

Manola, Maria; Koufadakis, Stylianos X.

## Article

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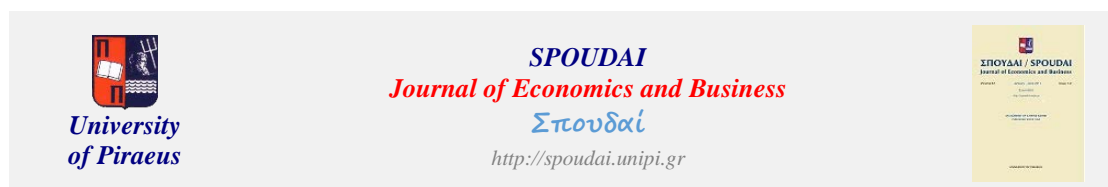
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## **The Gastronomy as an Art and its Role in the Local Economic Development of a Tourism Destination: A Literature Review**

Maria Manola<sup>a</sup>, Stylianos X. Koufadakis<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>*University of West Attica, Department of Tourism Management, Athens, Greece.  
Email: marmanola60@gmail.com*

<sup>b</sup>*University of West Attica, Department of Tourism Management, Athens, Greece.  
Email: stelios@ecom.gr*

### **Abstract**

The purpose of this paper is to review recent research on the art of gastronomy and its contribution to local economic development as a result of the upgrading of gastronomic tourism.

Hospitality and the culinary arts undoubtedly play a major role in influencing the experience of gastro-tourists who seek to enjoy unique taste sensations through the alternative gastronomic choices that are constantly being created globally.

Gastronomy is not only the art of cooking and good eating; it has also been argued that is a complex experience that combines food with the cultural heritage of a tourist destination.

Although there is a growing body of literature that recognizes the importance of tourism, it remains a major challenge to identify the contribution gastronomic tourism makes to economic development.

Our study systematically reviews all the relevant recent literature on this topic, offering additional arguments for how the art of gastronomy can be utilized as a means of bolstering the economic prosperity of a host country.

**JEL Classification:** M1; L80; O1.

**Keywords:** Gastronomic art; tourism; economic development

### **1. Introduction**

There is wide recognition of tourism as one of the most important sectors of economic activity worldwide. For tourism to be an integrated “product”, it combines several business activities that interact, mingle and complement each other<sup>1</sup>, in both the domestic and international environment.

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<sup>1</sup> Indicatively, tourist activity creates, maintains and develops cooperation among businesses that deal with a wide range of production, trade and cultural activities, including for instance tourist and product transportation, accommodation services, food and beverage services, guided tour services, entertainment services, etc. This multiplier effect of tourism on other economic activities is considered to produce the dynamics needed for the economic development of the countries or areas which invest in it.

Among these business activities, gastronomy as a sector seeks to attract a significant share of global attention, as the number of travelers who seek to enjoy different and special culinary experiences has been increasing over time. Large numbers of “gastro-tourists” cross the flavour boundaries of their native country and travel to every possible part of the planet to discover new flavors and to relish the local gastronomy, while at the same time, delve further into the history and traditions of their destination.

There are several definitions and interpretations that attempt to tease out the relations between food and tourism, their content and the relevant concepts. A remarkable study that examines the exact definition of the term “food tourism”, is that by Elis et al. (2018), in which the authors –among other things– appraise and review any concepts, themes, and aspects relevant to food tourism. In this specific piece of research, the terms “culinary tourism”, “food tourism” and “gastronomic tourism” are disaggregated and distinguished from each other, even though in many studies these particular terms are presented as being identical or used interchangeably. The authors clarify that “gastronomic tourism” concerns “the place of food in the culture of the host”, while the term “culinary tourism” reveals the intrinsic association between food and culture. However, the term “food tourism” is defined as a “physical experience, motivated by the desire to engage with local foods.”

This paper is structured into three parts. In the first, gastronomic tourism is analyzed as a distinctive travel experience. In the second, a systematic approach to the art of gastronomy and its historical dimension is developed. Through this historical analysis, we see how ancient civilizations used cooking as a way to spread their own culture. Searching for the roots of the word “gastronomy”, we discover who the pioneers were in the utilization of cooking as a bridge between nations.

By taking readers on a gastronomic tour, the authors of this study focus on diners’ desires for new experiences and the demonstration of local cuisine. The market in its current form, as we shall see, is capable of attracting tourists from many countries worldwide and broadens our gastronomic heritage.

The third part of this study aims to systematically review the relationship between gastronomy and economic development, at least, insofar as it has been reflected in the most recent literature.

## **2. Gastronomic Tourism**

Gastronomic tourism can be compared to a mirror through which we can see the history, people and local culture of the gastronomic destination. Alternatively, it can be regarded as the acquisition of experiences through food tourism, the acquisition of knowledge about, and consumption of food and beverages from, a specific place, which consequently leads to a better understanding of local customs and aspects of that place’s culture.

Whenever we refer to gastronomic tourism, in fact, we refer to a sub-category of cultural tourism, since gastronomy is considered to be an expression of culture. The desire of gastro-tourists to visit a food destination is motivated by their curiosity and their desire to explore the ingredients used by a culture that is new to them, combined with the memorable food experiences they intend to acquire.

Tourists' desires to experience local tastes at destinations and at their accommodation, have laid the ground for the development of gastronomic tourism.

As noted by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (2017), the continually increasing trend for gastronomic tourism is not only a result of the basic nutritional needs of tourists

which are met during a journey, but can also be an integral part of the cultural heritage of each destination, as well as a substantial factor that helps differentiate tourist destinations from the viewpoint of the tourism marketing.

Writing earlier than UNWTO, Hall and Sharples (2003) had already shone attention on the distinction between tourists who consume food “as part of their travel experience” and those food tourists who combined specific activities and behaviors with the taste sensations that a destination has to offer. Such activities typically involve visits to gastronomy festivals, attendance at gastronomy courses (i.e. cooking classes), visits to food producers (i.e. farmers, wineries, etc.), or to local food markets, or enjoying the special dishes served by restaurants, or participation in gourmet food shopping, going on food tours, etc. (Hall and Sharples, 2003; Sormaz, et al., 2016).

In addition, gastronomy activities (such as gastronomy festivals, training courses, visits to food-related museums, etc.), organized to protect and promote the gastronomic values of a region play an important role in the marketing of food destinations.

Taking into consideration the UNWTO’s Survey on Gastronomy Tourism (2016), gastronomy was found to account for a significant part of tourism development, based on the answers from the UNWTO’s member respondents in 29 countries provided between June and September 2016. At the same time, research done by the World Food Travel Association (WFTA), which was conducted in 2015, asserts that 93% of travelers nowadays can be considered to be “food travelers” on condition that during the last twelve months they have taken part in gastronomic experiences other than dining out. In fact, according to the WFTA (2015), going on gastronomic quests to various parts of the world in order to discover new taste experiences, allows us to call this category of travelers “*explorers*”.

The existence of tourists whose exclusive motivation for traveling is to engage in activities of gastronomic interest has resulted in equivalent facilities being developed by various organizations (such as thematic tour operators, specialized hotels, etc.), which ensure that, through the services they offer, they can cater for the increasing demand for gastronomic journeys. Some forms of tourism, such as wellness tourism or agritourism, promote engagement with aspects of gastronomy (such as diet cuisine, promoting healthy eating or cultivating local products). In this way, the importance of gastronomy to tourism is twofold: (a) it invariably improves the travel experience of all tourists and (b) further strengthens the local economy.

If one attempts to sketch a relatively generally acceptable profile for gastro-tourists, one soon runs into difficulties given that there will typically be major differences in the profiles of food tourists, depending on the geographical region the destination is located in within the host countries, or even the time when the gastronomic journey took place (URBACT, 2014).

Cañizares and Guzmán (2012) claim that there is nothing which clearly captures the profiles or the actual characteristics of gastro-tourists, noting that the findings of other authors demonstrate there are similarities in the characteristics of culinary travelers. Nevertheless, the authors suggest that this specific category of travelers has given rise to a new market in terms of marketing strategies.

As an activity, gastronomy is also considered by Cañizares and Guzmán (2012) as a continuous sequence in a travel experience, since a travel destination creates an integrated product that includes cultural treasures, particularities of local tastes, and other local experiences that not only characterize it, but also differentiate it from other destinations.

### 3. A Brief History of Gastronomy and Art of Restaurateuring

According to anthropologists, there is no doubt that human evolution tied into how human beings used to hunt for and collect their food, as well as with the techniques used to prepare the ingredients or the way in which they cooked them (Albala, 2013). It is assumed that prehistoric civilizations nourished themselves in multifarious ways, as far as the nutritional value of their foods was concerned, and that their diets contained meat, fish, seeds, greens or even insects.

Functional versatility, which was a result of the utilization of the first tools ever used (approximately 2.5-1.5 million years ago), enabled our prehistoric ancestors (*Homo habilis*) to become more efficient at hunting, but also more effective at agricultural tasks and in the preparation of food (Ungar et al., 2006).

The use of fire by the *Homo erectus* approximately 1.8 million to 300,000 years ago seems to have provided the human species with the ability to cook food (Wrangham, 2009) and to give a new dynamic to the nutritional evolution of the species.

Archeological research has shown that the Neanderthals (who lived about 30,000 years ago in Europe and in Near East) knew how to cook using fire (Henry, 2017).

The transition to agriculture during the First Agricultural Revolution (also known as the Neolithic Revolution) between 10,000 and 2,000 years ago, gave a new impetus to the cultural evolution of mankind. Nomadic tribes started creating the first human societies, and also began cultivating plants and domesticating animals systematically. Inevitably, these changes improved their nutritional habits, giving access to a greater variety of flavors than ever before (Weisdorf, 2005).

It is claimed that the first recorded recipes come from the period 4000-3000 years BC and they came from ancient Sumerians in the Mesopotamia region (Bottero, 2011).

Around 3100 BC, the River Nile and the fertile Egyptian soil gave the ancient Egyptians the chance to occupy themselves intensively with the cultivation of plants, as well as with profitable farming. Their diet was rich and included fruit, vegetables, fish, meat, poultry, bread, legumes, while spices, wine, and beer were also integral to their diet.

Dalby (1997) argues that gastronomy was part of the identity of ancient Greek civilization. Greek gastronomy is, in fact, considered to be the direct ancestor of Roman gastronomy which followed later. Wheat, barley and lentils, seem to be usual ingredients of a classic ancient Greek meal, while fish, vegetables, eggs, cheese, meat (less frequently), sweets and wine (“*oinos*”), were among the nutritional habits of the ancient Greeks.

It is not surprising to researchers that etymologically the word “gastronomy” derives from the ancient Greek words “*gastir*” (stomach) and “*nomos*” (law), and its meaning is “the art or law of regulating the stomach”. The word gastronomy in a generic sense includes the concept of “food knowledge”, while at the same time it is considered both as the science of cooking and as the science of eating.

It has been argued that the word “gastronomie” appeared in France for the first time (Henaut and Mitchell, 2018) with the development of the first restaurants in Paris, in the title of a poem by Joseph de Berchoux written in 1801, while it should be noted that the word was accorded formal recognition by the French Academy in 1835 when it was added to its dictionary (Moira et al., 2015).

Despite all that, the contribution of various ancient Greek writers should not be overlooked when examining gastronomic history. The surviving pieces of their works provide the first references to the art of gastronomy. For instance, in the poem “Hedypatheia” by the ancient Greek poet and philosopher Arcestratus, who came either from Gela or Syracuse (who is often mentioned as the “father of gastronomy”) there are gastronomic references in the form of cooking instructions. According to Frost et al. (2016), during the 4th century BC, as Arcestratus was traveling through the regions of the Mediterranean with the desire and the curiosity to discover the best food and beverages, he left many references to food as a legacy (i.e. journey diaries), while many consider him to be the founder of gastronomic tourism because of these travels.

Later, the fifteen-volume surviving work “Deipnosophistae” by the ancient Greek Athenaeus (who originally came from the city Naucratis in Egypt), written around the 3-4 century BC, is thought to be an extremely rich resource replete in gastronomic references.

During the Roman Empire which lasted from 27 BC to 467 AD, ancient Roman cuisine, as one can easily understand, was influenced over the course of the centuries by various civilizations (Greek for instance) which were part of its conquests, or which neighbored its geographical borders.

Descriptions of Roman gastronomy usually make reference to the works of Marcus Gavius Apicius, who is said to have lived in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. Hostels in ancient Rome appear to have played the role of taverns as well, where most travelers or people of low status would have had their meals. In the geographical region of Rome, there used to be small shops, called “popinae”, in which mostly plebeians or passing travelers could enjoy simple food with wine (Poter, 2008).

Kiefer (2002) reminds us that the roots of modern restaurants are thought to be the “taverns”, the “inns” or the “traiteurs” of the past.

The earliest forms of restaurants are claimed to originate from China (around 1127-1279 AD) and in fact to have a form similar to the one they have today (Akdeniz, 2019). Through a menu of food, they offered plenty of choices of dishes and tastes for diners to enjoy.

Later on, the history of gastronomy goes from the Middle Ages and the Italian Renaissance to the era of the evolution of the art of cooking in France, the country popularly considered to have the only organized gastronomic system in the whole world. According to gastronomic history, the period after the Revolution of 1789 in France provided the opportunity for the first food businesses to be created under the mantle of the restaurant industry. In fact, the greatest change that has ever occurred in the restaurant world took place only after the 18th century when urbanization and the transition to the modern economy occurred. It was after the Fall of Bastille when the King’s chefs spread all over Paris and the first restaurants started opening (Henaut and Mitchell, 2018).

Contrariwise, Meyzie (2010) and Aron (1973) indicate, though, that the idea of restaurants pre-existed the French Revolution and the success of the Revolution only accelerated their expansion. One example of this expansion quoted by Beauge (2012) is the story of a butcher named Pierre Louis Duval who in 1856 had the idea of offering a single dish of meat and bouillon to the workers at the food market “Les Halles”. This idea of serving savory dishes resulted in the establishment of 250 Bouillons restaurants by 1900.

In the first Parisian restaurants, anyone could order bouillon at a fixed price, while later a businessman – restaurateur named Boulanger also decided to include a kind of stew on the menu of the bouillons (Kiefer, 2002). Yet another view which has been advanced is that the first good restaurants opened in 1765 in Paris and other known cities in France (Akdeniz,

2019). In 1770 the first printed menu appeared in French restaurants and the choice of new dishes being offered to diners increased as new foods became available on the market.

Nowadays, there can be little doubt that the gastronomic art promoted by modern restaurants contributes to the economic development of tourist destinations and affects the socio-cultural environment of a host tourism destination thanks to its traditional specialties.

But for a restaurant to be able to maintain its hold on the market and have plenty of customers, it needs to stand out and to have developed modern technologies. As Koutroumanis (2011) mentions, restaurants took a long time to adapt to technological progress, so as not to negatively impact their already low profit margins. Despite that, the intensely competitive environment in the catering sector has led restaurants to adopt many technological applications, to effectively deal with various managerial challenges, as well as to improve their production process and the service offered to their diners.

#### 4. Gastronomic Art and Economic Development

Gastro-tourism now is a key element over the overall travel experience and therefore many academic studies have begun to research its relationship with economic development.

The fact that the tourism sector makes an influential contribution to the global economy is evidenced by several empirical studies. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council<sup>2</sup> (2019) both the assumption that 10.4% of the global GDP is the result of tourist activities and the fact that 10% of employment worldwide (with 319 million jobs) comes from the tourism industry, show the continuing positive progress the tourism sector has been making over the years.

At the same time, several studies have recognized the effect of the tourism sector on the economic growth of developed and developing countries. For example, Tugcu (2014) probed the relationship between tourism and economic growth using two indicative methodologies: those that examine the Granger causality between growth and tourism by using time-series data and those that use cross-section or panel data in their studies. Tugcu (2014) argues that the results of the studies designed to ascertain the *tourism-led growth hypothesis* show some differentiation because of the use of the two methodologies mentioned before. More specifically, some studies<sup>3</sup> which used time-series analysis find evidence supporting the existence of the growth hypothesis (tourism activity leads to economic growth), while some others (Lee and Chien, 2008; Kim, et al., 2006; and Dritsakis, 2004), assumed that there is bidirectional causality between economic growth and tourism activity (the so-called “*feedback hypothesis*”). Additionally, Tugcu (2014) reviewed the findings of Payne and Mervar (2010), Tang and Jang (2009), Ozturk and Acaravci (2009) and Oh (2005), according to which the time-series analysis led to conclusions that tourism is a result of economic growth (the “*conservation hypothesis*”), or that there is no relationship between the two investigated variables (the “*neutrality hypothesis*”).

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<sup>2</sup> World Travel and Tourism Council: Travel and Tourism Economic Impact 2019 (March 2019).

<sup>3</sup> Tugcu (2014) refers to the studies of Tang and Tan (2013), Tang and Abosedra (2012), Belloumi (2010), Akinboade and Braimoh (2010), Chen and Chiou-Wei (2009), Brida, et al. (2008), Balaguer and Cantavella-Jorda (2002), Gunduz and Hatemi-J. (2005), and Durbarry (2002).

At the same time, though, the relationship between economic development and tourism is not yet fully understood, as various academic efforts that were based on cross-section or panel data, exhibited mixed results on the relationship between the two<sup>4</sup>.

Using panel series data of the variables that measure the annual actual growth in GDP per capita, international tourism receipts and international tourism expenditures (all in US\$) between 1998-2011 for 21 Mediterranean countries, Tugcu (2014) reached different, controversial results. Specifically, he concluded that the Granger causality between economic development and the tourism sector has country and indicator-specific characteristics, with no general agreement on the directionality of the aforementioned relationship.

Working from the assumption that the gastronomy of a region is part of its wider cultural heritage (Gálvez et al., 2017; Scarpato, 2002), one research category has focused on examining whether culinary tourism is one of the primary factors taken into account when deciding what tourist destination to choose.

Privitera et al. (2018) claim that within the context of globalization, the experience of a tourist destination goes even more deeper when there is contact with the local cuisine, while they consider that gastronomic experiences add value to tourist activities overall.

The finding of a significant correlation between local gastronomy and a tourist visit would support the theory of economic development of those gastronomic destinations. Actually, as Gálvez et al. (2017) note, the category of tourists who show interest in local gastronomy, tend to be able to spend more money on the tourist destinations they visit.

For example, looking at the period October-November of 2009 Cañizares and Guzmán (2012) explored the profile of tourists who visited Córdoba, Spain, in connection with their motivations for visiting that place. Among the answers they collected from 206 visitors using questionnaires, the authors reached the conclusion that the most powerful attractant for tourists (69.3%) visiting Córdoba, was its cultural heritage (monuments and museums). The region's Andalusian cuisine was found to be the second most important reason for visiting Córdoba (for 24.4% of respondents).

A subsequent study by Gálvez et al. (2017) looking at the period from February to July 2016 for the city of Cuenca in Ecuador, revealed that only 38.4% of 414 American tourists, whose reasons for visiting this region of Latin America were investigated, were motivated by its gastronomic individuality. Generally, the authors recognized that North Americans who chose Cuenca as a tourist destination, showed differing attitudes regarding the gastronomic experiences the place had to offer, and not an unambiguous interest that focused on matters of culinary interest. Nevertheless, Gálvez et al. (2017), established that the category of American gastro-tourists to Cuenca, spent on average more money (\$63.40) on their vacation each day compared to other tourist categories who stated that their gastronomic interest in the region was at a lower level (average daily expenditure \$52.50). The authors then combined this specific finding with the assumption that culinary tourism makes a positive contribution to the socio-economic value of the holiday destination, bolstering the economic impact, which arises from the influx of foreign currency, on domestic salaries, on employment and on the wider economic activity of tourist regions.

Dougherty et al. (2013) recognize that increasing demand for local products creates economic opportunities in a series of associated business activities in the local food tourism network (such as farmers, food producers, restaurateurs, etc.), which cooperate in the creation, trade,

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<sup>4</sup> Tugcu (2014) mentions indicatively: Asian (2013), Falk (2010), Holzner (2011), Lee and Brahmašreṇe (2013), Lee and Chang (2008), Po and Huang (2008), Proença and Soukiazis (2008), Sequeira and Campos (2005), Sequeira and Nunes (2008).



and consumption processes for the products of their host communities. According to the authors the synergies that arise from the above activities create economic advantages for the local community, both from the viewpoint of higher prices for local products (because of increased demand for them) and resultant market expansion (because of the corresponding marketing strategies for the local food market). As Dougherty et al. (2013) mention, 73% of tourists visiting the Crawford and Vernon counties region of Wisconsin (US), which were included in their geographical study, were strongly motivated to purchase local products, while the authors also found that the largest part of daily expenditure related to the purchase of local foods (\$56 being spent on average on food per visit).

At the same time, the authors paid attention to the growth of interpersonal relationships (so-called “social capital”) in a tourist region and their correlation to local economic development. Synergies which developed among local food enterprises strengthen commercial relations between them for the benefit of the tourist region, if one takes into account that, according to the study, not only did 58% of the sample of farmers work together with local organizations to promote their products, but also 36% of the sample of restaurateurs purchased products from local farmers.

Since food tourism is part of the cultural heritage of a place, supporting local cuisine using marketing strategies (i.e. food festivals, restaurant weeks, fairs, etc.) helps extend the length of time tourists stay and also bolsters the consumption of local products, and has a multiplier effect on the economic development of the host community (Chigozie, 2015; Glasgow, 2015). As Williams et al. (2014) and Hall et al. (2003) report, tourism destinations have gradually been redefined as branding destinations rather than traditional geographic destinations, with food as the basic criterion used by gastro-tourists in choosing a destination.

Employing arguments in a similar vein, Sims (2009) asserts that in the competitive environment of the tourist market, the development of proper products and services, which differentiate tourism destinations from each other, is necessary. Local foods can be an important source for marketing and promotional activities in efforts to enhance the local economy, through the multiplier effect.

Privitera et al. (2018) argue that the effective combination of a landscape’s natural beauty and a specific local cuisine can result in a winning marketing strategy for a region’s tourism development. Exploring culinary tourism and its effects in the regions of Sicily (Italy) and Sibiu (Romania) they stressed -among other things- the importance of gastronomic cuisine among the basic motivations for visitors choosing to come to these region, while also noting that local gastronomy can be a particularly influential factor affecting a tourist’s choice of destination. To that end, the local government of Sibiu (Romania) decided to take an approach different to traditional tourism marketing one and started promoting the authenticity of local products and the uniqueness of its local food heritage more (Privitera et al., 2018). In their comprehensive analysis, authors concluded that gastronomy plays an influential role in this new promotional approach.

Some years prior to that, Sims (2009) had identified an association between the local food experience and the tourism destination under the umbrella of sustainable tourism. Taking into account the fact that sustainable tourism is considered to be a way of traveling and exploring a destination and ought to reflect the necessary degree of respect towards the local environment, residents and local culture, Sims (2009) claimed that food is an inseparable part of tourism of this kind. She also considered that taste experiences enjoyed by visitors in a tourism region bolster the sense of authenticity, which afterward boost the sustainable tourism of a particular destination.

The necessity of redefining an ordinary tourism destination as a place that attracts tourists by bolstering local branding has been consistently argued by Hall (2012), who points out that economic growth can come from implementing integrated strategies at both regional and national level.

In turn Cavicchi and Stancova (2016) have collated a series of food-led strategies that are deemed necessary to stimulate regional economic development in EU countries.

Other interesting studies have elevated tourism to the role of “creative experience” (Martins, 2016; Richards, 1999, among others). However, it should be noted in advance, that we cannot overlook the fact that in the past gastronomy was not clearly identified as a creative industry. As Pederson (2012) notes, the definition of an industry as a creative one was mostly based on its creative output, which means the outcome of its production process. But this specific approach would not appear to attribute vital importance to the process leading up to the creative outcome. At the same time, the perception that autonomy and freedom of expression are limited when there are rules that impede creativity prevented gastronomy being classified among the creative occupations (Florida, 2003).

Despite all that, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) (2008) have included gastronomy among the activities which creative sites (those regions that encourage “the arts and cultural heritage, the media and entertainment industries, and the creative business-to-business services”) can promote creatively. UNCTAD asserts that the main objective of creative city networks is to support and foster the local economy and social development through the reinforcement of creative industries.

While cultural tourism is an “umbrella concept” that involves various sectors of economic activity -among which one finds gastronomy tourism as well- (Martins, 2016), we can start to sketch the relationship between gastronomy and creativity.

Answering the question of whether gastronomy is an art form, Myhrvold (2011) is in no doubt, since, like other arts, food influences the mind and the behavior of people, offering aesthetic experiences. In this direction, particular importance should be attached to the report from the European Parliament (2014) in which the significance of gastronomy and cooking is stressed, which are “an increasingly important form of artistic and cultural expression”.

## **5. Conclusions**

In a fast-changing competitive and overcrowded tourism environment, there is no doubt that modern tourists have greater buying power than ever before, more alternatives when it comes to travel choices, and more time available to dedicate to a travel destination, which can satisfy their curiosity, tastes, and expectations. A basic motivation for this new category of tourists, who are called gastro-tourists, is travel to destinations that can stimulate personal aesthetic and gastronomic pleasures, in contrast to passive travel experiences that mass tourism usually offers.

The gastronomic experience expected to emerge from a tourist destination is considered to be an integral part of the criteria employed by sophisticated gastro-tourists in making their choice as well as an important element that can differentiate destinations from each other in terms of their marketing strategies. More specifically, a region’s gastronomic individuality is tied into its economic growth and forms a distinctive niche market segment for government policymakers who deal with tourist development. Gastronomic tourism has been a constantly expanding niche market over recent years, with new regions being added to the list of gastronomy destinations all the time.

Gastronomy, as a unique tourism product, can help a destination differentiate itself from others and give it special importance and thematic potential. Recognizing the gastronomic experience that a tourist destination offers, can also bolster the natural and cultural assets that tourist destination has to offer.

This paper has highlighted the importance of gastronomy art on the economic development of a tourism destination. Our practical contribution within this area has been to highlight how tourism supports the growth and development of travel destinations.

To conclude, the promotion of gastronomic art through targeted initiatives can contribute to the economic development of a geographical area and the upgrading of its entire tourist product.

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