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Food tourism is a hot topic both in terms of academic and research attention, and business and destination management. Here, *The Routledge Handbook of Gastronomic Tourism* addresses this special interest tourism, a field of study which has witnessed an increasing amount of papers, book chapters and case studies and industry reports during the last couple of decades. This book is composed by six parts and an impressive amount of 60 chapters. The book deals with both a wide variety of themes and geographical areas.

In terms of topics developed, the book covers all the dimensions of food and gastronomic tourism, in which are divided its six parts: theoretical understandings of gastronomic tourism, gastronomic tourists' behaviour, the sustainability of gastronomic tourism, gastronomy and digital world, contemporary issues, and futures perspectives in gastronomic tourism, both as a research arena and as a powerful tourist experience. Erik Wolf in the foreword of the book says that we have now

entered in the "Golden Age of Food Tourism". This book is certainly one of the "Golden Books of Gastronomic Tourism Research".

Firstly, Part One includes a general overview of gastronomic tourism. Theoretical and model approaches are provided, together with case studies applied to different geographical contexts. This general section highlights the understanding of gastronomy as part of culture, and tourism. This is especially relevant since food tourism is recently regarded as a form of creative tourism. To gather a food based knowledge is to discover the diversity of the world. While food is also getting global, food idiosyncrasies are a very local cultural expression. They are expected to be authentically experienced only in the place where a product grows or is harvested. However, global circumstances allow to explore a culture through food from the other side of the world.

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Within this context, food as a tourist attraction is examined as a vital ingredient in urban environments, and also as a source of rural development. In both cases, gastronomic tourism relies on the transformation of place – *terroir* – into a food based tourist attraction. In consequence, destinations need to take advantage of their culinary potential to market it through multiple activities that bring visitors and tourists to engage with the foodscapes of a place.

Here, the gastronomic tourist seeks to discover a cultural and natural framework throughout gastronomy. Part Two is precisely focused on the gastronomic tourist behaviour. Gastronomic motivations are increasingly studied by researchers and serve to better market food tourist products and experiences. While this is a difficult topic to explore, both academics and practitioners should remember that food is always part of a trip, since everybody needs to eat while traveling. Within this context, they need not only to focus on behaviours of those tourists who do have gastronomy as a primary motivation when travel, but also on those who do not have food as a main motivation. They all eat and practice food tourism, in a way or another. In particular, the book reviews what factors influence on food consumption in tourism, thus considering the tourist, the characteristics of food in the destination, and the own destination environment. The analysis of tourists' expectations, perceptions and satisfaction leads to a more effective segmentation of food tourists, culinary travellers, or *foodies*. This primary data serves as a basis for planning, development and marketing the destination strategy. This is applied to specific cases of food tourism consumption such as gastronomic trails or festivals.

The aforementioned case studies drive us to Part Three, which highlights the relationship between sustainability and gastronomic tourism. In particular, sustainable tourism development through local food emerges as a crucial topic. The use of short supply chains means to keep authentic chains, that is, supply chains that act as guardians of the sense of place. This has large economic, environmental,

and social benefits to local communities. In terms of gastronomic tourism, local supply chains contribute to the reconnection of agriculture and tourism, which is a relation increasingly developed through food. For example, farmers' markets show the seasonality of foods, landscapes, and lifestyles. This sustainable seasonality undoubtedly enhances the marketability of local food, whose effects on climate change mitigation, food waste reduction, and healthier consumption habits, are indisputable.

Part Four merges gastronomic tourism with other timely and well-researched topics in recent years. Food is a cultural and natural heritage which can also be explored in digital avenues. The growing use and power of social media is exemplified through the relationship between customer reviews and marketing decisions, which are essential both at industry and destination levels. Also, this section pays attention to the online management and reputation processes. That said, online communication is a complex arena since firms (and destinations) lose control on the generated contents, which at the same time produce electronic word-of-mouth and influence consumer behaviour and purchase decisions. The book innovatively reviews issues such as the collaborative gastronomy on digital platforms or the use of mobile applications to promote gastronomic tourism.

Part Five offers an approach to contemporary issues in the field. Here, the chapters again elaborate on a significant range of topics. Slow food, organic food and restaurants, and crafts foods and drinks bring the readers back to previous acknowledged topics: the sustainability of food tourism and the motivations of food tourists. In this sense, this section reveals the symbolic meanings attached to local foods and drinks, and advocates that, thanks to organic and handcrafted products, travellers are able to eat like locals. In a similar way, the role of street food as a gastronomic tourism practice is also discussed.

Finally, Part Six sets a relation between gastronomic tourism and futuristic

perspectives. It focuses on the gastronomy tourism development through festivals and events – for example, by revealing collaborations among food and wine producers, and by defining thematic products and experiences. The section reviews the influence of geographical indications or celebrity chefs' branding on marketing strategies. Both of them heavily contribute to the promotion of a regional identity which may use media as a form of gastronomic tourism – reading and watching about food is also a gastronomic experience.

Therefore, the book is an extensive, rich and diverse approach to the relationships between gastronomy and tourism through an impressive amount of cases that make this book a world

referent in gastronomic tourism research. Here, further research would need to focus on a more varied approach to rural and urban environments, geographical scales, and also count on deeper analyses about niche food tourisms – featured by local products that become destination landmarks. The book serves to students and academics, and also to practitioners who want to acquire food as a topic of interest in terms of analysing, discovering and understanding cultures, societies, landscapes, lifestyles, firms, and destinations. Also, the readers will gather insights from a wave of examples of best practices in operational, planning, management and marketing strategies based on food, cuisine and gastronomy.