

# The Rosengarten Report

THE FOODS AND WINES THAT MAKE ME SWOON

THIS MONTH'S TASTING SCOOP

## WHAT'S ON YOUR GRILL IN AUGUST? SAUSAGES THAT ARE..... POLES APART!!!

The Amazing Variety of Polish Sausage....It's Not All Kielbasa at the Supermarket.....It's Not Even All Kielbasa!

**B**y the time August hits, many of us backyard grillers are starting to tire of the standard chicken-hot dogs-burgers routine. A shake-up is what we need! And a shake-up's what you're gonna get, if you follow my lead. Due to my growing realization that Poland is, quietly, one of the greatest sausage countries on earth....and my growing bliss at how well Polish sausage is represented in the U.S. (a fact hidden from many, many foodies)....and my empirical results concerning the brilliance of Polish sausage on the grill....I am here to tell ya:

It is high time to do the polka.

Now, I can guess what you may be thinking: "Aha! Good idea! I should go to the supermarket and grab some of that kielbasa I usually boil, and put it on the grill."

And that's a good conclusion. Kielbasa is *wonderful* on the grill; caramelized nuances you never imagined during a wintertime boil with sauerkraut and potatoes will make you fall in love all over again.

But, if you follow me closely, more wonders will appear:

1) Kielbasa at the supermarket is kielbasa with training wheels! Yes, I admit, I've always been fond of it....but once you move beyond supermarket kielbasa, onto the real thing, the thing being manufactured in Brooklyn, New York and Chicago and Cleveland and Buffalo by hundreds of kielbasa artisans, working hard to please a demanding Polish population....and willing to ship to the Polish equivalent of gringos!..... you may never buy that supermarket stuff again!

2) Once you start buying kielbasa from these local



### ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

#### RECIPES OF THE SEASON

Mumbai Street Food.....Meet Mexico!

**THESSALONIKI, GREECE'S STUNNING SURPRISE**  
Fabulous City.....and Fabulous Eating Way Up North!

#### WINE IN TIME

Insincere Sancerre?

**AND MORE.....**

## BEST EAT-AS-IS POLISH SAUSAGE

So here they are, styles and products. Once again, to find out any producer's details, and how you may order, click here, or go to "The Roll-Call of Polish Sausage Producers" at the end of the story.

### STYLE: KABANOSY

These are the predecessors of.....Slim Jims! Now don't get nervous: I've never been fond of Slim Jims (I just looked at their list of ingredients at the market, which includes "mechanically separated chicken meat!"). They always seem nastily smoky (artificially so), with a real dead, industrial quality, and a bizarre texture not reminiscent of real meat.

The kabanosy is the anti-Slim Jim Slim Jim. I was surprised by how much I love these....and by my already-forming plans to make them regular occupants of my refrigerator (that's the first relief.....they need refrigeration!)

There are many variations in kabanosy:

\*they can be made from pork, or pork and beef

\*they can be real thin in diameter (like 3/8"), to plain old thin (3/4")

\*they can be fairly lightly smoked (though there's always a "smoked" taste to some degree), or very smoked

\*they can be anywhere from a light, pink-ish brown, to a dark purple-brown

\*they can be anywhere from quite tender and moist (like, say, a kosher salami), to quite dry and hard

\*they can come in sticks that are a foot or less, or in much longer coils

Just grab a stick out of the fridge, open a brewski.....

and you're good to go! (Though I've also discovered that the moist ones are great on rye bread with mustard!)

In my tasting, the masterpiece, for me, was Sweet Poland's "kabanosky swojskie," or "smoked links, old country style" (\$7.99 per lb.) These babies are on the fat side, about 3/4" in diameter, dark orange outside, light pink inside. Lovely snap before a soft, delightfully fatty chew. Smoky, peppery, porky, even the "b" word..... bacon-y! Excellent lingering taste of meat and fat.

I also loved Janek's "snacking kielbasa" (\$7.89 per lb.); 12" long, barely 1/2" in diameter, medium-dark orange-brown, with a real salami look inside (many others have a Canadian bacon kind of look). Porky, smoky, perfectly seasoned, like a Slim Jim that went to an Ivy League university.

Also excellent was Piast's "dried thin sausage" (\$5.29 per lb.). This company makes quite a specialty of eat-as-is sausage (see sidebar). This kabanosy, 15" long and 5/8" wide, is in a similar style to the ones above: like a chunky pink salami inside, really tender, with subtle smoke and garlic hints.

In a slightly different style—a little wider, a little lighter in color (more orange), a little moister—are the "kabanos" from Joe & Frank's (\$3.99 per lb.) More towards deli meat, and away from dried sausage. But if you'd like to go in the opposite direction, try the "smokies" from Raddell's—darker, drier, smokier, with a crisp skin that audibly cracks as you bite. Intense flavor, with a little bit of peppery heat in the finish.

### STYLE: LOMZYNSKA

There are also kielbasa kielbasa that go by this name, but the important distinction is this: whatever you intend to do with a lomzynska, the meat is very lean (the fat has been trimmed), and coarsely ground. Steve's Meat Market makes a gorgeous eat-as-is lomzynska (\$4.20 per

## THE OTHER PIAST EAT-AS-IS SAUSAGES

Piast is a New Jersey butcher, smokehouse, purveyor—with a taste for variety! If you add up all the kielbasas they produce, along with bacon, cold cuts and other specialties, the number exceeds a hundred. In my tasting, Piast—whose founders are from southern Poland—was well-represented by eat-as-is sausages; I received kinds from them that I received from no one else.

Two of these stand out. Their "Vienna Kielbasa," or "Kielbasa Wiedenska" (\$4.89 per lb.), is a dark coppery-brown sausage, with a skin that's almost papery-looking. Inside is a pink and chunky blend, with obscenely large pieces of fat—leading to an unusually tender chew. The meaty flavor is mild, extremely subtle.

Also mild, but in a different style, is the "Hungryman's Kielbasa" (\$3.69 per lb.); this one is white-ish inside, with the texture of rillettes, and a slightly smoky-peppery flavor. Great with beer!

ferent products that you can find in their two Chicago-area stores (the only stores they run), or in other delis around the country.

7147 W Archer Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60638  
773.586.0026

[www.joeandfranks.com](http://www.joeandfranks.com)

Best Strategy for Acquisition:  
Call 773.586.0026

### J. Baczynsky East Village Meat Market & Deli

J. Baczynsky, located in lower Manhattan's East Village, is a neighborhood, old-school meat market—but they're the last one left in a once-thriving Polish neighborhood! The small storefront is a full service-butcher, with its own smokehouse and curing room, hand-making their sausages on site. While the meat is the main attraction, they also bring in the herring, cheese, frozen blintzes, pierogis, beets, pickles, and mustards that fill the shelves.

139 Second Avenue  
New York, NY 10003  
212.228.5590

Best Strategy for Acquisition:  
Call 212.228.5590 and ask for Andrew

### Janek's Fine Foods

Jim Janek is a third-generation owner running his family business. Janek's specializes in manufacturing home-made Polish products, such as kielbasa, kabanosy, bacon, hams, pierogis, using the same recipes since 1924. Their butcher shop sells these products, and a full line of fresh meats too. Janek's now has two stores: their main manufacturing center and storefront in Passaic, and a smaller store in Mahwah. Both stores also sell other groceries imported from Poland, Hungary, and Germany.

200 Monroe Street  
Passaic, NJ 07055  
973.778.3147

[www.janeksfinefoods.com](http://www.janeksfinefoods.com)

Best Strategy for Acquisition:  
[www.janeksfinefoods.com](http://www.janeksfinefoods.com)



Rosengarten's Table

For Rosengarten's Table Members: Janek's is offering 10% off your entire purchase when you order online from [Janeksfinefoods.com](http://Janeksfinefoods.com). After paying for your order, your order number will appear on a confirmation page. Email Rose Janek at:

[service@janekfinefoods.com](mailto:service@janekfinefoods.com) with your order number and mention the Rosengarten Report and your Rosengarten Table ID, and she will take 10% off of your purchase. This promotion applies to first time customers only.

### Maurice Bonneau's Sausage Kitchen

The Sausage Kitchen is a small store in Maine, which hand-makes all of its sausages in small batches. Artisanal and expensive.

36 Main Street  
Lisbon Falls, ME 04252  
207.353.5503 Direct  
888.453.5503 Toll Free

[www.sausagekitchen.com](http://www.sausagekitchen.com)

Best Strategy for Acquisition:  
[www.sausagekitchen.com](http://www.sausagekitchen.com)

### Piast Meats & Provisions Inc.

Piast is a relative newcomer to the world of sausage-making in the U.S. (the company started up here in 1991)—but the family has had plenty of experience in their native southern Poland. Today, they produce a great many Polish sausages (including an extensive line of eat-as-is sausages), and sell them in three large Piast stores: two in Garfield and one in Maplewood New Jersey. They also stock a wide variety of Polish groceries. Their flagship store on Passaic St. in Garfield is the largest one, a two-story market carrying imported chocolates, coffee, teas and prepared meals. The smokehouse where their Polish sausage is made is next to this store.

1 Passaic Street  
Garfield, NJ 07026  
888 PIAST-US

[www.piaast.us](http://www.piaast.us)

Best Strategy for Acquisition:  
[www.piaast.us](http://www.piaast.us)

### Polana

Polana is an online-only grocery store created by the Machnicki family to meet the demands of Chicago's Polish population. All of Polana's meats are produced by Andy's Deli – a large meat manufacturer in Chicago, from whom Polana has made a strict selection. Polana will also ship you Polish soups, breads, blintzes, pierogis, cakes, and condiments.

3512 N. Kostner Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60641  
888.765.2621

# COMING UP IN THE NEXT ROSENGARTEN REPORT:

## CORN:

Evil Plant from Outer Space, or.....  
Gourmand's Delight in Late Summer?

- The issues.....
- The puzzle of sweet.....
- The best varieties.....
- The best farm stands across the country.....

And much more!

### Rosengarten's Table



#### ROSENGARTEN'S TABLE

The Rosengarten Report will bring you up-to-the-minute information on the best products available, as well as details concerning the best restaurants, hotels and wineries around the world. But I'll bring you something else, too. With your subscription to The Rosengarten Report, you will automatically become a member of Rosengarten's Table; you'll receive your own serial number. When you read about great products, restaurants, hotels or wineries in The Rosengarten Report, you will sometimes see a special note, encouraging members of Rosengarten's Table to contact a specific individual when dealing with that product, restaurant, hotel or winery. This is your way of "sharing my table," and getting special consideration from that establishment; it could take the form of a discount on products, a reservation for a normally booked restaurant or hotel, an appetizer or glass of wine on the house, a special insider's tour, or anything else that the merchant can think of.

Remember: If you want to contact a person that you read about in The Rosengarten Report by phone, fax or e-mail, please indicate your name and your Rosengarten's Table serial number to him or her. If your contact with the person is face-to-face (e.g. upon arrival for dinner), simply supply your number, along with a photo ID.

Offers are valid for current members of Rosengarten's Table only, and — unless otherwise noted — for one year only from the publication date of the issue in which the offer is mentioned. Please note: I feature products and services in The Rosengarten Report only if they make my heart throb. Once I've decided to write about an establishment, I give them a call to say that I'll be featuring them in an upcoming issue of The Rosengarten Report, and I ask them if there's anything they can do to make my readers feel as though they're "sharing my table." Sometimes they say yes, but sometimes they are unable to do anything. The answer does not have an impact on coverage, because my object is to share great finds with you. Nor does the answer make a difference in my esteem for the product or service offered, or in the warmth of my recommendation. There is no quid pro quo when it comes to the companies that I write about on these pages. If I love what I tasted, I say so—no matter what.

## THE ROSENGARTEN REPORT

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