

GASTRONOMIC FESTIVALS AND TOURISM: A CASE STUDY OF VALLEY OF THE VINEYARDS, BRAZIL

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to verify how the gastronomic festivals can positively influence the maintenance of regional cuisine by combining cultural, physiological and symbolic aspects (for example, the memory of taste). This work intends to analyze the gastronomic feasts held in the Vale dos Vinhedos, located in southern Brazil, in the historical and gastronomic region. The main tourism product of the Vale dos Vinhedos is wine, a cultural legacy of Italian immigrants who settled the region in the year 1875, where you can see the tourism and wine as purveyors of culture, work and history of this people in the region.

Key Words: Gastronomy, Wine Tourism and Gastronomic Festivals

INTRODUCTION

The study of alimentation is fascinating in its essence, because there are few topics in the academic complex that allows the unification of different areas of expertise such as: Economy, Food Engineering, Biology, Chemical Engineering, Nutrition, Anthropology, Archaeology, History, Geography, Gastronomy, Tourism, etc.. Research focusing on alimentation may have as an object of study, the association of the means of production and preparation of food with the economic condition of social groups, the relation of religious values with the consumption of food, food fads and symbols in the twenty-first century, the influence on popular culture and eating habits, etc..

Gastronomic Tourism noteworthy for providing a cultural experience to visitors from the food materialized. According to Gândara et al. (2009) gastronomic tourism can be understood as an aspect of cultural tourism in which the movement of visitors is given for reasons related to the culinary practices of a particular locality.

In fact the possibility of "experience" other cultures through food may expose both sides of the coin, the positive side would be the maintenance of tradition represented by dishes of regional cuisine and improvement in economic indicators in the region by inserting manpower in the market and by leveraging other possibilities of gains for the local population, as there will be a higher consumption in the local market and increasing the occupancy of lodging facilities in the region. The main downsides are the possibility of loss identity of the local food by "adaptations" of ingredients or methods of preparation and the possibility of environmental damage that may endanger the sustainability of the region.

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In Brazil there are several ways to insertion the alimentation to reinforce certain destination. In Curitiba, the neighborhood Santa Felicidade is an example of success in offering a large variety of food in a certain geographic region or the example of small italian restaurants in Sao Paulo. We can highlight the routes that compose the many circuits of Rural Tourism, such as route of cachaça in Minas Gerais, the route of the Valley of the Vineyards in Rio Grande do Sul or the route of the drovers in Paraná. Religious festivals play an important role in consolidating religious events through the main dining practices of the town, being one of the highlights of the June festivals that occur throughout the Northeast of Brazil. It is noteworthy, gastronomic festivals featuring "brand" of many tourist destinations, especially in the south to The Grape Festival, The Pine Nut Festival in Lages and the Pig in the Roller Festival in Toledo.

In this context, this paper aims to verify how the gastronomic festivals can influence the maintenance of regional cuisine by combining cultural, physiological and symbolic aspects (for example, the memory of taste). The gastronomic festivals are cultural manifestations of legitimate evidence of a region that customs and traditions through food, where by means of ingredients, cooking methods, social representations or symbols creates a complex scenario that deserves attention in the scientific academy to the different areas study.

The paper analyzed the gastronomic festivals held in the Valley of the Vineyards, located in southern Brazil, in the historical and gastronomic region. The main tourism product of the Valley of the Vineyards is wine, a cultural legacy of italian immigrants who settled the region in the year 1875, where you can see the tourism and wine as purveyors of culture, work and history of this people in the region.

The research involved a literature review compiled from books, journal articles and conferences, and analysis of examples that encourage understanding of the relationship between themes such as cultural identity, memory and local heritage, festivals, tourism, gastronomy, etc.

FOOD AND CULTURE

Eating habits are usually presented as a process closely related to the origin or colonization of a country. According to Reinhardt (2007) a typical food represents tradition but not necessarily the everyday population, but it awakens a sense of ownership, which makes the food order to "dress" of their country of origin. The gulasch, traditional german dish, although of Hungarian origin not upsets of the German people, because the important thing is that this food brings on feelings related to German origin, leading them to consider it as a typical food of that country.

The food culture in South America is strongly related to the immigrants that moved here bringing habits, needs, variety of foods, spices, change preferences, income, beliefs and taboos. Brazilian cuisine is the result of portuguese influence, african slaves and indigenous, but we must consider that the country has a continental dimension not only the geographical aspect, but also in the cultural diversity established by immigrants who have settled here (Italian, German, Japanese, Spanish, Arabic, Swiss and others) (Sonati et al. 2009).

Cascudo (2004) states that eating is an organic act that the intelligence became social. Eating is a social act, as it is nourished by a biological activity. Therefore, the consumption of food is not just the need, but sociability, culture, beliefs and taboos, and habits to the technology built by a social group (Carvalho, 2005).

The choice of what is considered "food" and how, when and why eating such food, is related to the cultural arbitrary. Culture is not only indicates what is and what is not food, provisions establishing (which should be taken and when) and prohibitions (taboos and interdictions strong), as established distinctions between what is considered "good" and what is considered "bad," "strong," "weak," ying and yang, as culturally defined by classifications and hierarchies (Maciel, 2001).

According to Rappaport (2003) there are three ideologies that influence food choice of food, which would be hedonism, spiritualism and nutritionist. Furthermore, says the fourth draft of an influence on certain foods identified as instruments or symbols of political or social ideologies.

Hedonism focuses on linking the power to delight the senses, presenting photographs of food in magazines or inserts to supermarkets, not culinary attractions for children in fast food outlets, artistic representations of haute cuisine in dishes, etc.. The spiritual ideology interferes on religious taboos (the hindu vegetarian, kosher food, prohibiting the consumption of certain animals or how to kill them) or non-religious beliefs (non-consumption of horse meat or dogs). The nutritionist is close to spiritualism in macrobiotic regime that believes that the food we eat have an influence on our mood, where diseases such as diabetes, high blood pressure, kidney stones have a close connection with eating and lifestyle habits.

The particulars given above truly reflect the lifestyle of much of the population, where there is a predominance of young people on hedonism ideology or old people on nutritionist ideology, but one should emphasize the importance of cultural identity in the definition of lifestyle. According Gimenes (2009) the gaucho barbecue, for example, contains its know-how and various other ritual elements that respond to a situation most (sharing of mate, the gaucho, etc.) and reaffirm a lifestyle linked a regional identity or the preparation of the acarajé the streets of Salvador is not limited to the use of cooking techniques, but it represents and embodies a series of historical and religious elements in the eyes of the taster.

The discussion on the different functions of the supply increases when this process is part of the tours, they often focus the tourist potential associated with this gastronomic region. For example, the scripts of wine and chocolate on the hills of Rio Grande do Sul, the pig in roller national festival held in Toledo (Paraná), the Oktoberfest in Blumenau (Santa Catarina), the various grape festivals that occur mainly in south of Brazil, and there are many events throughout Brazil, such as the routes of cachaça on the interior of Minas Gerais, the corn festival on Paragominas (Pará), the sausage festival in Maracaju (Mato Grosso do Sul) that a few events that were regional and in recent years gained national impact.

Gimenes (2004) also stresses that pubs, restaurants and nightclubs, often turn into leisure and sociability, they offer food and drinks targeted at the most different niches of demand, complementing the entertainment offer of tourist destinations, especially those dedicated to the sun and beach tourism.

In this context, the food awakens memories that allow memory to redefine and reconstruct identities. Corção (2007) the history of food establishes a line of continuity between the wasting away of tradition, re-invention of traditions in which it has the memory of taste as a guide, so the collective history relating to the individual level. Barroco (2008) through the food, you can see and feel the traditions that are not said. Food is also memory, operates very strongly in the imagination of each person, and is associated to the senses.

Proust explains his memory of taste on his novel “No sooner had the warm liquid mixed with the crumbs touched my palate than a shudder ran through me and I stopped, intent upon the extraordinary thing that was happening to me. An exquisite pleasure had invaded my senses, something isolated, detached, with no suggestion of its origin. And at once the vicissitudes of life had become indifferent to me, its disasters innocuous, its brevity illusory - this new sensation having had on me the effect which love has of filling me with a precious essence; or rather this essence was not in me it *was* me. I had ceased now to feel mediocre, contingent, mortal. Whence could it have come to me, this all-powerful joy? I sensed that it was connected with the taste of the tea and the cake, but that it infinitely transcended those savours, could, no, indeed, be of the same nature. Whence did it come? What did it mean? How could I seize and apprehend it?”(Proust, 1913).

Corção (2007) defining the memory of taste is associated with the daily lives of individuals. Eating in the context of study the memory of taste, is understood as an action that involves various social aspects, such as nutrition, economics, tradition, innovation, among others. Santos (2005) reinforces that the dietary practices and habits of social groups, these distant or recent practices that may constitute in culinary traditions, they often

cause the individual to consider inserted in a social and cultural context that gives it an identity, called the memory of taste.

Therefore, we sought to show the complexity in aligning culture and food and start a discussion about the participation of the gastronomic festivals as integral elements of the culture of a particular locality.

GASTRONOMIC FESTIVALS

In many cases, food is the primary reason for the festival celebration. Festivals provide an optimal opportunity for tourists and residents to interact and share each other's experiences (Kalkstein-Silkes, 2007).

In joyful celebration, farmers annually hold festivals with the community to share their good fortune from the land. Food from the harvest is central to the festival celebration. For farmers, the festival is a ritual commemorating a successful season and a venue for sharing the wealth of the land with the local community. This communal tradition, embedded with the sharing of a meal, rural areas have embraced for generations. The festival, as such, is ingrained in the culture of the community (Kalkstein-Silkes, 2007).

Such definitions do not mean that any trip to an event is food tourism, rather the desire to experience a particular type of food or the produce of a specific region must be the major motivation for such travel (Hall and Sharples, 2008).

Indeed, food tourism may possibly be regarded as an example of 'culinary', 'gastronomic', 'gourmet' or 'cuisine' tourism that reflects consumers for who interest in food and wine is a form of serious leisure (Hall and Mitchell, 2001; Hall and Sharples, 2003; Mitchell and Hall, 2003).

Wine tourism is a subset of food tourism being defined as visitation to vineyards, wineries, wine festivals and wine shows for which grape wine tasting and / or experiencing of a grape wine region are the prime motivating factor for visitors (Hall, 1996).

It further states that the landscape a lot of attention of the visitor, being a motivating factor, directly related to wine and together with him, reveals the identity of the Valley of the Vineyards, where the landscape can be seen as a cultural heritage of the region (Lavandoski, 2008). Casasola (2000) argues that reflection as the heritage is synonymous with the changed environment and also the socio-cultural environment, just what it can be seen in this region.

According Lavandoski (2008), the main tourism product of the Valley of the Vineyards is wine, a cultural legacy of italian immigrants who settled the region in the year 1875, where you can see the tourism and wine as purveyors of culture, work and history of this people in the region.

The region's main parties are the Grape National Festival (Caxias do Sul), Wine National Festival (Bento Goncalves) and Champagne National Festival (Garibaldi) that initially were designed to celebrate the grape harvest and celebrate their results, but over time has gained state and national status and the strengthening of these festivals has enabled the structuring of wineries to customer service, establish an annual calendar of events, professional training, development of certifications, identification of typical products of wine regions, creation of new associations producers, environmental concern and academic research on issues related to viticulture (Valduga, 2007).

With respect to related grape gastronomic festivals, specifically in the Valley of the Vineyards, some studies have reached the following conclusions:

- The development of gastronomic festivals in the Valley of the Vineyards allowed a greater share of public and private agencies for recovery of the region, such as: public constructions to facilitate access to tourist or qualification courses for the local population and thus prevent migration to other regions (Polita, 2006);

- The region typically formed by Italian immigrants noted on gastronomic festivals the opportunity to share cultural aspects of Italy, as well as putting into practice the hospitality pro inhabitants considered as paramount to maintain ties with visitors to the region (Soares, 2004);

- The development of the region allowed to accumulate knowledge and to structure an local productive systems with several strategic innovations that led to a quality label for local products (Gollo, 2006);

- The gastronomic festivals allow a reflection of cultural identity and on the alternatives of transferring knowledge (culture and customs) for future generations (Baccon, 2009);

- Frigeri (2009) develops a reflection on the development of the region upon the concept of "invented tradition", tradition and appeal to the past, can be clearly defined around the wine industry, is the instrument par excellence, which guarantees corporate competition and in that sense, their own individual survival in a world increasingly integrated circuits by globalized;

- The celebration of the harvest and celebrate their results, ended up attracting consumers from other cities and states of Brazil (Frigeri, 2009);

- To further develop and adjust supply to the wishes and interests of the visitor, enterprises create wine with attractive routes defined, visitation, tasting dishes, contact with residents and local culture, among others, transforming itself into the region a tourism product (Tonini and Lavandoski, 2011);

- How Wine is part of the culture of some people and consequently its food, it is difficult not to associate the two trips during the performance of this segment (Tonini and Lavandoski, 2011);

- The gastronomic tourism "consuming places" and provide an economy geared to the feelings and experiences of tourists (Tonini and Lavandoski, 2011);

CONCLUSIONS

It can be concluded that the diversity of cultures, landscapes and histories that characterize Brazil effectively means there is a need for types of "retention" of these aspects of daily life in various regions of the country. In this context, it is observed that the gastronomic festivals are a way to change and socio-economic transformation, technological and cultural induces a series of controversies that fits understand.

The aspects listed above denote the complexity of understanding the relationship between culture and power through the gastronomic feasts, but there is the certainty that they are a rich source for further research to attest to the importance of food tourism. To Gimenes (2006) should be considered the gastronomy of a different way: not as a knowledge that is hidden in the preparation of a plate or in the making of a tool, but as something that brings behind that final product, a universe involving symbolic knowledge, practices and traditions of the most diverse.

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