

‘Duck with apples’ and English lessons

Menu choices during Ice Hockey World Championship

By Oksana Zakharinskaya

2014 will see Minsk hosting the Ice Hockey World Championship for the first time, gathering fans and players from around the globe. Needless to say, Belarusians are quite impatient for the event to begin and the capital is acquiring various new sports facilities and hotel accommodation. Of course, a comfortable bed for the night and fantastic ice rinks will be well remembered, but food is just as important; meanwhile, affordability and tastiness should go hand in hand.

‘Fan-zones’ and first-class restaurants

This year, the capital will boast a total of 175,000 square metres of retail space. Olga Yezapenkova, the Head of the Main Administration of the Consumer Market’s Public Catering Department (Minsk City Executive Committee) notes that 10,000 catering sites are state run. Minsk Arena alone has a shopping centre with a

hypermarket, a restaurant and a cafe — suitable for adults and children. During the Ice Hockey World Championship, many temporary shops, seasonal cafes and places of entertainment will spring up, expanding the servicing zone by more than 20,000 seats near Minsk-Arena and Chizhovka-Arena. The accent will be on serving snacks and drinks, as well as larger meals and, of course, selling souvenirs. Ms. Yezapenkova notes that such restaurants and cafes will particularly serve traditional Belarusian cuisine. The Aginsky, Kuchmistr and Metelitsa cafes are newly opened at the Ice Palace, with all sites aiming to offer a range of traditional dishes, to suit every taste and budget.

Top-level

The Victoria Hotel inside the Stolitsa Business Centre is already fully booked for the championship, and has planned its meals in advance. It will be hosting eight ice-

hockey teams, including those from Germany, England, the USA and Norway, as well as foreign fans, notes Oksana Borko, who heads catering at the hotel. Its two dining halls can seat 120 and 140, serving buffet style European and Belarusian cuisine. Naturally, sportsmen tend to prefer healthy meal choices, so their trainers have liaised with the hotel to ensure

that appropriate dishes are prepared. They seem very happy with the arrangements for accommodation and the menu, which offers vegetables, fruit, fish and seafood. Belarusian carp and sturgeon feature, cooked in various ways, while those seeking heavier Belarusian cuisine won’t be



The largest ‘dranik’ (potato pancake) cooked at Rakovsky Brovar restaurant

disappointed by duck with apples, pork medallions in a spicy sauce or potato pancakes stuffed with salmon, caviar and mushrooms.

Ms. Borko emphasises that all service and food will be of the highest level and menus will be offered in three languages: Russian, English and Belarusian. Staff are also having English lessons — with waiters and administrative staff learning tailored vocabulary.

Tasty sauces

Victor Radevich, the Chairman of Board of the

Belarusian Association of Cooks believes that the standard of cuisine across the capital will surprise many visitors. A campaign is underway to encourage chefs to make wider use of sauces. Recipes, gathered from far and wide across Belarus and Europe, are being shared, ensuring that menus are diverse and mouth-watering. A recipe book of 194 dishes, with illustrations, is to be distributed, while a similar edition is planned for tasty snacks. Of course, many traditional Belarusian dishes use dried mushrooms, fresh berries,

honey and locally grown herbs to flavour them.

Loading up on pasta before each game

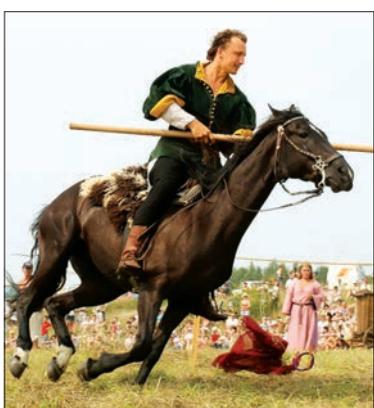
Former Belarusian national hockey team player Vladimir Kopat notes that players need to be conservative in their diet. Meat, fruit and vegetables are important, as are carbohydrates before each match. Pasta is the usual meal beforehand, with athletes able to enjoy a wider range of foods on their days off, in moderation. Keeping fit in every way is essential, with nutrition playing an important role in performance.

Winning champions cup in a fair tournament struggle

Pavel Kalinkov from Belarus recognised best among eight ‘knights’ from Holland, Germany, Norway and Russia

The 70,000 participants and guests of the *Times and Epochs-2013* Forum enjoyed a knightly camp, with authentic living conditions, tents and servants, and were entertained by armed horsemen.

The performance began with a parade of knights and sword-bearers while heralds explained the significance of heraldic shields and flags. Pavel Kalinkov, who received the ultimate cup,



Winner Pavel Kalinkov

tells us, “We represented the Grand Duchy of Lithuania at the

tournament, taking its flag to Moscow. Each uniform was precisely recreated from 15th century samples.”

Knights also demonstrated their skills by spearing rings and cutting targets, as well as lifting the scarves of beautiful ladies from the ground. Jousts were held, with the head being a forbidden target zone.

“I’m grateful to the participants of our Zolotaya Shpora horse-historical club for their help. They did everything to help me to compete,” notes Pavel. “My victory is theirs too.”

Miracles can happen

By Yekaterina Smirnova

Zhlobin resident, from Gomel Region, receives reply to letter written to British Queen Elizabeth

Anna tells us, “In 2011, my son took his first recuperative trip to the UK, staying with an English family, with whom we are now friends, phoning to congratulate each other on holidays. Last summer, the lady of the house discovered that she was suffering from a serious illness and, despite having surgery, she and her husband invited my child again for New Year, taking him on various day trips. By March, we discovered that her condition had worsened and I had no idea how to offer support, so

I wrote to the Queen. I didn’t ask for money or special attention but simply wrote that I was thankful for her Majesty’s country being home to such good people.

Anna sent her letter in April, finding the address online, and her sister helped to translate the letter into English. “In May, I found a surprise in my letter box,” Anna smiles. “It said that the Queen had been moved by my message and wishes our acquaintance a speedy recovery.” When Anna informed her British friends, they hardly believed her at first, but were delighted. Anna has since sent them copies of her letter and the Queen’s answer, saying, “I hope that it will support them in their hour of need. Miracles sometimes happen.”