

Market day - Stary Kleparz and the neighbourhood

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Trading history at Kleparz dates back to the Middle Ages. Today Stary Kleparz is one of Krakow's most colourful and diverse farmers' markets where you can buy vegetables from local farmers, ripe mangoes flown in from far away, and all sorts of other delicacies from various parts of the world.

Trade started to flourish here thanks to the location privileges of 25 June 1366 granting Kleparz the license to use butcher's stalls, baked good stands, cobbler's and blacksmith's workshops as well as other craft workshops with the same rights as Krakow's residents. For centuries trading, including the black market, was the heartbeat of Kleparz.

Some of Kleparz's tradeswomen were called sackers because they sold their goods out of sacks and bags. Both vendors and buyers ate in makeshift food stands called *farynas* littered around the market. Oat beer was the drink of choice sold in "grey stone flasks" from Julian Pagaczewski's brewery. According to Stanisław Cercha, Kleparz vendors baked white wheat pastry called kolach - with cheese or brushed with egg and saffron, butter kolachs and strudels (especially around Christmas), Kleparz offered *kukietka* rolls with nigella seeds and another type of *kukietki* which looked like a belly of a pig and were hence called 'piglets'. Dough scraps were used to bake flat *podpłomyki* bread and the so-called cobbler's bake - a small, flat bread with holes. We know what was sold in Kleparz market in the 17th century from the inventory of the spice store. These were, among others: pepper, ginger, rice, almonds, cloves, orange rind, dill, cumin, broad beans, saffron, mace, nutmeg, aniseed for spirits, cinammon, raisins, acacia gum, sugar, rose vodka and blackcurrant juice.

Market squares have always been a meeting place for residents looking for top quality produce. That is why a trip to the market was an opportunity to not only buy fresh vegetables but also hear the latest gossip. Therefore, it is no wonder that when Nowy Kleparz market was established nearby and the authorities wanted to transform old Kleparz into a presentable square and a park, the plans fell through.

Several times a year Stary Kleparz turns into a bustling urban hot spot and hundreds of Krakow residents come to sample specialties prepared by restaurateurs and other vendors during two food fairs: the Art and Food Bazar where you can buy handicrafts, cosmetics, but also eat - for example legendary seafood; and Najedzeni Fest! which takes over Stary Kleparz every September with a food fair centred around that most iconic of Polish vegetables - the beloved potato.

On the remaining days of the year, the table stands are full of top quality vegetables, fruit and mountain cheeses. In the Kleparz booths you can buy breads, meat, cold cuts, fish, dairy and various kitchen utensils as well as other indispensable household items.

From time to time snacks and nibbles are sold at certain stalls. Sekret Smaku serves *pierogi* and *gołąbki* (dumplings and stuffed cabbage rolls), and Czary Mary dishes out miso and waffles. Kaboom offers nettle lemonade, coffee, in addition to olives and interesting preserves. Węgierskie Specjały stocks salami from the famed Mangalica pig variety, lightly smoked liverwurst and pickled cabbage leaves that can be used to prepare delicious *gołąbki*. Massimo from Che Bonta imports foodstuffs from northern Italy: hams, salami and cheeses. A must-try



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for all mozzarella lovers is a creamy burrata which, when combined with August tomatoes, basil (excellent freshly cut herbs sold per kilo are available in booth 69) and good olive oil will transport you to Italy quicker than any budget airline.

The variety of products in Kleparz also include game (Dziki Trop), spit cake and cured Lithuanian cold cuts (Bracia Haydukiewicz), outstanding Polish cheeses (Ser i Szynga and other stalls), smoked fish and quark (Magdalena and other stalls). Other booths sell virtually everything - from cereals and dried dates to quirky pickles and organic produce.

Another outlet with a selection of exotic delicacies is the nearby Dubai Food (Rynek Kleparski 4) that carry all sorts of Middle Eastern spices and ingredients. Cheese lovers should visit Rynek Kleparski 12 to stock up on Dutch cheeses. Those who prefer the French cheesemaking tradition need to make a short detour from Kleparz and drop in to Le Rond (ul. Szlak 20) - a tiny shop with a neat selection of heavenly French cheeses. On your way there pay a visit to patisserie Wyszukane Desery Braci Szewczenko (Rynek Kleparski 14). Enthusiasts of Greek cuisine should also make a stop at Długa 29 to visit Athina Greek deli.

Grab your baskets and let's go!