

**Polska**



## Bread: an Export Hit

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Bread in Poland is perceived as a natural part of the daily diet, familiar and accepted. Surveys show that bread in some shape or form is purchased by 96 percent of households—more than any other product.

Polish bread is special. It has a unique flavor that is hard to find in baked goods made in other countries. A good crumb, crispness, a pleasant aroma are other qualities that set it apart. The creativity of bakers, meanwhile, results in a huge variety of bread on the market: loaves, rolls, crescent-shaped buns, baguettes and more. Bread can be large or small, light or dark, wheat, rye, mixed, wholegrain, made from rare cereals like spelt and amaranth, semi-sweet, and with added seeds, fruit, honey and toppings. It comes in shapes typical for a given region, like bagels and korovai bread, or loaves made for special occasions like harvest festivals and weddings.

Thanks to the centuries-old tradition of bread baking it has been possible to pass improved recipes from generation to generation. This means that the best bakers use recipes that can be even 300 years old—and the best ones involve a sourdough starter. Poland is also one of a small group of countries where bread is still made from rye flour, which has a lot more valuable nutrients than wheat flour—and the differences are noticeable to the palate as well. Blending tradition with well-tested technology enables Polish bakers to produce several hundred kinds of bread that leave no one indifferent, not even the most demanding gourmets. Little wonder, then, that Polish bread is appreciated at home and abroad.

Some years ago no one in Poland had even thought of exporting bread. Today a growing number of bakeries are seeking ways of encouraging people to buy their bread but also switching to exporting frozen goods. The opening of Poland's borders meant that Polish bakers looking for new markets first tentatively started taking their bread to borderland areas in Germany and the Czech Republic. Then, when they saw demand growing, they started opening stores and traveling further afield. No wonder that Poland's baked goods exports (bread plus cakes) today are worth in excess of 500 million euros.

Many Poles live and work in other countries these days. It turns out that what Polish people abroad miss the most is... Polish bread. According to one study conducted in Britain, bread was the Polish product most sought-after by Polish migrants.

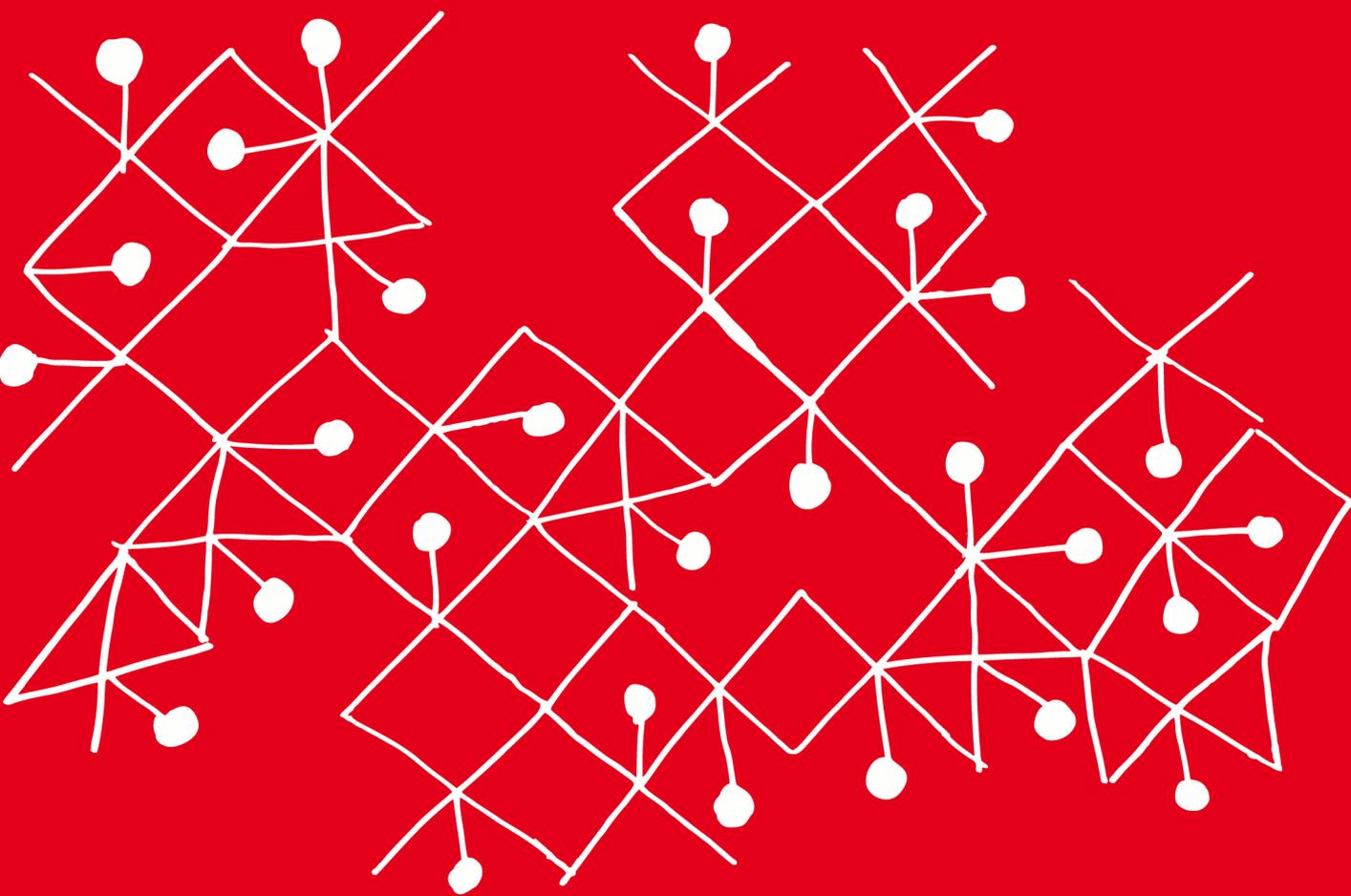
Bakers send the most bread to destinations with the biggest population of new economic migrants. Polish bread follows them Britain, Ireland, Germany and even Spain. There is every indication that it could stay there for good, since it is winning growing popularity among the locals as well.

Genuine Polish bread is starting to conquer world markets. One factor behind its success is not using the industrial technology that dominates the baking sector around the world. Polish bread offered internationally has to be special, with an original, unique flavor and aroma. Other countries have plenty of industrially made bread; Polish bread competes effectively by being different, healthier and tastier.

Bread exports are dominated by frozen products because these can be stored for long periods. Apart from loaves of sourdough bread, foreign buyers buy white wheat bread, baguettes and Kaiser rolls. These products are sent to destinations including Germany, Britain, Ireland, Belgium, the Netherlands and Scandinavian countries.

Reaching for traditional Polish bread, preferably one baked from wholemeal flour and based on natural sourdough, with the addition of sunflower seeds, for example, consumers can be certain that this product is exceptionally tasty and healthy, on the one hand, and that it meets top quality standards, on the other.

Source: The Warsaw Voice



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