

SHEETS

Food culture

In the Route “*Longobard Ways across Europe*”, along with the exploitation of the various evolutionary stages of Longobard civilization, it is intended to promote the exploitation of the endogenous resources of the territories that the route passes through, especially as regards the aspect of farm food products, wines and gastronomy, which are important sectors from the point of view of tourism and economics.

In this context, attention is focused on two areas of intervention.

On one hand the scientific area for studying the eating habits and cooking methods of the Longobard period. A period in which there were very few changes in diet.

Food in the Early Middle Ages

The staple food consisted of cereals, integrated with vegetables and natural products gathered in the woods. Meat - certainly more difficult to "conquer" by hunting and certainly more expensive - was considered a more prestigious foodstuff and was mostly present on the tables of the more well-to-do.

Most of the meat eaten was pork and chicken, while beef was less usual, both because cattle rearing required the availability of land and because cattle were more useful for pulling carts and working in the fields.

As regards fish - cod and herrings in the North of Europe - this was a common element in the diet of the Nordic populations and quite frequent elsewhere, for both freshwater and sea fish.

The acquisition of fertile land and the possession of animals were essential elements in gaining power, in the development of tribal groups, of communities and, lastly, of single individuals.

Food today

The tremendous paradox today is the imbalance between the excess of food among the most evolved societies - a condition that also includes the deplorable phenomenon of hedonic eating - and the absence of food in the poorest societies.

A weapon of inequality that accentuates various resulting phenomena: the exaggerated exploitation of certain areas for the purposes of mass production; the excess of intensive livestock farming with increased production of CO₂; the increase of pollution rates due to the use of chemicals and the emissions of gas in the atmosphere; bad dietary habits induced by distribution systems based only on profit (e.g. sale of non-seasonal products; products whose price is prevalently determined by transport and advertising costs).

Sustainability and typicality

The precise orientation of the "Longobardia System" that governs the Route “*Longobard Ways across Europe*” is to favour the valorization and promotion of typical local products with regard to production sustainability.

The aim is to favour, in each micro-territory on the Route, the recovery of productive activities related to the products of the local traditions, the so-called "forgotten" products, horticultural products that give the system and the territories themselves a higher value of social development.

The logic behind this approach is to make good use of the endogenous resources of the individual territories that contribute to creating and strengthening the overall specific identity of the territory: a value that cannot be reproduced.

The "Longobardia System" therefore encourages interventions that focus on increasing the knowledge of the nature and characteristics of the individual Territories for their sustainable use



with relation to the increase of typical local production; food education also relating the typical products to be proposed to the influx of sustainable tourism; food solidarity; the fight against food waste.

Pope Francis /

- *"We are living in a time of crisis; we see it in the environment, but above all we see it in men and women: The human person is in danger today, hence the urgent need for human ecology. The peril is grave because it is not merely a question of economics but of ethics and anthropology."*
- *"But the system continues as before, because it is dominated by the dynamics of the market."*
- *"Man is not in charge today, money is in charge, money rules. God our Father did not give the task of caring for the earth to money, but to us, to men and women: we have this task!"*
- *"Food wasted is food stolen from the poor» - Make yourself small, seek the essential.*