

The “Tourism Studies on the Mediterranean Region” Book Series

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(Institute for Studies on the Mediterranean – CNR-ISMed)

launches its third volume:

Evolving the perspectives on the value of gastronomy for Mediterranean destination development

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Call for chapters

Mediterranean countries have been long associated with gastronomy. However, only since the early 2000s, the relationship between places, travel experiences, and gastronomy has gained increasingly importance to travellers (e.g., Hall and Mitchell, 2000; Hjalager & Richards, 2002; Garibaldi, 2017a; 2021). Indeed, the significance of this relationship for destinations has become evident by the extent to which national, regional, and local food as well as tourism associations have sponsored specific programs and initiatives (e.g., Garibaldi, 2017b). Such programs have been argued to provide economic, social, and cultural benefits, especially to rural Mediterranean areas. Widening the tourism offering through gastronomy can attract new travellers or give them a reason to return pursuing a different experience (e.g., Garibaldi, 2021). The additional expenditure increases income for tourism businesses and for local governments (through taxation). It can therefore provide fundings for infrastructures and services that are required to ensure the destination to remain competitive (e.g., Correia et al., 2008). There are other economic returns from exploiting gastronomy in tourism: it can stimulate rural economic diversification, enabling non-agricultural activities that generates new income, protect existing jobs and/or create employment (e.g., Everett & Slocum, 2013). Social and cultural benefits concern the rediscovery of local gastronomic heritage. The new attractiveness of food can lead local people (and businesses) to reclaim and revitalize products, recipes, traditions, customs, etc., which are then showcased as to enhance travellers’ understanding of the destination (e.g., Fernandes & Richards, 2017). Along

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with stimulating the preservation of local gastronomic traditions (especially in face of globalization pressures), this tourism practice can have a positive effect on residents' sense of cultural belonging (e.g., Andersson et al., 2017). Existing studies have also emphasised major challenges. Programs aimed at exploiting gastronomy within the tourism practice must be tuned with market expectations. The consumption of experiences can represent both a primary and an accessory activity, and fulfil different motivations – i.e., pleasure, health, social bonding, and sense of place (e.g., Fernandes, 2021; Garibaldi, 2021). Destinations should therefore identify the demand interests and motivations, while ensuring the provision of experiences relying on local gastronomic resources. Preserving gastronomic heritage is another matter of significance. Travellers can put local providers under pressure, leading them to adapt products, recipes, traditions, etc. to suit their (changing) preferences. Destinations should avoid the risk of losing their gastronomic heritage through adequate policies and initiatives aimed at both persevering and supporting its evolution (Richards, 2002; Fernandes & Richards, 2017). Finally, the development of destinations via gastronomy heavily depends on mutual collaboration and cooperation among private and public actors that belongs to different sectors (tourism and agriculture) and, therefore, pursue different objectives. Destinations should stimulate networking and cross-sectorial linkages, starting with mapping out stakeholders' interests, finding compromises, sharing common goals (Garibaldi et al., 2019).

Despite the growing attention in both the academia and practitioners, the developmental processes underlying the exploitation of gastronomy in Mediterranean destinations need to be further investigated and looked at in more detail. A number of major issues can be identified.

Understanding the gastronomic experience in the context of lifestyle

Exploiting gastronomy in tourism destination requires to understand demand needs and expectations. Existing literature (e.g., Richards, 2021) argues that the consumption of gastronomic experiences is mainly an extension of the general lifestyle. For example, studies in Mediterranean countries pointed out that the increasing adoption of healthier food habits may have driven the growth of travellers' demand for food-centred activities in rural areas (Balderas-Cejudo et al., 2019; Garibaldi, 2021). Especially for those related with typical Mediterranean products such as wine (Compés López & Szolnoki, 2021) and olive oil (Ruiz Guerra et al., 2018). Research on the relative influence of general lifestyle on gastronomic choices on holiday – particularly when focusing on niche tourism practices like e.g., olive oil tourism, fish tourism, etc. – is therefore highly recommended as to pursue a deeper comprehension of tourists.

Hybridizing gastronomic experiences

The COVID-19 pandemic forced gastronomic experiences to move online. New digital formats such as e.g., virtual tours, tastings/pairings, cooking classes, events, etc., were increasingly offered by food producers across Mediterranean region to maintain/create relationships with current/new customers and to stimulate future onsite visits (e.g., Garibaldi & Pozzi, 2020). Much of the recent research has focused attention on the disruptive potential of digital gastronomic experiences.



Technology is argued to support, enhance, and empower the experience throughout all travel stages, enabling a never-ending journey (e.g., Richards, 2021; Garibaldi & Pozzi, 2023). Future studies should further investigate current and potential applications of emerging technological innovations in the gastronomic experience (e.g., metaverse, blockchain, etc.), the links between online and physical moments, and the role that travellers play in it.

Broadening the perspective on gastronomic heritage preservation

The use of gastronomy to foster destinations' development can revitalize local heritage, while posing issues on its development due to travellers' pressure. Climate change is also a matter of significance, as it can lead to changes in the agricultural production. Existing studies on the Mediterranean region provided evidence of national and regional initiatives that help to innovate local cuisine, while maintaining its attachment to history and tradition (e.g., Fernandes & Richards, 2021; Gonçalves et al., 2021). In such projects, food producers and the local community played an active role in preserving gastronomic heritage. However, also travellers are arguably among major actors. The gastronomic experience has a transformative potential, encouraging people to change their holiday and daily habits as well as to help preserving the heritage.

It appears necessary to investigate how tourists can be empowered in this process and what actions can be taken by destinations and food producers to achieve this goal. Studies on how climate change can affect heritage preservation are also highly recommended.

Bridging rural and urban areas

Tourism development through gastronomy implies a strong collaboration among all stakeholders. Much of existing research on Mediterranean countries focuses on mechanisms to set up collaborative processes (e.g., Fernandes & Richards, 2017; Garibaldi et al., 2019; Garibaldi, 2020) through the analysis of case studies. However, networking also creates bridges/physical connections between rural/inner and urban territories. They can take the form of, e.g., food innovation clusters, trails, centres/museums, etc., that bring together different attractions and facilities/services for the amusement of tourists. Such places also represent opportunities for travellers to discover less renowned destinations. There is room for a more contextualized analysis of physical touchpoints as results of networking processes, and their role in linking rural and urban areas.

Another research issue deals with the behavioural patterns of tourists visiting seaside destinations. As travellers often enjoy food-centred activities in both coastal and inner areas (Garibaldi, 2021), it appears of extreme importance to achieve a deeper comprehension of their gastronomic needs and expectations as well as pursued and desired activities. This would also improve the places' attractiveness and help to connect neighbouring areas through an integrated themed offering.



Objective of the 3rd Volume

Based on the above considerations, the aim of the third volume of the book series “Tourism Studies on the Mediterranean Region” is to offer novel perspectives on the value of gastronomy for the development of tourism destinations within the Mediterranean region. The volume also aims to enrich the discourse on gastronomy tourism by presenting interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary empirical research, both theoretically- and practice-driven.

Recommended topics

Without limiting the scope of the book chapters to be submitted, this call welcomes original work related to the following topics:

- Understanding the gastronomic experience in the context of lifestyle
 - Linkages between greener lifestyles and rural wellness activities on holiday
 - Emerging/niche tourism practices: Olive oil tourism, Fish tourism, tourism linked with the Mediterranean diet, and other practices

- Hybridizing gastronomic experiences
 - The new digital gastronomic tourist
 - The role of technologies in the gastronomic tourism experience: Metaverse, Blockchain, Human-food interfaces, Internet of Things, and other technologies
 - New hybridized (i.e., mixing online and offline) gastronomic experience formats
 - Perceived authenticity of gastronomic experiences
 - Neuroscience and neuro marketing in gastronomy and tourism

- Broadening the perspective on gastronomic heritage preservation
 - Approaches to gastronomic heritage preservation in the era of climate change
 - Evolution of the gastronomic heritage and the transformation of the tourism experience
 - Mechanisms to empower local communities and integrate tourists in gastronomic heritage preservation



- Bridging rural and urban areas
- Regional innovation clusters and innovative symbiosis for connecting rural and urban areas
- The physical touchpoints: Food museums, Food centres, Gastronomic hubs, Food routes and other touchpoints
- Behavioural patterns of travellers (e.g., gastronomic needs and expectations, pursued and desired activities) in seaside destinations

Submission procedure

Prospect authors are invited to submit original and unpublished manuscripts (written in British English) from a wide range of disciplines; an interdisciplinary approach is also strongly encouraged. The call welcomes both theoretical and empirical studies using a range of methodologies including qualitative, quantitative, mixed-methods and multi-methods. Potential authors should provide a structured abstract (i.e.: purposes – methodology – findings – originality – limitations – implications) of no more than 500 words. Author(s) would need to also submit a short bio-sketch (job title, department, university name, research interests or recent publications, and achievements) (up to 100 words). Please kindly note that the abstract acceptance does not necessarily guarantee the publication of the submitted full manuscript. All manuscripts will be subject to a double-blind peer review process. Please submit your abstract proposal by e-mail to roberta.garibaldi@unibg.it and to tourismstudies@ismed.cnr.it.

The book will be published by Mc-Graw Hill.

Key dates

The publishing calendar is the following:

- ✓ **05th March 2023**: submission of a **structured abstract** including purposes – methodology – findings – originality – limitations - implications (**up to 500 words**). Author/s would need to also submit a **short bio-sketch (up to 100 words)**.
- ✓ 13th March 2023: notification of the acceptance abstract
- ✓ 21st April 2023: full paper submission
- ✓ 31st May 2023: notification about the acceptance and peer review report (double-blind)
- ✓ 17th July 2023: submission of the final version
- ✓ **30th September 2023: publication in the book**



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