

Press Release

Press Day – 14 January 2026

“The Galaxy of Taste: From the Biosphere to the Plate”

The Alimentarium unveils on 15 January an immersive installation that transforms food data into a visual experience.

Vevey, Switzerland – 19 December 2025. Starting 15 January, the Alimentarium will present “The Galaxy of Taste: From the Biosphere to the Plate”, an original immersive and interactive digital installation.

Today, the Alimentarium presents a unique immersive and interactive digital installation, inspired by the famous aphorism of gastronome Brillat-Savarin in 1825: “The discovery of a new dish does more for the happiness of mankind than the discovery of a star.” Designed by data artist Kirell Benzi, this triptych creation plunges visitors into the heart of the relationships that connect living organisms, culinary cultures, and the foods we consume. On the left, a spectacular representation of the tree – or bush – of life brings together more than 1,200 “taxa” of edible animal and plant species. In the center, a dynamic multicolored sphere, the “Galaxy of Taste” reveals the connections between recipes from twelve regions of the world, the species they include, and the ingredients derived from those species. On the right, thousands of AI-generated images bring to life 1,200 species, over 600 dishes, and a myriad of ingredients.

Using a 3D mouse, visitors can explore the central sphere: each movement triggers, on the left, the corresponding species in the bush of life, and on the right, AI-generated images of dishes, species, and associated ingredients – offering an entirely new sensory and scientific exploration experience.

“Food is our strongest link to the biosphere. Kirell Benzi’s spectacular visualizations highlight this connection.” – Boris Wastiau, Anthropologist, Director of the Alimentarium

“The data visualization and the generation of thousands of images using AI by Kirell Benzi provided the solution to a long-standing project.” – Boris Wastiau, Anthropologist, Director of the Alimentarium

What the “Galaxy of Taste” Represents

“In this luminous sphere, data becomes substance. Recipes, ingredients, and edible species intertwine like constellations in a living galaxy of flavors. Each of the twelve culinary regions appears as a colored domain, shaping the chromatic geography of this edible cosmos. At their

intersections, ingredients and taxa form the gravitational core linking microorganisms to plants, oceans to kitchens, and cultures to ecosystems. Based on an exhaustive taxonomy developed with the Alimentarium and fueled by hundreds of real recipes, ingredients, and edible species, this work translates global culinary diversity into a constantly evolving visual universe. Both scientific map and sensory poem, it invites reflection on how life persists, knowledge circulates, and the act of eating binds us to the planet.” – Kirell Benzi, Data Artist

“Kirell Benzi’s creation spectacularly complements the contemporary works that punctuate the Alimentarium’s exhibition path.” – Boris Wastiau, Anthropologist, Director of the Alimentarium

About the Artist

Kirell Benzi: Exploring the Invisible Through the Light of Data

Pioneer of data art and Ph. D. in Data Science from EPFL, Kirell Benzi explores the intersection of art, AI, and visualization. Through immersive installations, he transforms complex datasets into captivating visual worlds that inspire curiosity and emotion. His works, powered by artificial intelligence, invite audiences to experience a unique blend of reflection and wonder. At the Alimentarium, Benzi weaves a link between our eating habits and cultural heritage. Internationally recognized, he has collaborated with prestigious brands and institutions – Nike, Google, Montreux Jazz Festival, the International Olympic Committee – and his creations have been showcased at iconic venues such as ArtLab, the Swiss National Museum, and TEDx Annecy.

“Working with Kirell Benzi opened our eyes to the creative potential of AI and data visualization.” – Boris Wastiau, Anthropologist, Director of the Alimentarium

An Experience for All

This installation is designed for everyone: knowledge seekers, 3D experience enthusiasts, art lovers, foodies, families, children, and school groups. It also speaks to those curious about the challenges and possibilities of artificial intelligence in artistic creation. Clearly destined to become a highlight of the museum’s exhibition path! The interface and all data are available in three languages – French, English, and German – like all resources offered by the Alimentarium.

“Work developed from the original idea, the collected data, and the prototype by André Ourednik”

This project was initiated in 2021 under the name “Tree of Edibles” as part of the Alimentarium’s digital transition strategy. Its primary ambition: to map all edible organisms in the form of a tree of life. The concept is based on a scientific approach combining biology, ecology, and anthropology. The project aims to make the complexity of the food world accessible to a broad audience through

an interactive visual installation. It relies on an intuitive digital interface, suitable for both young people and adults. The “Tree of Edibles” allows users to explore the diversity of species consumed around the globe. It connects organisms, recipes, culinary practices, and production chains. It complements the museum’s permanent exhibition and educational resources. Built around a database of edible species, the platform is designed to be collaborative and constantly evolving, ideally encouraging citizen participation through the individual addition of data. Since 2021, several Alimentarium team members have worked on this project in partnership with geographer André Ourednik, who delivered in summer 2025 the database of edible animal and plant species that forms the digital foundation of the installation unveiled today.

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On 14 January, the Alimentarium will host a full-day event dedicated to the press to discover the immersive digital installation “The Galaxy of Taste: From the Biosphere to the Plate”. This event is designed to offer journalists privileged access to the installation’s creator and the Alimentarium’s management for interviews and interactive demonstrations. Continuous access by appointment throughout the day from 10:00 to 17:00.

About the Alimentarium

The Alimentarium affirms its role as a leading museum dedicated to a global understanding of the food system, combining scientific knowledge, cultural history, and contemporary societal issues. At a time when food lies at the heart of social, environmental, health, and economic challenges, our institution is committed to providing the public with accessible, insightful, and rigorous perspectives. Our strategy is based on a systemic approach: showing how culinary practices, production chains, innovations, natural resources, and consumption habits are deeply interconnected. We develop exhibitions, educational programs, and digital tools that foster critical thinking, hands-on experience, and citizen participation. By assuming this role as a cultural mediator, the Alimentarium aims to contribute to collective reflection on the necessary food transition, inform without dogmatism, and guide everyone toward more enlightened, responsible, and sustainable choices.

PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE INSTALLATION

Link to download HD visuals and photo credit information: <https://shorturl.at/i3rbS>

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