

Follow Your Fork: A Culinary Journey Through Saxony-Anhalt

In Sachsen-Anhalt ist der Genuss zu Hause: Zwischen Backstuben, kleinen Manufakturen und Weinbergen warten Geschichten, Traditionen und eine Geschmacksvielfalt, die man am besten direkt vor Ort entdeckt. Wer Lust hat, die regionale Schatztruhe zu öffnen und Land und Leute kennenzulernen, sollte sich auf eine kulinarische Reise einlassen. Sie führt zu überraschenden Genusssorten – und ganz bestimmt auch zu einem neuen Blick auf die Region.

Wenn man an das Wort „Genuss“ denkt, schieben sich zuerst Bilder von Sterneköchen in den Kopf. Kochmützen, gerahmte „Feinschmecker“-Urkunden im Entree eines Restaurants und kunstvoll angerichtete Fine-Dining-Menüs auf den Tellern. Sachsen-Anhalt kann mit Genuss deluxe aufwarten. So wurde das „Pietsch“ in Wernigerode 2025 vom Guide Michelin aufgewertet und trägt nun sogar zwei Sterne. Das zweite Haus von Robin Pietsch, das „Zeitwerk“, und auch das Lokal „Speiseberg“ in Halle (Saale) konnten jeweils ihren Stern bestätigen.

With the Freyburg Wine Spring Festival, the Saale–Unstrut region opens its wine festival season every year on May 1. Visitors can sample young wines and regional specialties, accompanied by street music. Photo: Saale-Unstrut-Tourismus e.V./Falko Matte

Small Bites, Big Stories

Yet a true culinary experience doesn't necessarily require haute cuisine. It can be found in smaller moments, too. Anyone who wants to discover the taste of Saxony-Anhalt can start their own personal tasting tour. The starter kit for a first small test run might include: some creamy-sweet Halloren chocolates, a traditional Tangermünde energy bar (Nährstange), Halberstadt sausages smoked over beechwood, a lean cut of beef from Harz Red Highland cattle, a bottle of Garley beer from the Altmark, and a bite of what is said to be the liveliest cheese in the world. Würchwitz mite cheese, a pungent specialty produced in the Burgenland district, is an acquired taste for some and a true delicacy for others.

These samples could hardly be more different, yet they share something in common. They tell stories of tradition, craftsmanship, and regional identity—and they immediately spark the desire not only to see Saxony-Anhalt, but to taste it as well. This is precisely where the Genussfinder project comes in: a guide navigating from one culinary hotspot to the next, which in 2025 was among the finalists for the Saxony-Anhalt Tourism Award. Its initiator, Sascha Walz, describes himself as a lover of good food who appreciates fine cheese and wine and enjoys treating himself to culinary pleasures. “Strictly speaking, the project is pure self-interest,” he says with a laugh. “Because when we shoot our videos to show where to shop or dine, I get to know wonderful wineries, cafés, restaurants, and artisanal producers.”

Sascha Walz is the founder of the Genussfinder platform. With his team, he travels from one culinary hotspot to another in Saxony-Anhalt and shares his discoveries with a growing Instagram fan base. Here: Hofbude Pietsch in Wernigerode. Photo: Genussfinder

A Culinary Game of Discovery

The idea for the project emerged when Walz moved back from Berlin—where he had lived for several years—to his hometown in the Börde region. In the capital, he knew exactly where to find the good stuff. But when he and his family bought a farm in the small town of Egel in near Magdeburg, he initially felt somewhat disoriented. “I had no idea where to go for good food or coffee. Genussfinder is a huge game of discovery, even for me. By now, I know that I underestimated Saxony-Anhalt's culinary scene, because I've been genuinely surprised at every single place.”

As the owner of a social media marketing agency, Sascha Walz knows how to attract attention online. In the short videos for the Genussfinder Instagram channel, he doesn't just take bites of cake or sample soups himself; above all, he gives space to the stories behind the food. “I want people to talk about their products and businesses, because they shape the culinary identity of their state,” he explains.

Ronald Haake breeds Wagyu cattle in Kuhlhausen in northern Saxony-Anhalt. He emphasizes slow, stress-free rearing with high-quality feed, plenty of space, and fresh air. Photo: Genussfinder

Wagyu at the Village Edge: A Wow-Factor Insider Tip

Among the most surprising discoveries on his journey through Saxony-Anhalt so far was meeting Ronald Haake and David Meyer. In Kuhlhausen, a village near Havelberg, they breed and raise Wagyu cattle. The jet-black animals produce exceptionally tender, premium beef, finely marbled and rich in flavor. Their operation, Havel Wagyu, is one of the largest Wagyu breeders in Germany.

With tips like these, Walz reaches a remarkable number of food enthusiasts. His Instagram channel Genussfinder, which only launched in summer 2025, had already gained 20,000 followers by the end of the year. “That's truly astonishing given such a short

time,” he says, announcing plans to visit around 50 culinary locations per year with his team to gradually build a gastronomic map of the region. A basic listing on this map is free, he explains. Those seeking greater visibility and reach for the photos and videos on social media and the website can opt to become partners—that is, paying members of the platform.

Wagyu beef straight from the pasture along the River Havel. Photo: Genussfinde

Five Ingredients of Home

The initiative Heimatgenuss Mitteldeutschland (Local Flavors of Central Germany) pursues a similar goal of raising awareness of regional culinary treasures, taking a broader view that also includes Thuringia and Saxony. Founded five years ago with the aim of connecting regional food producers with chefs and restaurateurs, the association now counts 700 partners in its network.

Heimatgenuss Mitteldeutschland e.V. relies on a wide range of ideas. One particularly successful concept is the so-called Heimatmenü (regional menu): chefs create multi-course menus featuring at least five ingredients sourced locally. “This promotes regionality, quality, and sustainability and leads us to appreciate the work and products of our fruit growers, butchers, beekeepers, poultry farmers, cheese specialists, bakers, and winemakers more,” says chairwoman Christine Klauder. “Producers and restaurants become ambassadors of regional enjoyment together.” She herself admits that her research has turned her into a fan of Saxony-Anhalt. “It’s a true treasure chest for gourmets,” she enthuses.

The phrase “Enjoyment is a duty” is part of the kitchen philosophy at the Wörlitzer Hof restaurant in Saxony-Anhalt. Here, local ingredients take center stage, and not only a regional menu is served. Photo: Adrian Liebau, Gastblick.Media

Award-Winning, Handpicked, Regional

Just how surprisingly diverse the taste of home can be is also demonstrated by the competition Kulinarisches Sachsen-Anhalt (Culinary Saxony-Anhalt), organized by the state’s Ministry of Economy, Tourism, Agriculture and Forestry in cooperation with the Saxony-Anhalt Agricultural Marketing Agency. In 2025, 17 carefully selected products received the quality seal Kulinarischer Stern (Culinary Star)—including a strawberry smoothie from an orchard in Jessen, a mango gin from Timmenrode in the Harz Mountains, a mixed rye bread with wild garlic from the Kolping Vocational Training Center in Hettstedt, and the Anhalter Kremsschiffchen, baked in a family-run bakery in Hohenweiden. Some of the award-winning products can be delivered to your home in a “Culinary Stars Box.”

Anyone who enjoys tasting and feasting might continue their gourmet test series—working title: “What Does Saxony-Anhalt Taste Like?”—with one of the many specialty boxes available, such as the Harz gourmet crate, the Halle indulgence box, the Altmark crate, the Magdeburg Otto Treasure Box, the Wittenberg Gourmet Case, or a sampler of all the so-called “Golden Children” from the Saale–Unstrut region: gold-awarded top wines from an area with a 1,000-year winemaking tradition.

Family tradition: Manuel Flechtner creates natural wines and markets them under the Winzerbar label. His great-great-grandfather already cultivated a vineyard near Naumburg in the Saale Valley (Saxony-Anhalt). Photo: Saale-Unstrut-Tourismus e.V./Falko Matte

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More information:

Specialty boxes from Saxony-Anhalt: <https://amg-sachsen-anhalt.de/regionalkisten/>

<https://press.invest-in-saxony-anhalt.com/2025-12-22-Follow-Your-Fork-A-Culinary-Journey-Through-Saxony-Anhalt>