



ARTS & CULTURE

French Bread Makers Seek UN Recognition of the Baguette

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The United Nations' cultural agency may consider the making of French bread, known as the baguette, for its list of “**intangible** treasures.”

Bakers in France asked the French government to propose the traditional bread for the honor from UNESCO. About 6 million baguettes are sold every day in France.

The French minister of culture will make a recommendation to UNESCO in March. The baguette is competing against two other candidates for France's nomination. The candidates are the metal rooftops of buildings in Paris, made from zinc, and a wine festival in the country's Jura area.

In 2020, UNESCO considered things such as a dance in Zambia, camel racing in the United Arab Emirates and **pottery** making in Serbia for its list of treasures.

Bakers in France hope the baguette will be considered an official treasure because of its importance in French life. But, the bakers also are worried the baguette is becoming less important in France. They say it is being replaced by frozen bread that gets produced in factories and sold in supermarkets.

They want to protect small, traditional bread makers. Many of the small bakeries had a difficult year in 2020 because of coronavirus restrictions. Since the 1950s, about 30,000 small bakeries closed in France as supermarkets became popular.

Food and drink-making methods in other countries are already considered “treasures” by UNESCO. The organization recognizes the making of flat breads in Iran and Kazakhstan, Neapolitan pizza-making in Italy and beer making in Belgium.

In 1993 the French government declared rules for bread to be considered a baguette: It must be made only from water, flour, yeast and salt. The declaration noted the time and temperature for the uncooked bread to rise.

Mickael Reydellet owns eight bakeries in France. He said there is no single secret to making a good baguette. It requires **patience**, know-how and “good flour without **additives**.”

Bakers in France hope the label from UNESCO would prevent the French baguette from being taken over by **impostors**. Reydellet said the UNESCO honor would give support to the next generation of bakers.

Dominique Anract is the president of the French bakers’ organization. He said it is important for French people to protect the tradition of buying a baguette.

“The first **errand** we ask of a child is to go buy a baguette from a bakery,” he said.

I’m Dan Friedell.

The Reuters news agency wrote this story. Dan Friedell adapted it for Learning English. Mario Ritter, Jr. was the editor.

Is there an item in your country that should be considered by UNESCO? We want to hear from you. Write to us in the Comments Section and [visit our Facebook page](#).

Words in This Story

intangible - *adj.* not made of physical substance : not able to be touched : not tangible

pottery - *n.* objects such as bowls, plates and cups that are made from clay that is baked

patience - *n.* the ability to wait without becoming upset or to lose interest

additive - *n.* something (such as a chemical) that is added in small amounts to a substance to improve it in some way

impostor - *n.* a person who deceives others by pretending to be someone else

errand - *n.* a short trip that you take to do or get something
