

**PRESS RELEASE:**

**17 cities come together in Brussels**  
**around the themes of gastronomy and good food**

**Brussels, 9<sup>th</sup> February 2018 – Food and gastronomy was at the heart of the gathering held by Délice Network in Brussels to celebrate its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Founded in Lyon in 2007, the international cities network focusing on Food & Gastronomy is now presided by Brussels. 17 of the 23 member cities attended this special meeting from 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> February, based around the themes of gastronomy and good food. Nine representatives gathered at the Town Hall for a political round table session on 9<sup>th</sup> February, joined by Brussels-based restaurateurs and Michelin-starred chefs.**

The City of Brussels has been a member of Délice Network since it was created in Lyon in 2007, with the city's candidacy instigated by the current Mayor Philippe Close, formerly the Alderman of Tourism. Ten years later, Karine Lalieux has taken over the reins as the new Alderwoman of Tourism for the City of Brussels, as the President City of the Network. The city hosted an outstanding meeting that brought together representatives from 17 worldwide cities – an opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments of this first decade and the new presidency. Over the course of three days, foreign delegations worked together on the theme of 'Dining Experiences: it's all about the concept', looking at how Brussels stands out in terms of quirky and innovative gastronomic concepts. Such initiatives have helped make the city an attractive destination on the worldwide gastronomic stage. Participants were able to meet Brussels-based Michelin-starred chefs such as Lionel Rigolet, Christophe Hardiquet, Isabelle Arpin and others, along with successful entrepreneurs like David Ghysels from 'Dinner in the Sky', innovative budding enterprises including Perma Fungi, Fruitopia, La Fruitière, Little Food etc. and local food and gastronomy specialists such as Alexandra Swenden and Betty Marais.

On the final day, eight representatives met at the Town Hall for a round table in order to plan for the Délice network's second decade. *"Food and gastronomy play an integral role in a city's identity, constituting a really important means for driving economic and tourist development within urban centers"*, explains Karine Lalieux. Representatives from Barcelona, Bordeaux, Izmir, Lausanne, Lisbon, Lyon, Puebla, Torino and Brussels spent the morning discussing and approving the strategic plan right up to 2022, looking at various specific features. The meeting focused on each city's strategies in terms of food and gastronomy, along with opportunities for working together and helping each other via Délice Network.

## Key points:

- **Délice Network is the only institutional network that brings together cities that have chosen food & gastronomy as one of their strategic axis for economic and tourist development**
- **Representatives of 17 member cities met in Brussels from 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> February to discuss the theme of "Dining Experience: it's all about the Concept"**
- **Eight political representatives from the member cities were welcomed on 9<sup>th</sup> February by Karine Lalieux, Alderwoman of Tourism and Major Events for the City of Brussels, for a special political meeting to mark the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the network**

## **About Délice**

Délice is an international institutional network that facilitates working together and sharing experiences in the fields of food and gastronomy. It brings together cities that consider both specialties as a means to enrich their culture and unleash economic potential.

Created by the city of Lyon in late 2007, it today boasts 23 member cities across four continents. All the cities involved in Délice have a different approach to food and gastronomy, linked to their culture and strategy. What they have in common is their desire to get public and private partners involved in a communal project, with food and gastronomy positioned to drive urban development, improve economic opportunities and promote cities internationally, so as to raise their profiles and improve the well-being of their citizens.

The aim of the network is to enable these member cities to increase their knowledge and keep pace with the ever-evolving food and gastronomy sector, as well as sharing their initiatives and good practices and creating special partnerships for specific projects.

Délice member organizations vary according to individual cities, but include Municipal councils, Tourist Offices, Chambers of Commerce, Universities and other bodies involved in urban center development.

## **The 23 member cities of Délice Network in 2018 :**



Aarhus, Denmark	Izmir, Turkey
Barcelona, Spain	Lausanne, Switzerland
Birmingham, UK	Leipzig, Germany
Bordeaux, France	Lisbon, Portugal
Brussels, Belgium	Lyon, France
Cape Winelands, South Africa	Madrid, Spain
Chicago, USA	Mérida, Mexico
Guangzhou, China	Montreal, Canada
Gothenburg, Sweden	Puebla, Mexico
Helsinki, Finland	Riga, Latvia
Hong Kong, China	Stavanger, Norway
	Torino, Italy

## Contacts :

### **Audrey POELS**

Attachée de presse et conseillère

Cabinet Culture, Tourisme et Grands Evénements

Hôtel de Ville de Bruxelles

T. +32 (0)2 279 48 57 - [audrey.poels@brucity.be](mailto:audrey.poels@brucity.be)

### **Elisabetta Bernardini**

Manager du Réseau Délice

Lyon, France

T. +33 (0)7 84 95 26 24

[elisabetta.bernardini@delice-network.com](mailto:elisabetta.bernardini@delice-network.com)



## THE VALUES UPHELD BY DELICE NETWORK CITIES

Created by the City of Lyon in 2007, Délice is a network of 23 global cities who gather in order to gain expertise on using food and gastronomy as a major tool for the development of their territory:

- Food culture, an essential aspect of our identity that needs to be protected
- Food sector, the driving force of economic development
- Food scene, the vector of our international outreach and influence
- Food policies, the tools aimed at improving the quality of urban life

By becoming a member of the Délice network, the only international network of cities devoted to gastronomy, healthy eating and good food, member cities share certain universal values:

1. The need to preserve cultural heritage and raise people's awareness about the importance of gastronomic & food culture.
2. The wish to rethink food & gastronomy in a sustainable and environmentally friendly way.
3. The desire to bring together actors involved in the gastronomic value chain to develop a global project for each city.
4. The conviction that food & gastronomy are instrumental in creating strong social cohesion.
5. The commitment to establishing food & gastronomy as a cutting-edge sector in terms of job creation and entrepreneurial development.
6. The promotion of food & gastronomy for the development of sustainable, high quality tourism.
7. The importance of education, transmission and research when seeking to convey strong values regarding healthy eating habits, food & gastronomy.

Together through Délice Network, cities are gaining greater knowledge, exchanging initiatives and good practices, and creating collaborations and crosscutting projects between member cities. This is achieved thanks to annual theme-based meetings during which participants are able to learn all about the host city, welcome international experts and take time to exchange on news and good practices in each city.

Through this network, the Délice Cities have consolidated partnerships and ties that facilitate a wide range of projects and collaborations in favour of those actively involved in gastronomy & food-based sectors: chefs, entrepreneurs, culinary schools, event-staging specialists, farmers, growers and artisans.

More than ever before, we are convinced that food & gastronomy convey positive values, and that our public policies and initiatives can have a truly tangible impact on our cities.

Délice Network is an indispensable tool, to explore, rethink, develop, steer and collaborate on this important global issue. Comparing diverse cultures, approaches and methods enables all to prosper and come up with innovative ideas.

Délice Member Cities have expressed a wish to pursue these efforts into the future with as many cities as possible worldwide, and encourage those cities that share our values to join the dynamic.