



# PRESS KIT

2021

TheFork is the leader in online restaurant bookings in Europe, Latin America and Australia. Co-founded in 2007 by Bertrand Jelensperger, the website revolutionised the restaurant market by offering a new way to foster relationships between restaurants and diners, and by providing the first online booking diary for professionals.



## TheFork, a digital success story

**In the early 2000s**, Bertrand Jelensperger and his associates noticed that there were almost no online guides, while in print Michelin had done some spectacular work in establishing itself as THE reference in gastronomic guides, however on the Internet, everything remained to be done. It was around the same time that he has become familiar to the Yield Management mechanism (i.e. pricing policy and demand driven seat optimisation). At that point, the idea of a restaurant booking platform began to emerge, along with the opportunities it would create for restaurant owners if the company succeed in generating an audience and creating and driving qualified web traffic. Harnessing technology for the longstanding restaurant business... That was the foundation on which TheFork was built in 2007, and the mission has remained the same ever since: bringing restaurateurs and their customers closer together!

**In 2021**, Tripadvisor and TheFork Announce Leadership Management Transition as Bertrand Jelensperger Moves into Advisory Board Leadership Role and Almir Ambeskovic is Appointed as CEO for TheFork.

In this role, Almir is responsible for setting TheFork's business strategy and leading global operations of the brand, inclusive of TheFork's operations in twenty-two countries around the world.

Bertrand Jelensperger joined Tripadvisor CEO and co-founder, Stephen Kaufer, and support oversight of TheFork's strategy and business.



## THEFORK HAS BECOME THE SMART MOVE TO MAKE TO GET A TABLE!

The app makes it easy to find a restaurant, check real-time availability, book a table in just a few clicks and receive instant confirmation, 24 hours a day. Customers can choose from a selection of more than 80.000 partner restaurants, with or without special offers.

nearly  
**80 000**  
restaurants

**IN 22 COUNTRIES**

**28 MILLION+**  
app downloads

**22 MILLION+**  
reviews

**29 MILLION+**  
monthly visits



# THEFORK'S GROWTH SKYROCKETS

The opportunity to join TripAdvisor in 2014 on this adventure has enabled TheFork to leverage the global reach of the world's largest travel platform and to develop in new markets. This acquisition brings together two companies that share the same entrepreneurial culture and vision, where customers come first.

## 2006 - 2014 ROOTS AND FOUNDATIONS

- 2006** Origin of **LaFourchette** & Alain Ducasse idea
- 2007** Launch of **official business** & website in France & Spain
- 2011** Launch of **TheFork app**
- 2012** TheFork hits **10 million bookings** & launch of **Switzerland**
- 2014** **TripAdvisor acquires LaFourchette** & launch of **Belgium**

## 2014 - 2015 INTERNATIONALISATION, LAUNCHES AND ACQUISITIONS

Italy, Sweden, Denmark, Portugal, Brazil, Australia, Netherlands

## 2016 - 2018 CONSOLIDATION & DIVERSIFICATION

France, Thailand & Singapore (minor investment), Netherlands,  
Launch of TripAdvisor Restaurant Solutions (TARS)

## 2019-2020 EN ROUTE TO LATIN AMERICA, STRONGER PRESENCE IN EUROPE, PARTNERSHIP WITH MICHELIN AND DIGITAL PAYMENT

Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Perú, Uruguay  
France, Thailand & Singapore (minor investment), Netherlands, UK,  
Germany, Austria, Finland and Norway

Through the acquisition of Bookatable, TheFork strengthened its presence in Europe. The partnership between the Michelin Guide and TheFork, will significantly increase the visibility of Michelin Guide restaurants and provide an opportunity for millions of customers, to easily find and book Michelin selected restaurants on TheFork.

TheFork acquires Delinski and expands its presence in Germany and Austria.

The company innovates with new solutions such as digital payment directly from the app thanks to TheFork Pay, and Launch its Gift Card in Italy, the first gift card that allows users to enjoy a restaurant experience in more than 6,000 partner restaurants across all the country.

## 2021 STRENGTHENING OF GLOBAL LEADERSHIP POSITION

TripAdvisor and TheFork announce Leadership Management Transition as Bertrand Jelensperger Moves into Advisory Board Leadership Role and Almir Ambeskovic is appointed as CEO for TheFork





# THE ESSENTIAL PARTNER OF FOODIES

## A WIDE ARRAY OF RESTAURANTS, FOR EVERY TASTE AND EVERY OCCASION

At TheFork, we believe that every occasion, big or small, planned or unexpected, deserves the right restaurant! With more than 17,000 partner restaurants in France, and over 67,000 worldwide, we offer a wide choice of restaurants to meet all preferences, with discounts of up to 50%, all bookable in one click on the mobile app, 24 hours a day! Much more than a restaurant booking website, TheFork has become a true urban, gastronomic guide with a community.

## SMART REVIEWS

In order to choose the best option, diners can read the reviews posted by our active community comprising several million foodies: reviews are a way to guide customers, to inform them, to give credit to the restaurant, and to point as many people as possible to THE best restaurant for them, within their price range and at the right location. Only users who have eaten in a place will be able to post a review. Our mission is to offer personalised and exciting culinary experiences that meet our customers' expectations. With several million reviews on our websites, users put all their cards on the table, and it is encouraged!

## FOCUS ON THE INSIDER SELECTION

INSIDER, what is it? The idea is to give access, through TheFork app, to the best tables in town. The restaurants listed in the selection feature because they are trending, Michelin starred, or simply must-tries, and the offer caters for all budgets, and all food preferences.

INSIDER has been designed as a real "live guide" to provide the best option to our gourmet, on trend food lovers, whether they are searching for the quirkiest place in town, for award-winning dishes or for the latest fashionable dining experience. INSIDER offers an accurate selection, based on gastronomic restaurant critics and TheFork users' reviews, as well as expert assessments.

Much more than a unique customer experience, INSIDER promises to support restaurateurs through a trusting partnership where we maximize their visibility via a dedicated section on the app, giving them access to a targeted clientele.



## THEFORK AWARDS

### One day in the life of a restaurant critic

And the award goes to... In 2019, TheFork organised an awards ceremony to reward the best rated tables, voted for by the general public. It had never been done before in the world of French cuisine, where recognition awards are normally given by established critics and not by diners whereas they are top of mind when a chef works. A whole myriad of restaurants is assessed throughout France, so this award, in addition to giving a voice to the greatest number of people, also aims to reveal new talents.

The general public is invited to vote for their favourite restaurant from a selection of new hidden gems, previously nominated by a jury made up of 60 great chefs: these participatory ranking rewards 5 restaurants across France.

### The 2019 winners :

#### GRAND PRIX DU PUBLIC

L'Huitrier Pie - Saint-Emilion / Camille Brouillard et Soufiane Assarrar

#### PRIX DU PUBLIC

L'Auberge Le Bouc Bleu - Beblenheim/ Romain Hertrich

#### PRIX DU PUBLIC

By PM l'Atelier Restaurant - Nice/ Pierre Lesterle et Marco Raponi

#### PRIX DU PUBLIC

Roza - Nantes / Jean-François Pantaleon

#### PRIX DU PUBLIC

Anona - Paris / Thibaut Spiwack

#### PRIX "JEUNE CHEFFE ELLE À TABLE"

Le Mermoz - Paris/ Manon Fleury

## THEFORK FESTIVAL

As gastronomy is not just for gourmet food lovers, TheFork strives to make restaurant dining experiences accessible to everyone.

Several times a year, during TheFork Festival, users are spoilt for choice with a selection of over 1 000 restaurants offering up to 50 % discount! These discounts are one-offs and exclusive for the duration of the event, they give greater visibility to our partner restaurants and see new customers walking through their doors to taste their cuisine!

## MORE YUMS, FOR MORE YUMMY MEALS

TheFork rewards the appetite and loyalty of its customers!

The more you eat out in restaurants, the more opportunities TheFork will offer for spending extra special moments with family, with someone special or with friends!

Yums are loyalty points, earned through bookings made on TheFork: they can be converted into 10 € or 25€ discounts in partner restaurants that are part of the program



# THEFORK AND RESTAURATEURS: A WIN-WIN MODEL!

For us at TheFork, our mission is to support restaurant owners who wish to digitalise their business, and to keep contributing to the growth of the restaurant industry.

## A PREMIUM DIGITAL SHOWCASE FOR RESTAURANT OWNERS

The world is constantly changing... so is the landscape restaurants work in!

Digital tools bring a whole wealth of information to web users, quickly and easily: reviews, ratings and social media have a growing influence on behaviours when it comes to food and restaurants. The internet provides new front windows for restaurants, so now they can display their identity in two worlds simultaneously: in real life, and online!

Once featured on TheFork, restaurateurs have the opportunity to see their turnover increase as their visibility and online traffic are boosted; they can showcase their establishment in a prime online location, and website traffic of over 29 million visits each month is right within their reach.

Moreover, TheFork offers software solutions to help restaurant owners manage bookings, and also to optimise their results and visibility. It includes tools designed to enhance bookings flexibility, discounts and customer profile management, to help tackle no-shows and to benefit from our strategic partnerships with the greatest digital players such as Google, Facebook and Instagram. This enables them to be visible and bookable on all major platforms, through dedicated booking buttons.

***"I started out as a young chef, with no visibility... from one moment to the next, as soon as we registered with LaFourchette, bookings started coming in. It provides us with fantastic online visibility and allows us to develop our customer base much faster!"***

Yohann Bretnacker  
La Maison à Marseille



## THEFORK'S MISSION

TheFork's mission is to support restaurateurs in the digitalization of their activity and to continue our contribution to the growth of the restaurant industry.

A PwC study carried out on behalf of TheFork and TripAdvisor reveals that the two leaders contributed to the global growth of the restaurant industry, to the tune of 7.2 billion euros, including 1.6 billion in France, and that they also helped to create nearly 12,000 jobs in France in 2018.

## TECH AT THE HEART OF GROWTH

The platform goes 100% digital: over 100 developers are thriving to continuously optimise user experience, both for restaurateurs and customers, on the web platform, the booking software and the app of course, which has been downloaded by over 21 million users (in France, 2 out of 3 restaurant reservations are made through the app). TheFork strives to adapt to changing customer behaviours, that is why strategic partnerships have been signed with the three largest digital players such as Google, Facebook and Instagram, allowing restaurants to be visible and bookable on these platforms, with a couple of clicks on the dedicated buttons.



Find more about TheFork Manager in video

## BENEFITS FOR RESTAURANT

N°1 in online bookings

App available in 22 countries

29 million visits per month

Increased online visibility

Higher seat occupancy rate

11 times more bookings thanks to special offers

Marketing campaigns to enhance visibility: TV, radio, special events

Free website for restaurants

Booking widget on strategic platforms: TheFork, TripAdvisor, Google, Facebook, Instagram, Apple

Bookings management software

*"We are very happy to work with TheFork ! Probably because we are "beta tester partners", it means that we are one of the first restaurants to test TheFork Manager 3 in France, the brand-new version of their management tool. The team is extremely responsive, since the goal is to report bugs and suggestions for improvement during the test phase. We have a privileged relationship, dealing with a motivated team that works fast on behalf of its customers."*

Victor Malivert  
Signature Montmartre in Paris





## THE FIGHT AGAINST THE NO-SHOWS

What's a no-show?

This client behaviour is becoming increasingly widespread in many different industries and services involving bookings. It describes a person or customer who fails to show up for their reservation or appointment and did not give prior notice to the professional. This phenomenon is impacting not only the restaurant industry, but it also becoming an issue across society as it has repercussions when it happens to hotels, to healthcare professionals as well as small traders such as hairdressers!

Booking a table online for lunch or dinner in a restaurant does give greater freedom to customers, however not honouring this booking is rather a reflection of current attitudes in our society. With the fast-paced lives that we all lead, consumerism going out of control, and the dehumanisation of service providers, all these aspects of today's way of life contribute to generating "no-shows".

For over two years, TheFork has decided to act and has developed tools for restaurateurs so they can access the relevant data which will help them reduce the number of no-shows, and the drastic impact it can have on business performance!

The aim of these countermeasures at different stages of the process is to raise awareness and to make the diner feel responsible for their booking, while reintroducing the human dimension in this online interaction, keeping in mind that the world of gastronomy does revolve around affect and sharing.

Implementing these tools lead to a reduction of the no-show rate by 31% over 2 years, and 90% of TheFork customers who have been no-shows once did not reoffend within a period of 6 months.

## THE SOLUTIONS THEFORK OFFERS

Email and SMS reminders sent to customers, so they remember that they are expected at the restaurant

1 click cancellation system accessible through emails, SMS and push notifications

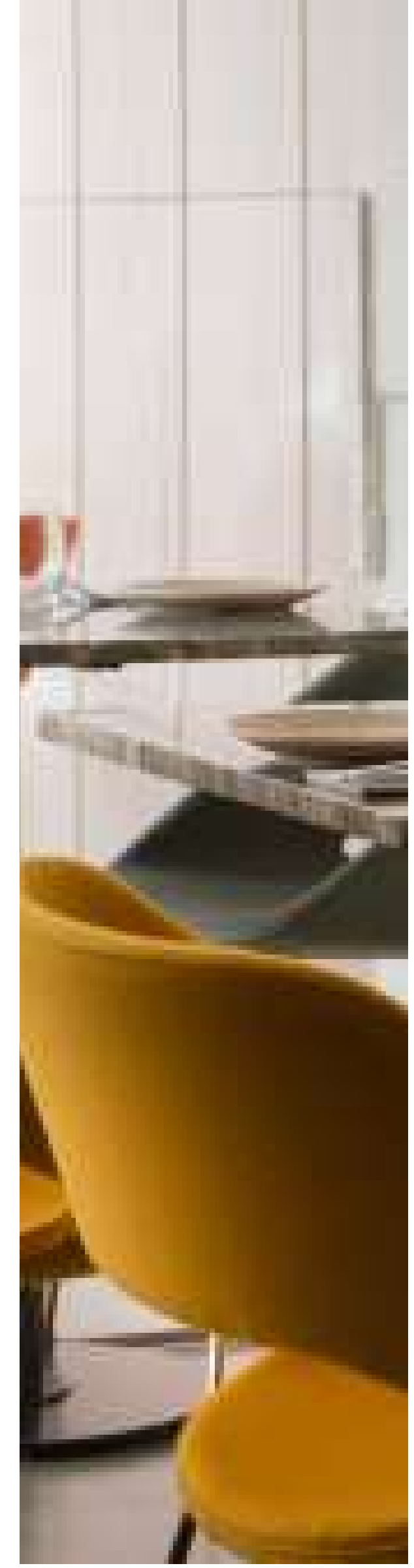
Reliability indicator for each customer in TheForkManager

Collecting credit card details, or prepayment at the time of booking

An awareness campaign highlighting the consequences of no-shows

*"My restaurant is a small family-run business, with 20 employees... I had been hearing about TheFork for a while, so I decided to give it a try. I decided to pay for the software subscription so I could benefit from more features; I appreciate the fact that I can use free booking widgets on my website and my social media pages, it offsets the cost of the booking processing fees for customers who have booked through TheFork."*

Marie-Pier Boelen  
La Chaumière à Honfleur



## BIOGRAPHY ALMIR AMBESKOVIC, CEO THEFORK

Prior to being appointed as CEO, Almir was Vice President Sales and Marketing for TheFork, a role in which he was responsible for the growth of the business in all the countries within twenty-two markets where TheFork operates. Almir has directly led several countries as general manager at TheFork since 2015. He began his career with TheFork in 2014 as Italy Country Manager following the acquisition by Tripadvisor of RestOpolis, an online restaurants reservation startup he founded and led since 2011.

Born in Sarajevo in 1977, Almir began his career as a consultant and entrepreneur in the IT sector. First as start-up entrepreneur founding three companies, then as top manager of a digital scale-up as TheFork, Almir has always been active as a mentor for innovation in Italy. In 2012, Almir created and hosted the first Italian television program on start-ups and innovation. He was also vice president of the group of young entrepreneurs of Assolombarda, with responsibilities in marketing and startups, for six years until 2016.





# CONTACTS

## PRESS AGENCY

To be updated locally

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