life. Until today, bratwurst can only be called "Nuremberg", if they are produced within the city limits. Since 2003, this designation has been protected worldwide by the European Union. More than three million sausages are produced daily and exported around the globe – the yearly production figures are estimated at 1.4 billion.

There is no other food that is more closely tied to the history of the Franconian metropolis – after all, they have a 700-year-long tradition here. A discerning bratwurst tradition in Nuremberg can be traced back as far as the 14th century. They can be eaten as six, eight, ten or twelve original "Nuremberg Rostbratwurst" with horseradish and sauerkraut or potato salad or (in the same number) in a spicy broth flavored with onions and vinegar as "Blaue Zipfel"; as "3 im Weckla" (three in a crispy roll); two raw pressed with onions on a roll as "Gehäckweckla" or one on a fork.

This long tradition has produced numerous legends and myths surrounding the Nuremberg bratwurst. One says that they are made so small to allow innkeepers to sell them through the keyholes of their taverns during closing hours. What is known is that in the Middle Ages the citizens of Nuremberg already laid value on quality over quantity and preferred the small and delicate local sausages rather than their larger and cruder Franconian cousins. Thanks to a flourishing trade with the Orient, spices were available in Nuremberg in medieval times.

The Nuremberg bratwurst has a celebrity fan club: The famous German comedian Loriot drew a picture of himself enthusiastically eating a bratwurst in the guest book of a local sausage restaurant. That prince among poets, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, had a steady supply of Nuremberg bratwurst shipped to his home in Weimar. And the Bayreuth author Jean Paul received Nuremberg bratwurst by mail from his publisher. In 1813, he thanked him with the words: "The sausages are a pleasant forget-me-not from Nuremberg for my tummy."

Those who would like to combine the culinary enjoyment of bratwurst with a city tour can take part in a bratwurst tour or the excursion entitled "How does my City Taste?"