

Review Paper

Tools and Development Drivers for the Gastronomic Tourism

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ABSTRACT

The article examines the concept and features of gastronomic tourism, its history and its importance in the modern world. It is noted that gastronomic tourism meets all the requirements in transitioning from a service economy to an experience economy. The basis of gastronomic tourism is an authentic product identified by territorial characteristics and can attract tourists to the region. Gastronomic tourism is based on the concept of knowing and exploring, eating, tasting and enjoying the gastronomic culture of a region or country. The uniqueness of gastro tourism is highlighted as it links such policy development and integrated planning, product development and packaging, promotion and marketing, distribution and sales, and operations and services in tourism destinations, which are vital core activities in the tourism value chain. Ancillary activities related to the gastronomic product include transport and infrastructure, human resource development, technology and systems of other ancillary goods and services, which may not be associated with the leading tourism business but have a significant impact on the value of tourism. Also, the article discusses in detail the strategic plan for developing gastro-tourism, which includes the following phases: analysis and diagnosis of the situation; general strategic planning; operational planning; informing and disseminating the plan. The participants in the gastronomic process are listed, such as gastronomic heritage; gastronomic products, manufacturers and food industry; hospitality sector; specialized trade; campaigns for organizing gastronomic events and for the dissemination of gastronomic culture; areas for gastronomic education; centres for gastronomic research and training.

HIGHLIGHTS

- ① Gastronomic tourism meets all the requirements in transitioning from a service economy to an experience economy. The basis of gastronomic tourism is an authentic product that is identified on a territorial basis and can attract tourists to the region.
- ② Gastronomy tourism, much more than food: gastronomy tourism goes beyond the restaurant and leads to the discovery and integration of other actors in the food production chain. It permeates all industries and can be unique in maximizing the distribution of tourism benefits across communities and territories.
- ③ Gastronomic tourism dictates new trends in world tourism, and its popularity will grow shortly.

Keywords: Gastronomic excursions, authentic farm, development drivers, hospitality sector, gastronomic culture, gastronomic tourism.

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In our time, there is a departure from mass tourism “today we are here and tomorrow there” when tourists spend a lot of time on sightseeing buses and spend one or two nights in one place. Since such tourism has several disadvantages for destinations, tourists are dissatisfied with their impressions and experiences (Nesterchuk *et al.* 2021; Nesterchuk *et al.* 2022).

Modern tourists set themselves much greater goals and requirements for travel, which gives rise to specific trends in international tourism:

- ♦ growing demand for authentic, authentic experiences;
- ♦ the growth of the “Experience a destination as a local” movement;
- ♦ tourists are looking for a unique experience – “Golden moments” (Shpak *et al.* 2021).

All these trends are inherent in gastro-tourism and provide points for developing infrastructure.

All over the world, gastronomic products, authentic restaurants and farms are emerging; old markets are being restored, attracting the local population and becoming one of the most attractive places for foreign tourists. In such markets, tourists can buy products from local producers and taste authentic dishes and local branded products.

The basis of gastronomic tourism is a product identified on a territorial basis and acts as one of the resources that can attract travellers to a region, country, city, etc. A gastronomic brand or speciality is a feature of regional cuisine expressed in the presence of one or more local dishes found only in a given region or have a particular authenticity.

The gastronomic product is at the centre of gastronomic tourism but is not a separate part. The structure of the gastronomic tour includes:

- ♦ visiting farms and small industries to get acquainted with the speciality;
- ♦ participation in master classes and tastings;
- ♦ visiting restaurants of traditional or haute cuisine;
- ♦ visiting local markets, fairs and festivals;
- ♦ visiting museums and excursions in the area (Shpak *et al.* 2022).

Theoretical part: The phenomenon of gastronomic tourism

The development of modern tourism is paradoxical. On the one hand, globalization and accessibility make the world more open (Prokopenko & Omelyanenko 2018); on the other hand, it generates the value of local resources, identity and culture. Tourist destinations are forced to maintain ever-higher competitiveness and participate in the constant struggle to retain a part of their market.

In the modern world, the service economy has been replaced by the so-called experience economy (Halkiv *et al.* 2020).

In a world filled with primarily monotonous goods and services, the most significant opportunities for value creation lie precisely in delivering experiences. Separating experience from service in a company’s operations opens up great opportunities for economic growth.

Impressions and experiences are seen as the fourth economic proposition alongside raw materials, goods and services. By adding to the goods and services that can directly impact the tourist’s senses, the tourism industry actors try to saturate these services with experiences. Because some products are inherently dependent on sensory perception, these goods include gastronomic tours.



Fig. 1: History of gastronomic tourism terminology (author’s development)

Gastronomic tourism as an independent director of tourism began to develop relatively recently (Fig. 1). In 2015, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) globally recognized gastro tourism as a separate segment of world tourism (UNWTO 2015). It provided a platform for cooperation between countries and the private sector.

And today, gastronomic tourism is a global trend and is considered one of the most dynamically developing sectors of world tourism. This is an effective tool and in some cases, a locomotive for promoting countries in the tourism market. However, in recent years, gastronomy has become an indispensable element of acquaintance with the culture and lifestyle of a particular region. Gastronomy combines all the traditional values associated with new trends in tourism: authenticity, interest and respect for culture and traditions, healthy lifestyle, sustainability, experience and impressions.

Cultural and gastronomic tourism is the most fashionable and demanded trend in the global tourism industry. It is an effective tool for promoting countries, regions and destinations in the tourism market.

Gastronomic Tour is a specially selected program of culinary relaxation, including tasting dishes and drinks, getting acquainted with the technology and the process of their preparation, and training with professional chefs (Koval *et al.* 2020). Depending on the purpose of the trip, the tour may include all of the above points, several activities, or one specific segment of the culinary tour. In recent years, food

tours often include visits to various food festivals, celebrations and fairs.

Gastro-tourism arose not only because of the desire of people to preserve and present the uniqueness of the specialities of their country but also thanks to itinerant and curious tourists who live in search of the new and unknown. Through acquiring new experiences, tourists retain their impressions in their memory longer than the moments of everyday events.

Gastronomic tourism, like its lovers, is very diverse. In conditions of increased competition for your client, you need to clearly understand what the gastronomic tour and gastronomic destination look like for whom.

Depending on the degree of preparation and interest of the tourist, it is necessary to prepare a tour program, thus distributing the load on both tourists and the subjects of the tourist program (Table 1).

The objects of culinary tourism are:

- ♦ countries whose cuisine is the most popular on the world stage. Today these countries include France, Italy, Spain, India, Japan, China, and Mexico (Fig. 2). Recently, this series has been supplemented by other countries - Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Peru, and Singapore.
- ♦ regions are known for the products produced in the area. For example, such regions of France as Bordeaux, Alsace, Burgundy, and Champagne are included in the Appellation d'Origine Controle classification (the name of the products according to the place of their production) and are known for their unique

Table 1: Categories of the target audience of gastronomic tours

Tourist	Hedonist	Foodie	Master	Expert
Description	For those who go on a gastro tour for the first time. Half-day program with free time.	A tour for those who understand the meaning of gastro tourism and engaged clients who appreciate leisurely walks and tastings.	Tour for those who like to immerse themselves in detail in the process and cook and learn from the best.	Full-day program with immersion in culture, traditions, and customs through national cuisine, crafts and communication with residents. All the abundance of opportunities and gastronomic delights.
Complexity	Easy level	Average level	Average level	High level
Activity	Half-day	Full day	Full day	Day in two
Accents	Relax with taste	Learn better tastes	Prepare the best meals	For almost professionals
Tour includes	Wineries; production with tasting; markets and shops	Restaurants; wineries; tastings	Culinary; masterclasses; production; markets; tastings	Production; tastings; wineries; families; culinary masterclasses; markets and shops; restaurants

wines. Also known are the Dutch cities of Gouda and Edam, where cheeses are produced.

- ♦ the so-called “restaurant cities”. The main criterion for distinguishing such destinations is the presence of establishments representing various cuisines, styles and formats. For example, New York, London, Paris, Tokyo, Rome, Brussels, Hong Kong, Barcelona, San Francisco, and New Orleans (GlobalDaa 2016).

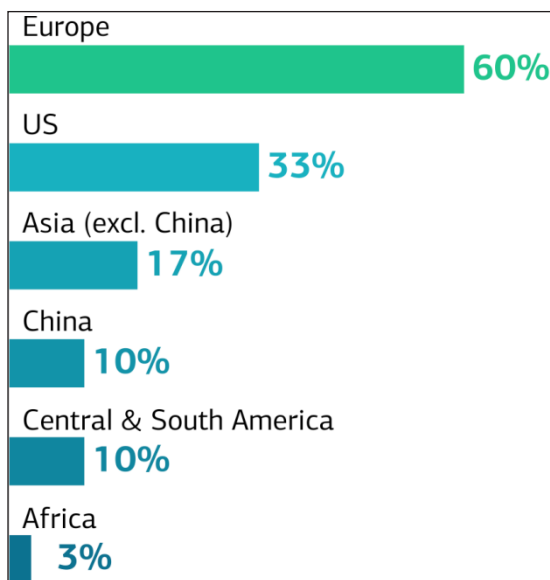


Fig. 2: Which of the below regions are associated with high-quality food/drink products? (*Source:* GlobalDaa Consumer Survey Q4-2016)

Features of gastronomic tourism

In its report on gastronomic tourism, UNWTO posted the results of a survey among its organization’s 158 active member countries. According to the results of this survey, 88.2% of respondents consider gastronomy as a strategic element in brand definition, and only 67.6% of respondents believe that a unique gastronomic brand has been formed in their country, 46.5% of countries have their gastronomy strategy included in the national tourism development plan (UNWTO 2015).

These figures show that the world considers gastro-tourism opportunistic and gives it market advantages in development.

The world has become very globalized. Gastronomy and gastronomic heritage, gastronomic culture is what distinguishes one destination from another. They convey the characteristics of the place visited by tourists.

Gastro-tourism embodies all the traditional values and new trends in tourism: acquaintance with culture and traditions, the popularity of a healthy lifestyle, authenticity, sustainability, impressions, and experience.

According to the latest UNWTO data, gastronomic tourism greatly benefits the country’s economy. Mass tourism traditionally leaves 5% of the cost at the destination, while adventure, eco and food tourism leaves 65.6% at the local level (UNWTO 2015). Gastronomy helps revitalize and diversify tourism and contributes to local economic development because it includes various professional sectors - manufacturers, chefs, food, markets, travel and hospitality businesses and related business organizations.

Gastronomic tourism is based on the concept of knowing and exploring, eating, tasting and enjoying the gastronomic culture of a region or country. The culinary identity of the terroir, with its distinctive features of the landscape of culture, products, methods and dishes of the destination, is a crucial highlight of gastronomic tourism.

Terroir in gastro-tourism is an element of differentiation and a source of local identity. It covers ecological and landscape values, history, culture, traditions, villages, seas, mountains, and the place’s cuisine.

In this regard, transforming the territory into a “culinary landscape” is one of the objectives and goals of the destination (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3: Transformation of the territory into a “culinary landscape” (author’s development)

In this context, a critical step for the economic development and management of gastronomic tourism in the territory is to identify, inventory, and analyze the potential and growth of various elements in the food tourism value chain: producers in the primary and secondary sectors, firms in the service sector, catering, accommodation, retailers, companies providing gastronomic events and services (culinary workshops, tasting schools, etc.), knowledge centres such as culinary and hospitality schools, markets, wholesale markets, auctions, etc. places for the dissemination of gastronomic culture, trade fairs, festivals and events; and natural and cultural resources (Fig. 4).

The advantages and features give the impetus for such rapid development and popularity of gastro tourism that it possesses:

- ♦ the opportunity to revitalize and diversify tourism can attract tourists to countries and regions already familiar to them;
- ♦ lack of pronounced seasonality for travel;
- ♦ the tourist gets acquainted with the everyday life, history and culture of the country much more profound than in a classic sightseeing trip;
- ♦ gastro-tourism combines various related businesses and industries, develops local

businesses, creates new jobs, and contributes to the preservation of culture and the environment;

- ♦ gastronomic tourism attracts investments in the regions, and increases the tourist flow;
- ♦ the development of gastronomic tourism in rural and remote areas of the country increases the employment of the population and the standard of living;
- ♦ gastronomic tours, as a rule, are not “hot”; there is no concept of “lowest price”.

All over the world, especially in Europe, there is a tendency to develop and special protection of local specialities and regional products born in this territory. This is important because each country has its own “tourist magnets” to help compete for its tourists. Many regions not only develop local specialities but also develop an information evidence base about the product: when and by whom the product or recipe was invented, attached to a particular territory, what features and qualities it possesses, and the history of the product.

For example, in Europe, there is a system for the protection of specialists. The most ambitious system of legal regulation of this kind is “Protection of geographical indications and guarantees of traditional characteristics in the European Union”,

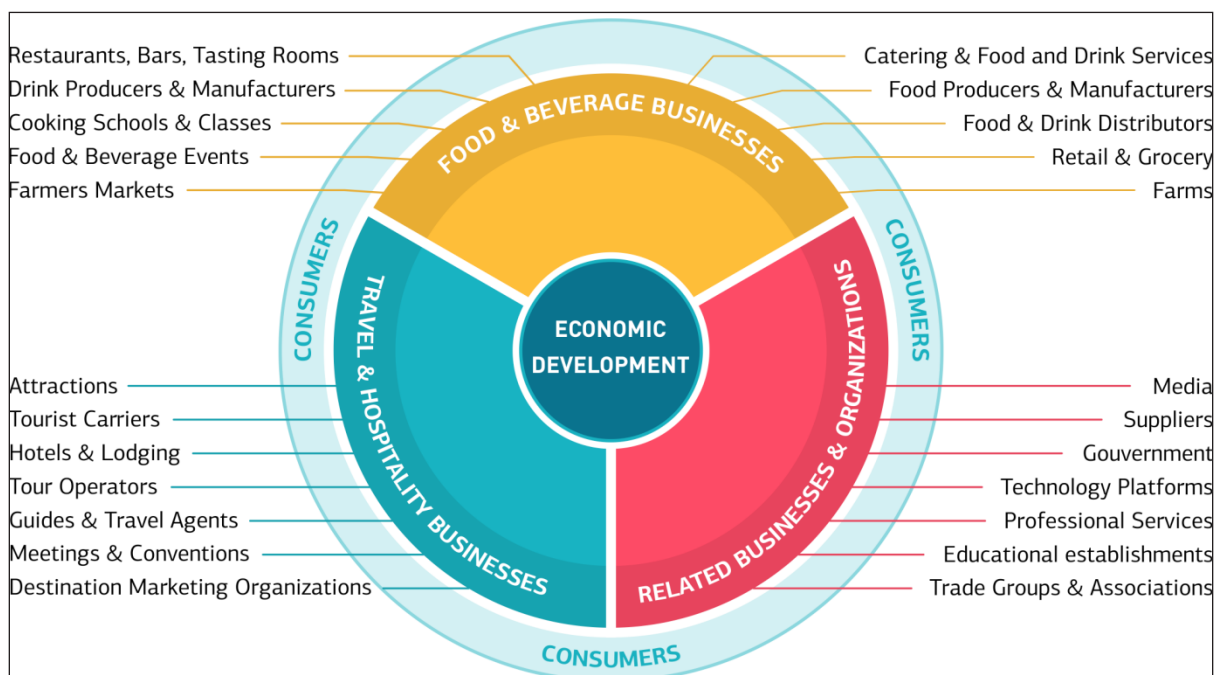


Fig. 4: Participants of gastronomic tourism and the impact of gastronomic tourism on the economic development of the region (author's development)

which can provide and protect guarantees for certain professionals.

Protected Designation of Origin provides for absolute adherence to the recipe, the use of strictly specified raw materials and the product's production place must be located exclusively in the designated region (Examples: Parmigiano Reggiana cheese, Roquefort cheese).

Protected Geographical Indication - provides for absolute adherence to the recipe and the use of strictly specified raw materials. The place of production can be changed or produced in different areas in the region (Examples: scotch whiskey, balsamic vinegar).

Traditional Specialty Guaranteed - Provides absolute adherence to recipes and workflows in a particular geographic area. Still, manufacturers are not required to locate production in the same area (example: Lithuanian salami, mussels busho).

Tools and development drivers for the development of gastronomic tourism in the destination

The competitiveness of a destination is built on the planning and strategic management of its comparative and competitive advantages and is based on creating high-quality, differentiated products that create an experience and added value for tourists.

To improve competitiveness and maximize the positive impact of tourism, a correct assessment of the situation and strategic planning are necessary. Such planning will help to minimize the negative impact, predict changes in the needs and tastes of tourist demand, rapid reorientation of supply depending on seasonality or changes in demand, reduce deficiencies in the destination, and so on.

If a tourist destination prioritizes the promotion of gastronomic cultural attractions, it is vital to draw up a strategic plan for developing and promoting gastronomic tourism.

Such a plan is the primary tool for laying the foundations and developing strategies for future actions, which all involved agents must carry out within a specific time frame to create this type of tourism.

Based on the potential of the destination, this plan:

- ◆ sets the path for the development and market of gastronomic tourism;
- ◆ if necessary, it should be flexible and adapt over time or seasonality;
- ◆ must take into account the interests of all participants in the process and be divided among them.

The strategic plan for gastronomy tourism starts with an understanding of the initial situation and diagnosis, then translates into reality the views and needs of the sector involved and serves to identify and establish the main strategic directions of action that will allow you to become a destination, optionally, a destination for gastronomy tourism.

In the development and preparation of the Strategic Plan for Gastronomy Tourism, the classical methodology is used, which should include mechanisms for the participation of agents associated with the activity, and mainly consists of the following main stages:

Stage 0. Project launch

At the preliminary stage, the working group is determined, as well as the scope and methodology of the project, the primary goals and deadlines.

Stage I: Analysis and diagnosis of the situation.

At this stage, the current situation and potential of tourism activities and infrastructure related to gastronomy in the territory are determined, and the main gaps and opportunities are identified. It identifies favourable and unfavourable conditions affecting gastronomic tourism activities that need to be considered in the planning process and includes internal and external analysis.

1. Internal analysis

- ◆ the territorial and tourist context of the gastronomic tourism product;
- ◆ inventory and assessment of gastronomic resources;
- ◆ analysis of the tourist offer and its gastronomic component;
- ◆ analysis of promotion and marketing of gastronomic tourism;

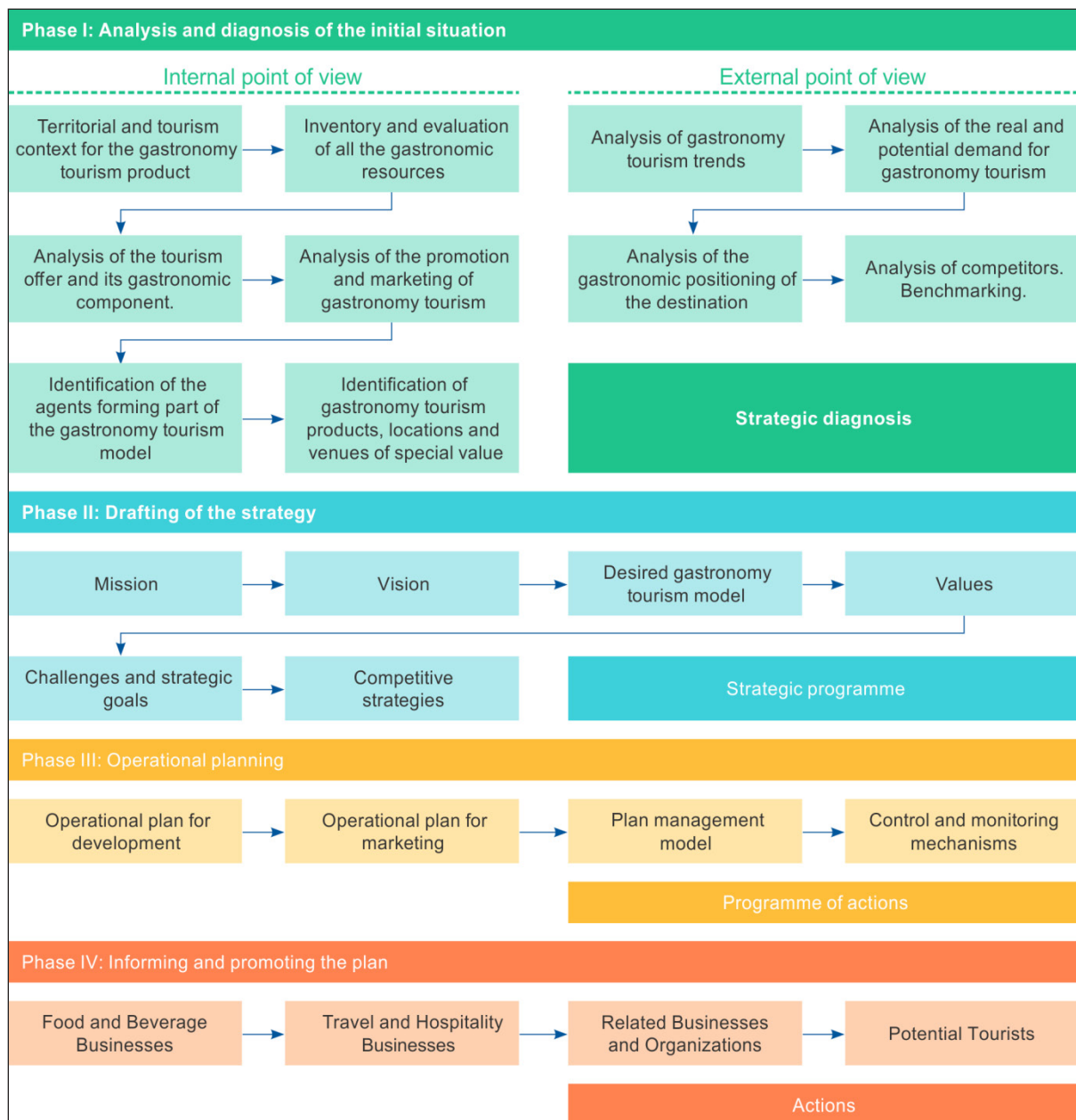


Fig. 5: Methodological process for drafting a Strategic Plan for Gastronomy Tourism (author's development)

- ♦ identification of agents involved in the gastronomic tourism model;
- ♦ identification of a gastronomic product and gastronomic tourism locations of particular value.

2. External analysis

- ♦ trend analysis (tourism, food, catering, gastronomic tourism);
- ♦ analysis of actual and potential demand for gastronomic tourism;

- ♦ analysis of the gastronomic positioning of the destination;
- ♦ analysis of competitors.

Phase II: Development of a strategic plan

Based on the analysis and diagnosis of the situation, and the overall long-term plan is developed, which is critical for determining the way to achieve the goals. Connecting and engaging all agents, including the local community, is essential. Strategic recommendations will be given on this direction's future of gastronomic tourism.

To ensure the sustainable development of gastronomic tourism and its positive impact on the destination, the sector itself, and local communities, the plan should visualize the desired scenario to increase the destination's competitiveness in the main markets and among various target audiences.

Phase III: Operational planning

At this stage, priorities and programs for developing the gastronomic direction are determined. A plan for both operational development and operational marketing is being developed so that the tourism and gastronomic potential of the territory brings maximum benefit to all parties involved.

Phase IV: Communication and dissemination of the plan

At this stage, the Plan is brought to the attention of all sector stakeholders, citizens, and communication channels that may be associated with potential tourists.

The classical methodology of the Strategic Plan for Food Tourism uses the same process and methodology as in other strategic tourism plans. Still, the peculiarity of planning for food tourism is that it concerns a wide and varied range of agents who must participate in it (Fig. 5).

One of the key tasks in building a tourism development model is to understand the reality of the territory based on the knowledge and participation of all agents. They need to be involved in the discussion about the tourism development strategy.

The development of a strategic food tourism plan should include an open, collaborative reflection process involving the most representative agents of the food tourism value chain in the destination, as well as political leaders, associations from the gastronomy and tourism sector, tourism professionals, opinion leaders from the industry and also.

To achieve the goals and visualize the tourism scenario, the participatory process must ensure that the sector's benefits are shared by including them in the gastronomic tourism value chain.

CONCLUSION

Today we can talk about a new economy that is

replacing the service economy - the experience economy. Gastronomic tourism has a lot to do with experience. In modern society, preferences are changing, and gastronomic tourism, which has relatively recently separated into a different industry, is rapidly developing. This type of tourism contributes to the socio-economic development of the regions, including the creation of additional jobs, the preservation or opening of production of certain products, and their implementation, helping to brand the regions and attract tourist flows.

The ideal conditions for the development of gastro-tourism in the region are:

- ◆ the presence of sustainable gastronomic brands and brands of the territory;
- ◆ understanding the importance and necessity of developing gastro-tourism among local producers and local authorities;
- ◆ understanding and forecasting demand;
- ◆ the availability of tools for the creation and promotion of gastronomic tourism;
- ◆ availability of work standards in the field of gastronomic tourism;
- ◆ availability of qualified personnel in the field of gastro tourism;
- ◆ support of the public and private sector for the development of the gastronomic tourism of the destination;
- ◆ the presence of domestic tour operators specializing in gastro-tourism (Halkiv *et al.* 2022).

Also, a unique role in developing gastronomic tourism in the region is the presence of a gastronomic tourism strategy. A successful gastronomic tourism strategic plan should include:

- ◆ overview of local culinary history and heritage;
- ◆ profile of famous restaurants and bars;
- ◆ audit of restaurants, bars, attractions, entertainment and events related to food and drinks;
- ◆ overview of local food and beverage producers (from farms and gardens to breweries and factories);
- ◆ educational plan for residents and employees of the hospitality industry;

- ♦ opportunities for additional activities, attractions or experiences;
- ♦ identification of different interests and target markets;
- ♦ creation of a joint network or partnership between various businesses serving travellers;
- ♦ definition of traditional production methods and tools;
- ♦ drawing up a plan for the preservation or promotion of traditions;
- ♦ considering the possibility of long-term planning (for example, a five-year plan), rather than pursuing short-term goals;
- ♦ concentration and development of several products, not one.

To enhance the role of gastronomy and tourism in local culture, the following steps are necessary:

Identifying regional food and beverage heritage and demonstrating its importance. Regions should explore and discover if they have regional food and beverage heritage and culture. Then promote it among the locals, as you cannot be proud and interested in something unknown.

Training in tourism and gastronomy subjects. The local population should learn about the specifics of their destination through the public education system, visits to places where food grows, and projects that encourage them to ask their grandparents about food and nutritional practices-inclusion of tourism and gastronomy subjects in the curricula of schools that value local heritage.

Ensuring the availability of experiences and festivals. Guided tours of the region in the open air to allow residents to immerse themselves in tourist areas. Expert seminars in wine, food and beer for local people by cities, tourist councils, ministries, etc.

Using social media to tell stories and make connections. Ensuring that food and beverage providers are connected to social media and, most importantly, participate in these channels, and respond promptly

Food tourism is much more than food: food tourism goes beyond the restaurant and leads to the discovery and integration of other players in the food chain. It cuts across all industries and can

be unique in maximizing the distribution of the benefits of tourism to communities and territories. Since travellers eat and drink several times a day, the most common travel activities are related to food tourism. The most common types of gastronomic travel are: visiting authentic restaurants for an unforgettable experience, visiting farms and food festivals, and eating in a food truck, food cart, or grocery stall.

Gastronomic tourism dictates new trends in world tourism, and its popularity will grow shortly.

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