

## GASTRONOMIC FESTIVALS AND FAIRS: A TOOL FOR SEASONAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

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### Abstract.

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*The article examines the current state of gastronomic tourism, which is defined as a trip aimed at exploring the national cuisine of a country, learning about cooking techniques, and improving professional knowledge in the field of culinary arts. The article discusses the role of culinary tourism in the economy of impressions and explores the theoretical aspects of gastronomic tourism..*

Gastronomic tourism as an independent tourism direction has only recently begun to develop. There are several definitions that allow us to classify trips as gastronomic tourism.

In specialized literature, we find terms such as "culinary tourism," "food tourism," and "gastronomic tourism."

Food, tasting, culinary, food, wine, beer, and other types of gastronomic tourism are all variations of this concept.

The term "culinary tourism" was first coined in 1998 by L. Long, associate professor of Folk Culture at Bowling Green University, Ohio (USA), to express the idea that people learn about other cultures through local food.

Gastronomic tourism is tourism when tourists and visitors who plan to partially or completely taste the cuisine of a certain area or carry out activities related to gastronomy visit certain destinations.

The goal of culinary tourism is to educate and inspire food and wine enthusiasts, providing them with the opportunity to explore different destinations and learn about local food trends, cooking methods, and the history of food, dishes, and beverages. Tourists can

participate in immersive experiences that allow them to immerse themselves in the culture of different destinations around the world through food and drink. Culinary tours generally involve a wide range of activities related to cooking, food sampling, food trends, winemaking, and baking.

In addition to restaurant weeks in various cities, events related to dining and cooking competitions, culinary tourism also includes visits to wineries and breweries, restaurant tours, visits to food industry facilities, conferences, and other events featuring culinary professionals and cookbook authors, as well as ethnic food tastings.

Italy, Spain, and other Mediterranean countries offer vacationers the opportunity to spend time in rural homes, where they can not only stay for an extended period but also learn how to cook local and regional dishes. Some destinations also offer culinary tours and special dining experiences, where tourists can visit various restaurants, cafes, and bistros, meet with chefs, and participate in food workshops or events organized by culinary institutions and chefs, such as the Culinary Institute of America. There are also programs and events for those who want to learn about local industries, restaurants, new trends, and cooking methods.

Italy is considered to be the first country to have generated the idea of gastronomic tours, as it was the Italians who were the first to successfully combine the establishment of trade and technological production with the attraction of tourists under the banner of delicious and healthy food. Today, according to the Italian National Tourism Authority, at least 10% of tourists visit this country to participate in various gastronomic and wine tours. However, there is still no association for gastronomic tourism in this country.

The aim of this organization is to promote new trends in the leisure market, offering new exciting and unique proposals to meet the demands of tourists visiting Spain. The Association is made up of members who meet the following requirements: companies that work in gastronomic tourism, who are residents of Spain, who pay taxes and those who work legally in this sector, such as tourist agencies.

A culinary tour is a specially selected culinary vacation program that includes tasting dishes and beverages, learning about the technology and process of their preparation, as well as training from professional chefs. Depending on the purpose of the trip, the tour may include all of the above, several activities, or a specific segment of the culinary tour. In recent years, gastronomic tours often include visits to various culinary festivals, celebrations, and fairs.

The objects of culinary tourism include:

- Countries whose cuisine is the most popular on the global stage. Today, these countries include France, Italy, Spain, Japan, and China.

- Regions known for their locally produced products. For example, regions in France such as Bordeaux, Alsace, Burgundy, and Champagne, which are classified as Appellation d'Origine Controle (the name of products based on their place of production) and are known for their unique wines. The Dutch cities of Gouda and Edam are also famous for their cheese production.

- So-called "restaurant cities." The main criterion for identifying such destinations is the presence of establishments that offer a variety of cuisines, styles, and formats. Examples include New York, London, Paris, Tokyo, Rome, Brussels, Hong Kong, Barcelona, San Francisco, and New Orleans.

A fairly large number of people love masterpieces of culinary art. Undoubtedly, they can be tasted in restaurants and cafes of national cuisines, without leaving the city, but in order to truly appreciate the merits of exquisite dishes, drinks, desserts, the modern tourism industry has developed for the gourmets and the so-called gastronomic tours.

It is known that a country's culinary traditions can tell a lot about its people's temperament, culture, and lifestyle. By exploring gastronomic routes and sampling the masterpieces of national cuisine, you can discover the world from a different perspective. Food can tell you as much about a people as art and architecture can. While famous works of art are the creations of a single individual, cuisine is the creation of an entire nation. When a modern tourist goes on vacation, they often find themselves craving new experiences. This is what drives the development of new forms of tourism.

Today, gastronomic tourism is a promising area of research. Both foreign and domestic scientists are studying this phenomenon. The basis of gastronomic tourism is the gastronomic brand, and understanding its essence and structure can help in developing a classification of this type of tourism. However, this issue receives relatively little attention in the scientific literature.

It should be noted that the term "gastronomy" should be distinguished from the term "culinary arts." The concept of "culinary arts" refers to a specific system of methods and technologies for cooking food. Well-established technological processes, equipment, and recipes play an important role in this field. The Dictionary of Foreign Words in the Russian Language clarifies that "culinary arts are the art of preparing sophisticated dishes." By analyzing the definitions of "gastronomy" and "culinary arts," we can conclude that gastronomy deals with the so-called raw materials (food products and beverages), while

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culinary arts focus on the processes of processing or cooking these raw materials to create dishes. Therefore, gastronomy is a broader concept.

Gastronomic festivals in various countries around the world, including Russia, occupy a special place in gastronomic tourism. Gastronomic tourism influences the formation of a tourist region's brand, the national and economic situation of the region, and the financial aspects of culinary travel and food festival visits have a positive impact on the region's economy.

Many countries purposefully construct their own gastronomic face, an example is the experience of Singapore, where the so-called new Asian cuisine was created. There are also spontaneously emerging brands of territories (in France, Italy, Spain), although in the face of intense competition from other countries and the use of aggressive strategies by new players, the reputation of even such culinary gurus requires support programs. For example, the Spanish authorities are actively promoting their seemingly very popular cuisine.

In its report on gastronomic tourism, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has published the results of a survey among the current members of its organization (and these are 156 countries). According to the results of this survey, 88.2% of respondents consider gastronomy to be a strategic element in defining the brand and image of the region, and only 11.8% consider it an unimportant aspect. Nevertheless, only 67.6% of respondents believe that their country has a unique gastronomic brand, while 32.3% believe that their country has significant potential for developing this area.

A. N. Veretennikov and E. A. Solomakhina, the authors of the article "Gastronomic Tourism," consider the current state of gastronomic tourism and note its important role in the economy of this type of tourism [3]. They confirm this by describing gastronomic tourism in various countries around the world.

E. V. Efremova believes that a gastronomic trip is not just an ordinary introduction to the local cuisine, but also serves as an impetus for studying the culture of a given country and changing one's opinion about it [4]. She emphasizes that this type of tourism is not well-developed in Russia, although it has potential, citing the example that the only organization in Russia that plans such tours is the Association of Gastronomic Tourism in Russia (AGRT), but there are many such organizations in other countries.

E. M. Zelenskaya has an interesting point of view in her article "The Gastronomic Component in the Industry."

In the field of tourism, gastronomy is considered a key aspect of the territory's tourism activities, given the rapid development of tourism and the increasing competition between

tourism market players who are constantly seeking innovative approaches and new competitive advantages for their products and services [5]. According to Zelenskaya, gastronomy has the potential to enhance the attractiveness of the tourism product. She highlights the following advantages: increasing the competitive potential of the territory and gastronomic products; diversifying the local economy; flexibility to the phenomena of globalization and unification; reduction of environmental consequences from tourism activities, increase in their profitability; increase in the number of tourists, etc.

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