

ẢNH HƯỞNG CỦA CẨM NANG HƯỚNG DẪN ẨM THỰC ĐỐI VỚI KHÁCH DU LỊCH

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TÓM TẮT

Bài báo nhằm phác thảo các dấu mốc chính, xác định sự phát triển nhanh chóng của du lịch ẩm thực kể từ khi xuất hiện các hướng dẫn ẩm thực như Cẩm nang Michelin từ các khía cạnh: động lực du lịch, nhận thức của du khách về chất lượng điểm đến và sự chuyển đổi thành thủ đô ẩm thực cũng như tác động của “Hiệu ứng Michelin” đối với khách du lịch, điểm đến và ngành du lịch. Trên cơ sở các phân tích, nghiên cứu đưa ra kết luận ban đầu về các xu hướng mới nổi và các hướng nghiên cứu trong tương lai liên quan đến du lịch ẩm thực như: tăng cường quan hệ hợp tác giữa các đại lý du lịch và các bên liên quan, quan hệ giá trị giữa tác động của các công nghệ mới và việc bảo vệ di sản.

Từ khóa: *cẩm nang ẩm thực, du lịch, động lực du lịch, kinh nghiệm, thủ đô ẩm thực.*

IMPACT OF GASTRONOMIC GUIDEBOOKS ON TOURISTS

ABSTRACT

This paper carried out research of global sources to outline the main themes that define the rapid evolution of the gastro-tourist since the appearance of gastronomic guides such as the Michelin Guide: their motivations, perception of the quality of the destination, and the transformation of their culinary capital, as well as the impact of the “Michelin Effect” on the tourist, the destination and the tourism industry. To conclude, emerging trends and future lines of research in gastronomic tourism are summarised, such as the enhancement of partnerships between agents and stakeholders, the impact of new technologies, and the protection of heritage as an axis of value.

Keywords: *culinary capital, experience, gastronomic guides, tourism, tourist motivations.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Gastronomy, heritage and cuisine are intrinsically linked to the region in which they reside and develop (Meneguel et al., 2019). The tourist eagerness to discover that which is autochthonous and authentic and represents

an opportunity for cultural investment has turned gastronomy into one of the most important motivations in the travel approach, receiving the consumption of gastronomic heritage within the tourist activity its own denomination: gastro-tourism.

Gastronomic tourism (or gastro-tourism) is a type of activity characterized by the visitor experience linked to food-related products and activities, such as authentic, traditional, and/or innovative culinary experiences as described by the UNWTO (2019). Put the emphasis on the term experience, gastronomic experiences are increasingly becoming important drivers of tourism flows worldwide, as they allow travelers to become more familiar with the local culture and traditions of the places visited (Mariani & Bresciani, 2022). Like cultural tourism, led by the boom in heritage interest (Hewison, 2023) since the 1980s, interest in gastronomy has grown and become a massive phenomenon, both from a social and media point of view (Fusté Forné, 2017), and tourism benefits from the emerging cultural motivations linked to the gastronomy of tourists.

Nowadays, the consolidation of figures such as great chefs or restaurant concepts finds a niche in the high exhibitions of culture, becoming at the same time tourist attractions (Daries et al., 2018; Forgas Serra, 2019; Fusté Forné, 2017; Lin et al., 2022). These phenomena would not be possible without the appearance of tourist-gastronomic guides, which since the beginning of the 20th century have focused on providing knowledge to an increasingly larger public, participate and have actively participated in the construction of the image of tourist destinations of which we are still heirs (Karpik, 2000). In addition, the categorization of restaurants using stars or other symbols based on rigorous and professional criticism helps to position these establishments as worthy of living their experience, detouring, or traveling expressly to visit them (History of the Michelin Guide, n.d.). In short, the Michelin star system is a recognition based on the outcome and applicable management systems to improve the process that results in more satisfied customers (Escalante Álamo, 2022).

In the current academic landscape, theses such as that of Dr. Daries-Ramón (2018) explore the relational dynamics of high-level gastronomy, giving rise to establishing relationships between gastronomic evolution and economic, territorial, and social impact: in other words, how the consolidation of the gastronomic landscape in times of booming dichotomy of innovation in techniques for regenerating gastronomic heritage has also served to drive a wave of experiential tourism and motivated by discovering the landscape behind the culinary expression of a destination. The movement associated with gastronomic guides puts cities, gastronomies, and characters on the map (Bocos-Mirabella, 2022; Escalante Álamo, 2022; Meneguel et al., 2019) and fine dining restaurants reactivate the motivation to travel for the gastronomic, excellent and surprising, giving rise to new products and dynamics of the tourist's relationship with the territory.

The brief reviews above are intended to be an initial exploration of the terminology associated with culinary tourism from the impact that guides such as Michelin have had since their emergence. The purpose of this research is to synthesize the core concepts of culinary tourism, providing an outline of important milestones for culinary tourism from the perspective of the impact of the Michelin Effect as well as the trends of this touristic type in the future. The article aims to answer the question of the location and importance of culinary tourism on the tourism map as well as the attraction of this type to researchers around the world.

2. RECURRENT CONCEPTS IN THE LITERATURE

This literature review starts from an exploration of the contents located in platforms such as Google Scholar, Scopus, and ScienceDirect under the conceptual umbrella of gastronomic tourism and gastronomic guide, and some of the main emerging themes in academia include

tourists' motivations, culinary capital, and Michelin effect. Additionally, non-indexed sources (doctoral dissertations and master's theses) in the field of study are considered to expand the scope of knowledge and conclusions in the field.

The search reveals that work on synthesizing the impact of guidebooks on gastronomic tourism is relatively scarce, especially if this impact is focused on the tourist and the evolution of his or her motivations and culinary capital. In contrast, the references linked to the study of gastronomy as a tourist modality are numerous and have expanded over the years, marking their beginnings in the 1980s and progressing abundantly up to the present day. However, the first instances of documents created explicitly for tourism and its complements (in the case of the study, restaurants and other gastronomic services) can be found before 1900, as is the case of the Michelin Guide itself. The guide of the new century was a pioneer in the drafting of the traveler's handbook, including everything necessary to facilitate their travels as well as recommendations for accommodation and restaurants (Csergo, 2011; Bocos-Mirabella, 2022; History of the Michelin Guide, n. d.). This approach to new traveler segments has triggered the effort of several authors to study the Michelin effect, which in the framework of sociology and economics reports important impacts within the tourism sector.

2.1. Motivations of gastronomic tourists

The exploration of the cuisine specific to tourist destinations has seen an increase in interest on the part of tourists in recent years (Forgas, 2019) and has established itself as an essential (if not primary) travel motivation (López-Guzmán et al., 2012). With the emergence of guidebooks, new markets have been given support to explore the world's tourist destinations with a necessary complementary component: restaurant stops

of interest. Their evolution has allowed the motivations of tourists to focus also from the gastronomic point of view thanks to the enhancement of restaurants and figures for their culinary excellence and responsible action with the heritage.

Currently, gastronomic motivation can be as much related to the fact of going to eat at a Michelin-star restaurant as to taste regional products and elaborations in specialized premises (restaurants, markets and fairs) (Forgas Serra, 2019) and the gastronomic tourist is one who during his trip seeks to taste the local or traditional gastronomy of the destination, although certain customer segments are pushed by different motivations. These affect the importance that the gastronomic product has for them as an attraction factor (Daries, 2018) especially if it is about fine dining restaurants. In their empirical study, Bang et al. (2022) relate the Michelin effect in terms of social value: a Michelin-starred restaurant is not only a place where food is served and the customer eats, but also a place to socialize and purchase luxury products and experiences is related to the customers' desire to demonstrate their social status. Therefore, they conclude that social value motivation can be a strong stimulus for customers to visit Michelin-starred restaurants.

2.2. Tourist culinary capital

Part of the strategic direction of Michelin-starred restaurants is to respond to the needs of customer profiles such as gastronomes/gourmets or foodies with a high level of culinary capital. Cultural capital is the ability of an individual to recognize and enjoy cultural elements considered of great value by members of society and is inherited, acquired, and accumulated through continuous socialization (Bourdieu, 1979). The emergence of the first gastronomic guides around the 1920s in Europe invites tourists to "become gourmets" and offer an introduction to gastronomic provinces and

their food and culinary traditions (Csergo, 2011), expanding their culinary capital. Restaurants can be considered as providers of cultural elements sharing positions with other segments of the cultural industry (Meneguel et al., 2019). Thus, as the authors deduce, even if the activities undertaken by gastronomic tourists are not the main motivation for the trip, they have the potential to communicate through broader experiences cultural impressions, and values that at the individual level enrich the capital acquired through tourism.

People with a high level of culinary capital are passionate about eating, experiencing, and learning about food (Lee et al., 2022). Culinary knowledge occupies the largest proportion of culinary capital components. The netnographic study by Lee et al. revealed that the culinary knowledge of Michelin restaurant consumers was mainly observed in the knowledge of references to menu concepts, wine lists, food ingredients, cooking methods, and chef. But in Nowak's (2013) assessment, the true mark of distinction, and therefore the most deserving of culinary capital, is “openness” to the food and cuisine regardless of price.

2.3. Perception of the gastronomic quality of the destination

As established in previous sections, tourist guides have played an important role in the development of the creation of the image of tourist destinations as they are known: the attributes and icons with which they are defined form part of the popular imagination today. But the image of a tourist destination is also composed of subjective perceptions of those unusual or even unique attributes, attractions or services of destinations (Culler et al., 1981; Lin et al., 2022) that escape the more generic descriptions for tourism. Among them, the cuisine of a destination and iconic food, which through its sensory experientiality reinforces the effect of perceived value on the intention to repeat the

experience (Anton Martin et al., 2021) and is more linked to memory, generating a more intense bond with the tourist. A cuisine that is attractive for its taste and quality can contribute to improving the tourism product (Hjalager et al., 2000) and as advocated by Castillo-Manzano et al. (2021), once gastronomic excellence has been achieved either through Michelin stars or a very deep legacy linked to gastronomic tradition, the development of marketing campaigns based on excellence to promote the image and brand of a destination is justified.

The quality of the destination can be linked to factors such as the properties of the indigenous products, the local living environment, and the design and preparation of the offer, product or experience, but for the tourist, the tool with which to discriminate the value of the gastronomic offer is usually the Michelin guide (Daries et al., 2018). In fact, it is the case in Spain that the cities with the most Michelin-starred restaurants also have the highest number of restaurants and bars without any star whose quality is recognized in the Michelin guide itself (Castillo-Manzano et al., 2021). In some cases, as Anton Martin (2021) proves, the value of the dining destination is reflected in how visitors evaluate the relationship between perceived quality and the sacrifice made for the dining experience at the destination. When consumers dine at a Michelin-starred restaurant, the risk they perceive is mainly related to the money and time invested (Chiang & Guo, 2021) and in these cases, the sensory experience is a decisive factor since a pleasant experience is highly related to a perception of higher quality and a positive intention to repeat and recommend (Oppermann, 2000).

2.4. Michelin effect on tourism

The Michelin Guide is recognized as a reference for consumers who intend to visit and dine in a fine dining establishment (Rita et al., 2023). Both the “tourist” version of the

guide (1909 – 1933), which focused on “cultural objects”, and the “gastronomic” version (1934 – 1998), which focused on restaurants and cultural products, established a quality market, despite their different methods (Karpik, 2000). Thus, with the Michelin Guide, cuisine became a reason for pilgrimage (Bocos-Mirabella, 2022; Csergo, 2011) and the gastronomic criticism accompanying the traced routes established a discourse with which to “read” cuisine for an increasingly wider public (Bocos-Mirabella, 2022). This creation of gastronomic discourse begins as a marketing strategy but in turn allows us to identify the gastronomic products associated with a given region, the geography of stores and restaurants, and food cultures and traditions (Csergo, 2011).

In Spain, especially in Catalonia, the relationship between gastronomy and tourism has noticed a growth due to the predominant culinary heritage interpreted in the territory (recognized by UNESCO as an intangible asset of humanity in 2013) and the high number of restaurants awarded with the famous Michelin stars (Forgas Serra, 2019). This restaurant typology brings together all the attraction factors of the destination (Daries, 2018), and a renowned or “luxury” gastronomic experience can increase the tourist flow and become a new indicator of tourist destinations (Lin et al., 2022). High-quality restaurants have become key assets in the economies of many countries, often being considered tourism attractors in themselves (Daries et al., 2018). Michelin-starred chefs and restaurants are not only the ultimate exponents of haute cuisine in the hospitality industry, but also key players in the development process of gastronomy, food science, tourist destinations and even regional economies (Castillo-Manzano et al., 2023; López-Guzmán et al., 2012). As Bocos-Mirabella (2022) points out, the Michelin Guide emphasizes the fact that restaurants are “inscribed” in an environment and the experience of going to a restaurant is

closely linked to the penetration of the idiosyncrasy of the place where it is located (Csergo, 2011). But their function does not remain merely informative: this guide of the new century brings with it a distinction that gives prestige to both the manufacturer and the factory; they make them an attractive attraction for culinary adepts and promote the recognition and exploration of the regions linked to them. This is what several scholars call the Michelin effect (Bang et al., 2022; Castillo-Manzano et al., 2021; Csergo, 2011; Rita et al., 2023): the dynamics by which nowadays the consolidation of figures such as great chefs or restaurant concepts find a niche in the high exhibitions of our culture, turning them at the same time into tourist attractions linked to cultural heritage (Daries, 2018). As Dr. Natalia Daries (2018) demonstrates, for the places where they are located, considering catering establishments as tourist destinations in their own right has an impact on the tourist identity of the regions; with this acquired influencing power, they manage to alter the existing tourism paradigm by attracting new segments and reviving areas of the territory through an interest in gastronomic heritage. For the consumer, as Dr. Sara Forgas (2019) points out, gastronomic motivation can be as much related to the intention of tasting regional products and elaborations in restaurants, fairs and specialized markets as to going to eat at a Michelin-star restaurant.

While for many tourists the quality offered in the gastronomic offer is an important part of the experience (Bang et al., 2022), another part of travelers takes into account the emotional and non-functional benefits, such as the hedonic and social values that visits to these types of establishments report (Forgas, 2019). In his article on the “Roca Effect” based on the influence of the Celler de Can Roca in Girona, Forgas reveals the profile of Michelin tourism in Catalonia: it is quality tourism that contributes to the diversification and proliferation in the supply of high-end

products and services with added value while producing a feedback effect among the same restaurants in the region.

In Vietnam, especially in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City – two largest tourist centers, the “Michelin effect” phenomenon is only recently known just after the ceremony organized to award the first Michelin stars to 4 Vietnamese restaurants. In addition, there are also 70 restaurants, and eateries on the Michelin Selected list, 29 restaurants recommended in the list of Bib Gourmand, and 3 individuals received Michelin Guide Special Award. This recognition brings Vietnamese gastro-tourism so many positive impacts such as improving tourists' knowledge about Vietnamese gastronomy, encouraging tourists to taste typical dishes, and increasing not only tourists in the restaurant business but also in the accommodation and other tourist activities. In addition, there is no denying the economic effect that Michelin-star brings to the beneficiary through the increasing flow of tourists. The Michelin effect has paved the way for positive competition among Vietnamese restaurants for the strong development of gastrotourism in the near future.

3. EMERGING TRENDS IN GASTRONOMIC TOURISM

A bibliometric analysis carried out by Kuhn et al. (2023) and published in the International Journal of Gastronomy and Food Science very recently gathers in thematic clusters the trends in gastronomic tourism, and demonstrates the possible fields of development research, giving rise to topics such as attractiveness and gastronomic tourism; offer of experiences and authenticity; creative city, development of culture and street food. On the other hand, Okumus (2020) performs his own breakdown of themes following the literature between 1956 and 2000 in gastronomic tourism, the gaps and thematic evolution of research lines

to provide a future perspective that largely aligns with Kuhn:

- Design and Promotion of Culinary Experiences: Designing and Co-creating Unique Local Gastronomic Tourism Experiences; Technology and its effect on the design and promotion of culinary tourism experiences; Development of new culinary events; Social networks and culinary tourism experiences, events, and culinary destinations.

- Culinary innovation and sustainability: Food Photography and Food 4D Printing; Culinary medicine and molecular gastronomy; Street food; Food waste, environmental challenges, and sustainability issues related to food tourism.

- Stakeholder engagement and risk management: Establishing stronger stakeholder engagements in food tourism development; Food safety challenges (including risk management aspects).

All these issues can form the axes on which to continue to evolve the knowledge and management of tourism and gastronomy as a lure.

The use of the term experience at various levels stands out, reinforcing the idea that gastronomy, in tourism, has to be lived and will last in the memory. A destination's distinctive cuisine and iconic dishes increasingly function as factors of tourist attraction and, as such, are references and symbols that identify a place, helping to position it (Anton Martin et al., 2021). As the authors reference in their paper, entities, and restaurants can leverage iconic food not only as a pull factor for first-time visitors to a destination but also to evoke memories for returning visitors. While most destination managers recognize the importance of these types of businesses for tourist consumption and use them in their advertising campaigns (Daries, 2018), the future of evolving the communication and promotion of fine dining as a tourism attraction is for restaurants to

look beyond traditional presence and encourage online interaction and collaboration, connectivity, and the ability to generate and share content and knowledge with users (Daries et al., 2018). Industry or government can focus on improving the original experience or designing a new one based on tourists' preferences or needs to achieve a win-win situation (Lin et al., 2022). As described by Anton Martin et al. (2021) in their study, in the overall experience with local food, the destination image is not focused on a specific (gastronomic) element and can be further diluted, so it may have less impact on future intentions; in contrast, the emotions and fun associated with a specific icon leave an imprint on the tourist that succeeds in arousing the desire or motivation to return.

Along the lines of what has been researched about the impact of haute cuisine establishments or Michelin-starred restaurants on the tourist destination, there is great potential for the development of collaboration strategies and synergies between the nuclei of attraction systems (such as restaurants of this typology) and the surrounding destinations (Daries, 2018). In this sense, future research can focus on the study and creation of synergies between entrepreneurs and destination managers to retain and prolong the stay of visitors, attracting them by offering activities related to the gastronomy scene, creating loyalty actions, and developing joint promotions with tourism management entities.

Previous studies by Daries et al. (2017) have confirmed that most customers consult the website before visiting a Michelin restaurant. However, despite the importance of the restaurant sector in the economy and the tourism industry, high-quality restaurant websites require improvements to adapt to customer demands (Daries-Ramon et al., 2019) and convert the conversion of web visits into customers, something that now

does not occur frequently on restaurant pages (Litvin et al., 2005). This is why studying and investing in new communication methods that “connect” with potential customers and manage to convey a piece of the experience is a window into the evolution of current strategies. Future advances in hospitality and tourism management will arise from harnessing and exploiting the opportunities provided by the creation and management of gastronomic experiences, as well as through (digital) technologies (Mariani & Bresciani, 2022).

Along the lines of the environmental impact of gastronomic tourism, Sujood et al., (2023) propose a gap: sustainability in food production sometimes adds cost to the food product, so it is necessary to empirically investigate the willingness of the tourist to accept and pay this additional cost for the sake of the environment, and its economic impact on the sector.

4. CONCLUSION

This brief study on gastronomic tourism has uncovered perspectives on the most recurrent themes in the study of tourists influenced by guides such as Michelin and their evolution as gastro-tourists. Emerging trends open the way to a very extensive and multidisciplinary world of research, where there is much scope for redefining both the gastronomy and tourism sectors through innovation, responsibility, and the application of techniques and tools with experience at their core. Research on gastronomic tourism was already extensive due to its recent emergence as a trend among tourists in search of authenticity and sensory experiences, but it takes on a new meaning when intertwined with the culture of haute cuisine, which defends values such as the protection of heritage, landscape, and culture of the destination. Gastronomic tourism is often identified as an "accidental" tourism or by-product of authentic tourist activity, but with the concept of culinary capital, we find

the relationship between the taste for the consumption of culture (in this case, gastronomy) and the origin of tourism as a cultural activity.

The diversity and flexibility of gastronomic products and experiences at the destination mean that in the future it could be one of the most dynamic activities within the cultural approach of the territories. In the future, many more actors will be involved in the process of creating the offer, starting with those professionals who since the 1980s have populated the roads of places of interest and mapped the gastronomic culture of places for adventurers, as well as the manufacturers of the experiences themselves and those who have seen their tradition evolve throughout their lives. Consuming gastronomy and consequently heritage has never been more accessible thanks to the information available online, but it is still necessary to redirect the growing interest in the culinary towards the enhancement of gastronomies that do not necessarily fall under the umbrella of haute cuisine but that represent and embody with equal passion the values and nuances that define a region.

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