

GASTRONOMY AND FESTIVALS IN ITALY

DOI: 10.26341/issn.2241-4002-2020-1c-sv-3

Georgios Koltsikoglou

Master of International Law (L.L.M) University of Teramo

g.koltsikoglou@outlook.com

Foteini Maniou

Graduate of Philosophy NKUA, Msc University of the Aegean

fvtinimaniou@yahoo.gr

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to highlight the Art of gastronomic tourism in Italy. The uniqueness and quality both locally and nationally in combination with its cultural heritage and natural beauty, are a pole of attraction for visitors from all over the world. It is considered as a successful gastronomic tourism destinations as it has "invested" in this genre through the gastronomic and oenological festivals as well as the wine routes that take place in different cities of Italy. One of the first Ice Cream Museum in the world is evidence as a case study for our research.

Key words: *gastronomic tourism, theme park, Italian cuisine, ice cream festival, culture.*

1. Gastronomy and Tourism

Gastronomy is an art form and art in turn is associated with tourism. A large percentage of travelers want to experience a variety of gastronomic experiences and some of them travel for the sole purpose of these experiences. Gastronomy means not only taste but culture, history, customs, traditions and traditions of a place. Tourists are fascinated not only by a very nice taste of wine or food but by the combination of taste and geographical location of a place they visit. Therefore, one would say that taste and location together create a successful interaction (Manola-Palanta 2020).

Gastronomy highlights the country's identity, culture, customs and traditions. Terms related to gastronomy, which are used to search for the tourist destinations where he will find almost everything what he wants - quality - tourism - good food – good location - local cuisine - is "food tourism", "gastronomy tourism", "culinary tourism". The term that has prevailed in recent years is "gastronomic tourism". (Manola, Koufadakis, 2020) .. In general, the taste experiences of visitors in an area create a sense of authenticity, an important factor that affects the psychology and behavior of the tourist, thus enhancing sustainable tourism (Manola & Palanta 2020)

The distinction between the above concepts is aptly defined, since the term "gastronomy tourism" is defined as "the place of food through the culture of the host", the term "culinary tourism" is described as the inherent relationship between food and culture of a place "and finally with the term“ food tourism”, the“ desire of the traveler to deal with the local food”.

Wine gastronomy is a culture is the link that develops between the tourist and the destination area. .Food and wine function as expressions of feelings of hospitality and traditions while at the same time they are elements of identity and differentiation in relation to others (Manola, 2019b)

According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2019), the continuous growth of "gastronomic tourism", is not based only on the visitor who wants to remain in the basic food choices that will meet his needs, but in that it is an important part of the cultural tourism.

In this case, if we want to examine the trend of "gastronomic tourism" in terms of tourism marketing, it will be easier for travelers to choose a destination as local cuisine is what will differentiate each tourist destination (Manola & Kotsikoglou , 2020)

Hall & Sharples (2003) developed a theory that separates tourists from food-tourists. In the first case, the consumption of food is observed as part of their travel experience while in the second case it seems that the tasty experiences of the place play a role which are combined with activities in which travelers participate (attending and participating in gastronomy festivals, cooking festivals etc. a.) . Below we will see that Italy is a typical destination of the second case, where tourists participate in festivals, having received the travel experience of Italian gastronomy upon their return.

2. Italian cuisine-festival

After centuries of changes in social and political regimes, Italian cuisine evolved starting around the 4th century BC. Its influences start with the Ancient Greeks & Romans, and continue with the Jews, the Arabs and the Byzantines. During the period of the Roman Empire, local cuisine was influenced by various cultures (eg Greeks), which were conquered or geographically adjacent. Marcus Gavius Apicius (1st century AD) mentions that the inns in Ancient Rome functioned as taverns where travelers had lunch. In the area of Rome, there were small shops called "popinae", in which passers-by ate simple food accompanied by wine.

In Italian cuisine there are many characteristics such as the excellent cheeses, the special spices etc. Its main features are the variety of dishes which is distinguished for its simplicity using, only, from four to eight ingredients with emphasis on the quality of the ingredients.

Many Italian recipes and Italian dishes have spread all over the world, and in every country we find from small to large elements of Italian cuisine in its restaurants. In Italian cuisine we will of course find the largest variety of cheeses, cold cuts, pasta, rice, eggs, the extra virgin olive oil etc. It is worth noting that Italian pizza is the most popular food in the world, and the traditional art of Neapolitan pizzaiuolo is protected by UNESCO and recognized as "intangible heritage of mankind" in 2017.

According to a statistical study from a part of a sample conducted in 2018, the results of the percentages in the question "What is the destination of a visit for gastronomic reasons?", Italy, with a percentage of 11.1%, ranks 3rd. The first destination choice is France with 22.2% and the second Spain with 16.7%. (Vitouladiti & Koliopoulou, 2018) Italy is a successful gastronomic tourist country, which welcomes thousands of tourists who want to try authentic Italian cuisine. It has focused on a strong brand name of its cuisine, combining the quality and the special taste of the Italian recipes. Gastronomic visitors to Italy, according to statistics, visit it again and again. According to the following cases of tourism development, Italian gastronomy seems to have enormous mobility and global influences.

In 2015, in the greater Bologna area, the "Fico Eataly"y gastronomic theme park started operating, with forty factories in total, where visitors have the opportunity to tour the premises learning about the processing of animal products. Various species of animals such as goats, rabbits, etc. are bred in its facilities. There are also bakeries for bread, pasta, cheese, dairy products, while the visitor can visit, in addition, forty tasting places, six classrooms, cinema, shops, theatre and conference centre with a capacity of 50 to 1000 participants. The aim of Fico Eataly's programs is not only to attract tourists to the area but, above all, education – information on the raw materials of Italian cuisine and Italian food. At least 30 events are organized daily and visitors have the opportunity to choose any thematic unit that interests them. The tour of the farms is done by vehicle due to long distances. In addition, visitors are given the opportunity to participate in guided tours of the botanical gardens with herbs and milking the animals while they can discover the secrets of fermenting bread, the

secrets of making traditional Italian pasta with eggs, cookies and the secrets of making various types of pizza , ice cream, cheese, etc. (W.T.O,2019)

The wine and gastronomic tourist among others needs to experience feelings for it and tourism today contains activities of unique experience that create emotion through landscapes, experiences and activities that help the traveler in his own search in a new tone a new theme. (Manola 2019a)

A second case of tourism development in Italy, we find in the city of Bra under the name "SLOW FOOD". The goal of this organization is quality and sustainability in the process of processing, production and consumption of food. The organization is the organizer of many events in Italy such as the Cheese Festival, Salone del Gusto etc. It aims to highlight the local cuisine of Italy. "SLOW FOOD" after its first establishment in Turin continued to grow dynamically in other countries around the world such as USA, Switzerland, Paris, etc.

In 1996 the 1st Salone del Gusto (theme park) was organized, which has been held every year since. It is worth noting that in 2016 it managed to exceed the number of 1 million visitors to the gastronomic festival. More than half of them were foreign visitors who expressed their pleasure and interest in participating next year as well. The Salone del Gusto today continues to be organized and is one of the most important international exhibitions dedicated to handicrafts, sustainable food and small producers that protect local traditions and high quality products.

In 1998, the Cheese Festival was inaugurated in Turin, which was the first international exhibition of Slow Food dedicated to dairy products. The Cheese Festival has now become an institution and continues to take place every two years with great visiting interest.

Forlimpopoli⁴ has a ten-day mix of gastronomy, culture and entertainment. Restaurants and tasting kiosks set up along the city streets, a festive gastronomic atmosphere complemented by performances, concerts, exhibitions and other events during the Forlimpopoli gastronomic festival, organized in collaboration with Casa Artusi, a gastronomic cultural center dedicated to in homemade Italian cuisine. Cooking classes are conducted in Italian but can also be organized in English or other languages for individuals and groups of up to 20 people⁵.

The Festival Stragusto is held in the city of Trapani⁶and is characterized as street food. It lasts five (5) days and floods the historic centre of the city every year. You can try dishes from all over Italy but mainly you can try local dishes of the city⁷.

The three-day tasting festival "Taste Shop" in Florence⁸ takes place for three days and is presented by Pitti Immagine. The festival is aimed at visitors who like good food, but also new flavors. At the "Taste Shop" visitors can also buy Italian products that they will discover at the stands of the approximately 300 food and beverage companies that participate in this festival, every year.

3. Case study - gelato italiano

The popular Italian ice cream is a special dessert that differs from an ordinary ice cream, as its fat content ranges from 4% to 8%. The reason why a small amount of sugar is required for its preparation (from 16% to 22%) is to have a balance in the composition and to avoid its

⁴ Forlimpopoli is located in the province of Forli-Cesena in northeastern Italy south of Forli, near the seaside town of Rimini. It is a city with a rich history and culture

⁵ www.festartusiana.it

⁶ The old town of Trapani is located on the west coast of Sicily and has a very strong medieval element. In addition to the festival and local cuisine, the city is famous for its wine and sea salt harvest.

⁷ www.stragusto.it/en/

⁸ Florence, the city of Dante and one of the top destinations in Italy also offers top Italian cuisine.

"freezing". Its preparation⁹ dates back to the beginning of the 17th century. While in ancient Rome, according to surviving information, they used snow as a base and added milk, honey and fruit juice. From then until today, it has undergone many variations in taste and in the way it is prepared.

The World Gelato Festival is considered in addition to the most famous individual gelato tournament in the world and a top event. It consists of a four-year qualifying round with selections and national / continental finals that allow Chefs from around the world to qualify for the final stage of the tournament called the "Gelato Festival World Masters". The next World Final will take place in 2021. So far, 15 ice cream festivals have taken place. The highlight was the year 2019 where the traffic reached 1,000,000 people with 1,000 chefs from 5 Continents competing for the preparation of the best product. The Gelato Festival can now be considered one of the most important and popular festivals in the world.

The Carpigiani Gelato Museum, as a unique initiative of the Italians worldwide, is a presumption of the greatest importance that the Italians give to ice cream and to the quality peculiarity and superiority of gastronomy. It is located in the city of Bologna, since 2012 in an area of over 1,000 square meters. The visitor has the opportunity to see rich photographic material related to the history of ice cream, twenty ice cream machines, starting from the first version and reaching to the present day, as well as to participate in interactive activities thus having the opportunity to feel part of its history ice cream. The visit to the museum is divided into three thematic levels:

- i. The evolution of ice cream over the centuries,
- ii. The history of production in terms of its technological development and
- iii. The ways but also the places of consumption of ice cream.

The crown of the exhibits, which attracts the largest number of visitors, is the first handwritten recipe of Italian ice cream, which is exhibited in the museum.

4. Conclusions

Gastronomic Tourism has developed rapidly in recent years in Europe and around the world. Italian gastronomy seems to have enormous mobility and global influences in the international market. Initiatives such as: a) the gastronomic theme park in the Bologna region, b) the "SLOW FOOD" in the city of Bra, c) the Cheese Festival in Turin which was the first international exhibition of Slow Food for dairy products, d) the Forlimpoli Festival, which operates as a gastronomic cultural centre dedicated to homemade Italian cuisine, e) the Stragusto Festival in Trapani, Sicily and f) the Florence Food Festival demonstrate the uniqueness and importance of promotion, development and consequently economic and tourism development.

The Gelato Festival has managed to spread the uniqueness of ice cream, as the number of visitors reaches 1,000,000 every year. Gastronomic Tourism is one of the most interesting types of tourism and in the case of Italy, which has combined the experiential approach (with cooking and tasting courses) through the variety of dishes offered by the local cuisine, it proves to be true.

⁹ The first ice cream maker in Italy, close to the form we know today, was a fisherman, Francesco Procopio de'Colitelli in 1686 AD, who in his spare time was engaged in the design and construction of a machine, with which finally managed to create the best possible ice cream. His grandson, who was also a fisherman, helping his grandfather, seeing that this effort paid off, decided to leave for Paris with his grandfather's ice cream machine and recipe. There operated a cafe-pastry shop called Café Procope. He made many attempts to perfect the ice cream recipe, discovering that using sugar instead of honey would make it tastier and for the longest time he mixed the ice with salt. In the 19th century ice cream is widespread as there are points of sale not only in Italy but also in other countries of the world such as Malta, America, etc .. Today the most common ice cream recipes in the western world are: the American type and the Italian (Gelato).

References

- Hall, C. M. & Sharples, L. (2003). "The consumption of experiences or the experience of consumption? An introduction to the tourism of taste. Food Tourism Around The World". Development, management and markets. Oxford: Butterworth – Heinemann
- Manola, M., (2019a). Literature-Tourism-Culture. Athens: Ed.Tsotras
- Manola, M.(2019b). L'italiano per i professionisti di turismo. . Athens: Ed.Tsotras
- Manola, M., & Koufadakis, St.(2020). "The gastronomy as an art and its role in the local economic development of a tourism destination. A literature review." Spoudai Journal of Economics e Business, Volume 70, Issue1,2
- Manola,M.& Palanta,G.(2020).Gastronomy and opera. an approach from an"unconventional" source. Journal of Tourism Research.volume 25.
- Manola, M.& Koltsikoglou, G. (2020). "CULTURAL EXPERIENTIAL WINE ROUTES IN ITALY-TUSCANY", SDCT-Journal. Volume 1/2020.
- Vitouladiti, O. & Koliopoulou, K. (2018). Gastronomy as a tourism and travel product: Approaches to tourism marketing. Thesis. [online] available at:
➤ <https://apothesis.eap.gr/handle/repo/32668>
- World Tourism Organization (2019). International Tourism Highlights. 2019 Edition.

Websites

- <https://www.gazzettadelgusto.it/eventi>: Eventi enogastronomici in Italia.
- <https://www.itinerarinelgusto.it/eventi/list>: Eventi in Italia.
- <http://www.festartusiana.it/>: Artusiana Food and Wine Festival Forlimpoli.
- <https://www.stragusto.it/en/>: Festival Stragusto.
- https://www.academia.edu/38898795/Italian_Artisanal_Gelato_According_to_Donata_Panciera?fbclid=IwAR0su67K43WTorbrJMBd9gI7XQprwdyjrln4H6sYhau0XSu9MukTG32m3c: Donata Panciera. Italian Artisanal Gelato.
- <https://www.pittimmagine.com/en/corporate/fairs/taste.html>: Florence Food Festival.
- <https://gelatofestival.com/en/>: Gelato Festival.
- <https://www.eatalyworld.it/en/>: Il Parco del Cibo Italiano più emozionante del Mondo.
- <https://cheese.slowfood.it/en/>: Cheese Festival.
- <https://www.slowfood.com/>: Non-governmental organization "Slow Food".
- http://www.pinonacciartecucina.org/1/storia_della_cucina_italiana_3481937.html: Storia della cucina italiana.
- <https://illaboratoriodimmskg.com/2013/07/il-gelato.html>: Gelato Historia.
- <https://www.gelatomuseum.com/it/home>: Gelato museum.
- <https://www.eatalyworld.it/en>. EatalyWorld.
- <https://illaboratoriodimmskg.com/2013/07/il-gelato.html>