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Guidelines for the Development of Gastronomy Tourism

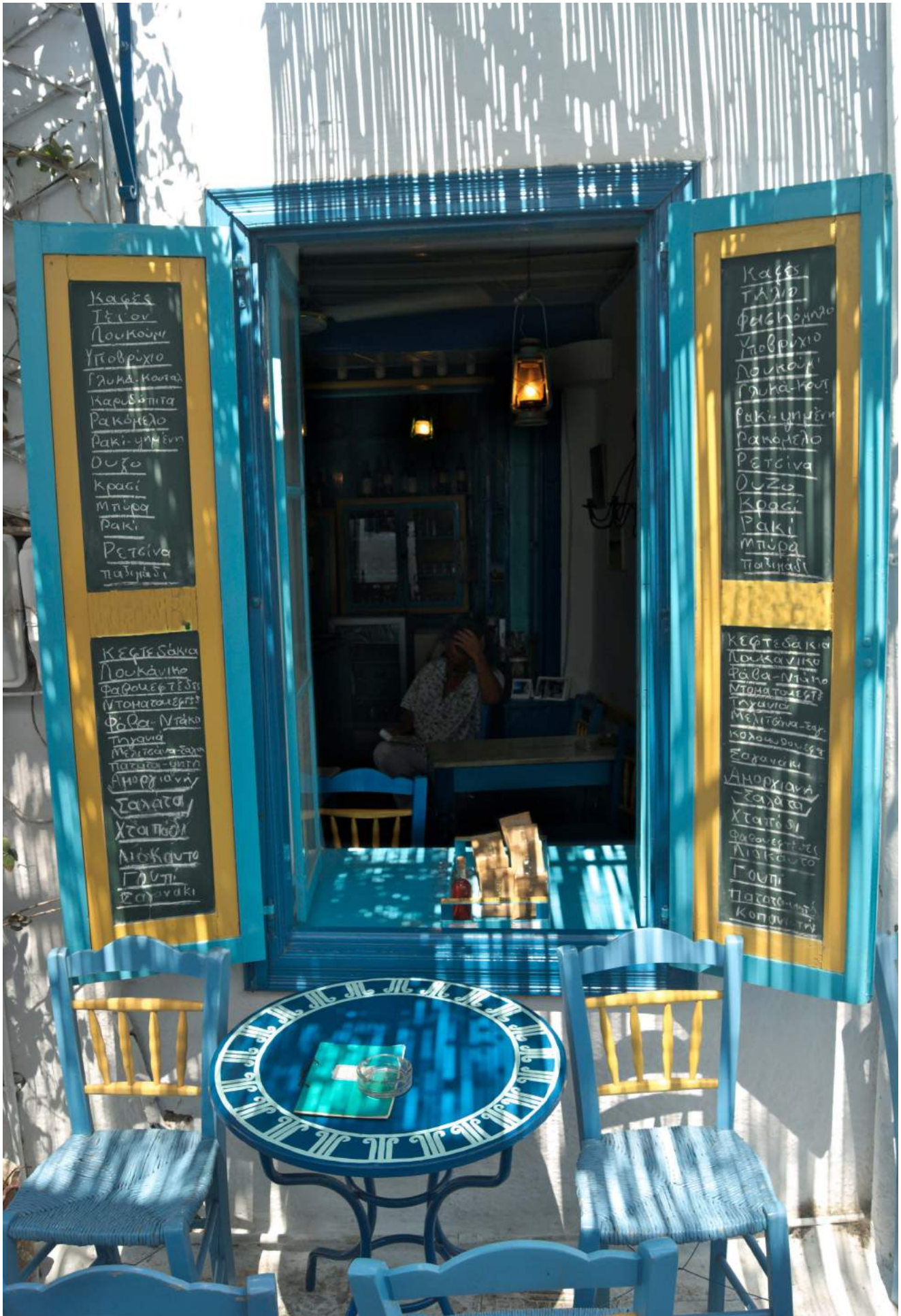
Guidelines for the Development of Gastronomy Tourism



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The editing and revision work at UNWTO was carried out under the supervision of Ms. Sandra Carvão, Chief of the Tourism Market Intelligence and Competitiveness Department, with the contribution of Ms. Aditya Amaranggana.



Foreword World Tourism Organization

Gastronomy tourism forms an integral part of local life and is forged by the history, culture, economy and society of a territory. This bears the natural potential to enrich the visitor experience, establishing a direct connection to the region, its people, culture and heritage.

The interest in gastronomy tourism has grown in recent years alongside its intrinsic promotion of regional identity, economic development and traditional heritage. Having identified its competitive edge, more and more destinations around the world are looking to position themselves as destinations for gastronomy tourism.

These guidelines have been developed by UNWTO and our Affiliate Member, the Basque Culinary Center (BCC). They are a practical toolkit to support the development of gastronomy tourism at the destination level.

The guidelines complement the work that UNWTO and the BCC have been undertaking over the past years to promote gastronomy tourism around the world, including the yearly UNWTO World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism, which alternates between Donostia/San Sebastián, Spain, and an international host country.

I wish to thank the BCC, a global gastronomy leader, for its commitment and outstanding contribution to advance gastronomy tourism as a means to advance sustainable development in partnership with UNWTO.

Zurab Pololikashvili
*Secretary-General,
World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)*



Foreword Basque Culinary Center

Gastronomy is one of the sectors most valued by tourists. When we travel we like to discover the local cuisine of the destination, to explore its restaurants, to taste the typical products, the traditions, and to be able to live surprising, unique and special experiences. The data show that, according to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), more than a third of a tourist's spending is dedicated to food. Gastronomy has become one of the main reasons to travel.

In many destinations, gastronomy has become a strategic sector that contributes to the generation of wealth and employment, creating value for the entire value chain from the production of quality food, its transformation, to the hotel or tourism companies and the promotion of the country brand.

This guides the work of the Basque Culinary Center. A holistic and interdisciplinary approach aimed at developing the potential of gastronomy through the training of professionals, in research and innovation of products and services collaborating with companies and through different initiatives to promote gastronomy. The Basque Culinary Center is today a university faculty with students from 32 countries, a Technological Center in Gastronomy and has agreements with more than 50 companies.

Aware of the importance of gastronomy tourism, five years ago, together with the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), we organized the first World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism. During these five years, gastronomy tourism has been growing in all stages. It is a broad sector that generates wealth and employment, and that faces the challenges of a large sector.

These have been the bases that have led us to develop the *Guidelines for the Development of Gastronomy Tourism* together with the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), our strategic ally, – a publication that we hope will help and become a useful tool for those territories that want to position and reinforce their gastronomic strategy.

Joxe Mari Aizega
Director General,
Basque Culinary Center



Introduction

Gastronomy tourism, a rising form of tourism

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) defines *gastronomy tourism* as “a type of tourism activity which is characterized by the visitor’s experience linked with food and related products and activities while travelling. Along with authentic, traditional, and/or innovative culinary experiences, Gastronomy Tourism may also involve other related activities such as visiting the local producers, participating in food festivals and attending cooking classes. Eno-tourism (Wine Tourism), as a sub-type of Gastronomy Tourism, refers to tourism whose purpose is visiting vineyards, wineries, tasting, consuming and/or purchasing wine, often at or near the source”.¹

Gastronomy is reasoned knowledge about what we eat and how we eat it. It is an area of inter-disciplinary knowledge which studies and generates physicochemical, cultural and socio-economic processes in which human beings cultivate, process, distribute and consume good foods and beverages which affect their physical, mental and social wellbeing.²

Gastronomy has always formed part of tourism, but the relationship between them has changed significantly over recent decades. In recent years, we have seen a phenomenon in which increasing interest in food has led the relationship between gastronomy and tourism to evolve towards new models, giving rise to a new tourism segment, that of gastronomy tourism.

The need to eat is the same for all of us, but it also differentiates us. Gastronomy tourism has arisen precisely because of this difference: the difference between tourists who simply feed themselves during their travels and those for whom gastronomy has a decisive influence on their choice of destination and who wish to satisfy their hedonistic and cultural appetite in addition to their physiological need to eat.

Over recent decades, gastronomy tourism has gone beyond the table setting and now includes all sectors of a destination’s food and tourism chain – producers (agriculture, fishing, etc.), processing firms (dairies, olive mills, canning plants, wineries, etc.), the tourism and hospitality sector (restaurants, specialised accommodation, gastronomic activity firms, etc.), the retail sector, the commerce sector (sale of products) and even the knowledge sector.

Gastronomy tourism today cuts across many tourism products. It has expanded the possibilities for enjoyment and knowledge offered by good-quality local gastronomy products in the different territories and by the activities that are possible in their productive and processing environments.

Gastronomy tourism is therefore based on a concept of knowing and learning, eating, tasting and enjoying the gastronomic culture that is identified with a territory. It is not possible to talk of gastronomy tourism without also talking about the culinary identity of the *terroir* as

a distinguishing feature. The territory is the backbone of gastronomy because a destination's landscapes, culture, products, techniques and dishes define its culinary identity and are the foundation of, and should be part of, the DNA of the tourism experiences offered to visitors.

Destinations all over the world are now developing strategies to develop the culinary identity of their territories and to promote proposals whereby their gastronomy and its singularities may exert an important influence on tourists' decisions to travel there and/or to attract the profile of gastronomy tourists who wish to experience the gastronomic culture of the places visited.

Great progress in the shaping of a diverse gastronomy tourism offer that is largely experience-based points to the interest among the various sectors involved in developing it.

From the point of view of demand, one of the main obstacles for quantifying gastronomy tourists and measuring the impact of gastronomy tourism worldwide is the lack of a well-defined, standardised definition of gastronomy tourism and of a methodology for comparisons. However, both market research and the statistics available in some destinations point to a clear rise in so-called gastronomy tourists and also indicate that they are tourists who consume more than average and who are demanding, discerning, putting value in authenticity and reject uniformity.

So food has become an essential inducement for differentiating tourism destinations and making them attractive, and gastronomy tourism has become a market segment in itself.

There is a broad consensus today that gastronomy tourism can contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in destinations and there is a huge opportunity for developing this contribution in areas such as rural development, economic growth, job creation or responsible consumption and production.

The scenario, therefore, is one in which gastronomy is conceived as a great asset for tourism destinations, and gastronomy tourism offers great opportunities to the whole sector and to society in general. But it is also a greatly changing environment, in which today it is more necessary than ever to plan and define strategies that determine the roadmap for both consolidated and emerging gastronomy tourism destinations.

Purpose and scope of the guide

The purpose of this guide drawn up by UNWTO and BCC is to provide a set of practical tools for national tourism administrations (NTAs) and destination management organizations (DMOs) that wish to develop gastronomy tourism.

This set of tools has been created to guide and support NTAs and DMOs and to facilitate their efforts to develop and manage any form of gastronomy tourism, especially during the initial phases of development of a gastronomy destination.

The guide describes some general principles and recommendations for the development of gastronomy tourism in destinations from the perspective of NTAs and DMOs.

It aims to provide assistance on various key aspects in the planning and management of gastronomy tourism destinations, posing in each case a set of guidelines on the work to be done.

The guide does not aim to be a detailed manual on procedures, but rather to cover in a coherent way the areas of management or interest that must be considered when developing gastronomy tourism in destinations. For each area, comments and recommendations for action are made, and practical advice is given on aspects to be taken into account.

The tourism scenario and the degree of knowledge of gastronomy tourism may vary considerably from one destination to another and this will determine the way in which this guide is interpreted and used.

Methodology

The working process covered the compilation of both primary and secondary information:

- On the one hand, several experts in gastronomy tourism who participate in the Master's Course on Gastronomy Tourism at the BCC were involved. They were asked to contribute regarding the main milestones and practices for efficient development of gastronomy tourism in destinations, from the perspective of NTAs and DMOs; and

- On the other hand, a review was carried out of existing secondary sources, including academic works, books, reports and studies, specialist journals and case studies. Especially, the Global Reports on Gastronomy Tourism by UNWTO were consulted, as well as the contributions, reflections and conclusions of the four World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism organized by UNWTO and the BCC and held in 2015 (Donostia/San Sebastián, Spain), 2016 (Lima, Peru), 2017 (Donostia/San Sebastián, Spain) and 2018 (Bangkok, Thailand).

Endnotes:

- 1 World Tourism Organization (2019), *UNWTO Tourism Definitions*, UNWTO, Madrid, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284420858>.
- 2 Government of the Basque Country (2017), *Plan estratégico de gastronomía y alimentación de Euskadi 2020*.







Chapter 1 Development of gastronomy tourism – a practical guide for tourism destinations

1.1 Planning and management of gastronomy tourism in the territory

The competitiveness of a tourism destination is built on the planning and strategic management of its comparative and competitive advantages and is based on the creation of high-quality, differentiated products that generate experiences and added value for tourists.

Proper planning is necessary to boost the competitiveness of tourism destinations and maximize the positive impacts of tourism, minimizing the negative ones, anticipating changes in the needs and tastes of tourism demand and re-orienting the offer, reducing deficiencies in the destination, fighting seasonality, etc.

When the tourism policy of a destination places priority on working to promote the attractions of the gastronomic culture, it is essential to draw up a Strategic Plan for Gastronomy Tourism.

Such plans should be considered as instruments for laying the foundations and designing strategies for future action with regard to gastronomy tourism in the destination. They also provide a framework for all actions to be carried out by all the agents involved, over a specific timescale for fostering this type of tourism.

Therefore, based on the reality and potential of the destination, this document:

- Sets the path for the development and market of gastronomy tourism;
- Should be flexible and adapted over time if the scenario makes this necessary; and
- Should be shared and based on a consensus with the agents of the gastronomy tourism ecosystem in the destination.

Therefore, a Strategic Plan for Gastronomy Tourism is considered:

- A planning tool which, starting from an understanding of the initial situation and a diagnosis, transfers to reality the perceptions and needs of the sector involved and serves to define and lay down the main strategic lines of action that will allow the destination to become, as desired, a destination for gastronomy tourism; and
- An integrated strategy that is in line with the destination's general tourism strategy and with other tools for planning, and in coordination with actions by other bodies and entities, depending on the geographical scope of action of the NTA and the DMO.

Planning gastronomy tourism is not substantially different from the planning of any other tourism product or segment either in regard to its functionality or the working process. It does, however, differ in regard to the broad and diverse range of agents that must participate in it.

In the design and drafting of a Strategic Plan for Gastronomy Tourism, a classic methodology is followed, which must incorporate mechanisms for participation by agents related to the activity, and basically comprises the following main phases:

Preliminary phase: Launch of the project. During this phase, the working team is defined, along with the scope and methodology of the project, the main targets and the timescale.

Phase I: Analysis and diagnosis of the situation. This phase focusses on the knowledge of the destination's tourism context, its current situation and the potential of the tourism activity related to gastronomy in the territory, and on the identification of the main shortcomings and potentialities. This diagnosis identifies any favourable and unfavourable conditions affecting the gastronomy tourism activity which will have to be dealt with during the planning process. For this purpose, among other aspects, the following shall be analysed:

1. From an internal point of view:
 - The territorial and tourism context of the gastronomy tourism product;
 - Inventory and evaluation of all gastronomy resources;
 - Analysis of the tourism supply and its gastronomic component;
 - Analysis of the promotion and marketing of gastronomy tourism;
 - Identification of the agents forming part of the gastronomy tourism model; and
 - Identification of any gastronomy tourism products, locations and venues that have special or differential value.
2. From the external point of view:
 - Analysis of trends (tourism, food, catering management, gastronomy tourism);
 - Analysis of the real and potential demand for gastronomy tourism;
 - Analysis of the gastronomic positioning of the destination; and
 - Analysis of competitors.

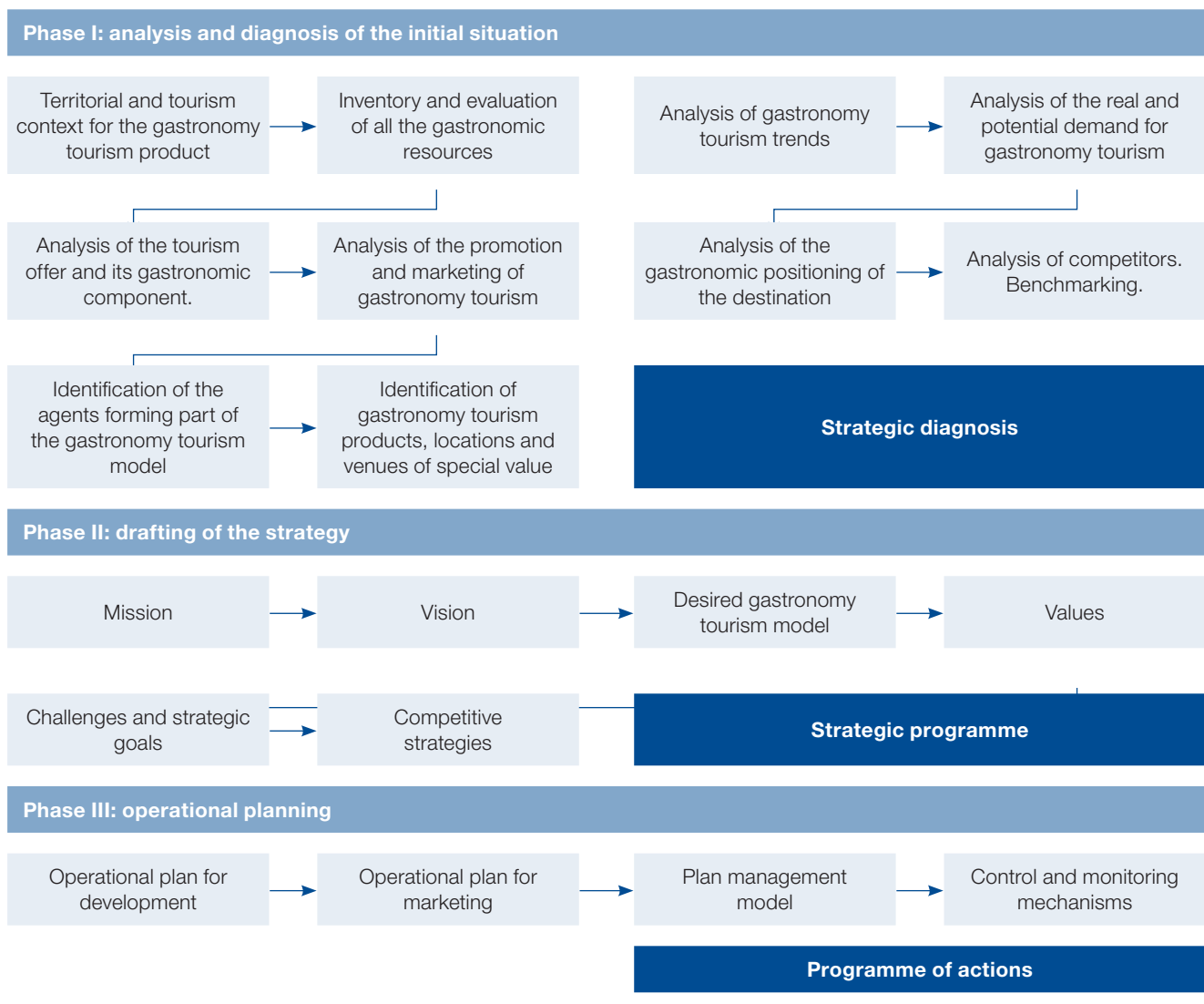
Phase II: Strategic drafting of the Plan. Based on the preliminary phase of diagnosis, this second phase is a complex but key phase which is crucial for defining the path to be followed for achieving the goals. It is essential to involve the participation and the consensus among all agents, including the local community. Strategic recommendations will be made regarding the future of gastronomy tourism for the destination. These must visualize the desired scenario regarding the areas of action for boosting the destination's competitiveness, how the destination must be projected in the main markets and among the different target audiences in order to ensure that the sustainable development and growth of gastronomy tourism benefit the territory, as well as the sector that is directly involved and the local communities.

Phase III: Operational planning. In this stage the programmes shall be defined and priorities established for the actions needed to advance towards the construction of the gastronomy destination. Therefore, both an Operational Development Plan and an Operational Marketing Plan must be devised so that all the tourism and gastronomic potential of the territory can be developed in such a way that it will benefit all the parties involved.

Phase IV: Communication and dissemination of the Plan. In this phase, the Plan will be made known externally to all those involved, in the sector, among citizens and among the communication channels that can link up with potential tourists.

The following graph covers the full contents and the classic methodology of a Strategic Plan for Gastronomy Tourism that has the same process and methodology in certain aspects as other strategic tourism plans.

Figure 1.1 Methodological process for drafting a Strategic Plan for Gastronomy Tourism



Source: Basque Culinary Center.

Results

A strategic planning tool based on consensus with the gastronomy tourism agents in the destination over a specific timescale which will take the form of annual plans and operational programmes.

Important

- **The Gastronomy Tourism Plan must be completely in line with the destination’s Tourism Plan** and its goals;
- **Planning is not guessing the future:** planning is defining and using various scenarios that help to reduce uncertainty by providing strategies and tactics for the destination to minimize its weaknesses and reinforce its strengths;

- **Multi-disciplinary working team:** the drafting of a gastronomy tourism strategy requires an experienced, multi-disciplinary working team with sufficient skills and technical capability to consider the various phases of the project covering gastronomy and tourism from different but complementary angles. The roles and working mechanisms to be established between the internal team in the NTA or DMO and the external team of advisors are also key elements;
- **Processes and mechanisms for participation:** one of the key objectives when building a tourism development model is to grasp the reality of the territory based on the knowledge and participation of the relevant agents. They need to be involved in the process of discussion and reflection on the tourism strategy to be designed in order to achieve the goals and visualize the tourism scenario in a not very distant future. The drafting of a Strategic Plan for Gastronomy Tourism shall include an open, participatory process of reflection in which the most representative agents from the gastronomy tourism value chain in the destination must participate (political leaders, associations from the gastronomy and tourism sector, tourism specialists, opinion leaders from the sector, etc.). The process of participation must also guarantee that the benefits of the sector are distributed by including them in the value chain of gastronomy tourism; and
- **Sustainable development:** the Gastronomy Tourism Plan, like the destination's Tourism Plan, must include the principles of the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda and the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism.

1.2 The value chain of gastronomy tourism

The value chain of tourism is a sequence of primary and support activities which are strategically essential for the performance of the tourism sector.

Linked processes such as policy making and integrated planning, product development and packaging, promotion and marketing, distribution and sales and destination operations and services are the key **primary activities** of the tourism value chain.

Support activities involve transport and infrastructure, human resource development, technology and systems of other complementary goods and services which may not be related to the core tourism businesses but have a high impact on the value of tourism (UNWTO).¹

Gastronomy tourism is a very interesting field when analysing the value chain because, for some years now, **gastronomy has gone beyond the table and the restaurant setting. As a product it is now open to a large number of attributes and participants.**

There seems to be unanimity in considering gastronomy as a value chain involving different branches of activity and starting from **food production** (which includes agriculture, fishing and the food industry). It includes **distribution** via any type of channel (from traditional markets, supermarkets and large retail outlets to neighbourhood shops, grocers and online commerce); and it reaches homes and catering businesses with different profiles (including international delivery firms) for **processing and tasting** and, obviously, it also includes tourism related to gastronomy.

The value chain of gastronomy and, therefore, of gastronomy tourism, means that a broader, richer, more satisfactory universe can be covered by tourism and allows it to become the main motive for tourism activity. Gastronomy is not just a dish. To reach that dish, a value chain has been built that includes elements associated with the production and processing of foods, as well as their distribution, transformation and, finally, ingestion. These processes include added values such as gastronomic landscapes, the destination's cultural and culinary identity, tangible and intangible heritage (culinary crafts, traditional recipes, utensils, etc.) and are linked to other elements having a greater or lesser impact such as public policies, administrative regulation, infrastructure, training and research, amongst others.

The value chain of gastronomy tourism is an important topic: **it allows for the building of an innovative framework for the analysis of the tourism activity from a holistic and integrating perspective.** Understanding how the process works is essential for identifying what policies are needed to ensure that sustainability is included as a strategic variable for the management and positioning of gastronomy tourism destinations in markets and, therefore, for the success of the resulting tourism products and activities.

In this context, a **key** step for the development and management of gastronomy tourism in a territory is to **identify, inventory and analyse the potential and degree of development of the various elements in the value chain of gastronomy tourism:** producers in the primary and secondary sector, firms in the tertiary sector, the catering offer, accommodation, specialist trade, firms providing gastronomic activities and services (cooking workshops, tasting schools, etc.), knowledge venues such as cooking and hospitality schools, markets, wholesale markets, auctions, and venues for the dissemination of gastronomic culture, trade fairs, festivals and events, and also natural and cultural resources.

This quantitative and qualitative identification and analysis may contain the following elements, among others:

1. **Gastronomic heritage:** natural, heritage and gastronomic resources: gastronomic routes and itineraries, landscapes, paths, recipes, typical dishes, culinary crafts, etc;
2. **Gastronomic products, producers and food industries:** quality products with a Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) and a Protected Geographical Indication (PGI); from the sea, the land, cattle-breeding, etc.), their production areas and associated tourism and leisure activities;
3. **Hospitality sector (catering and accommodation):** quantitative and qualitative: number of establishments, types (haute cuisine and signature cuisine, traditional cuisine, popular cuisine, tapas bars, gastrobars, etc.), geographical distribution, types, quality labels associated with gastronomy;
4. **Specialist trade:** traditional markets, street markets, local products, delicatessens, wine cellars, etc.;

5. **Events and activities to disseminate gastronomic culture:** trade fairs and markets offering produce from agriculture, fishing and farming, gastronomic events, gastronomic activity firms;
6. **Venues for gastronomic education:** museums and wine and food interpretation centres; and
7. **Centres for gastronomic research and training:** gastronomic universities, hospitality schools and training centres, etc.

This analysis should allow us to identify the products, locations and venues for gastronomy tourism of special or differential value that define the destination's value proposition and to analyse current and potential products, their promotion and marketing. It will also be necessary to study how gastronomy tourism complements other tourism products existing in the destination.

Results

Knowledge of the functioning of the existing value chain of gastronomy tourism in the destination, identifying the attractions, services, direct and indirect agents and the links between them.

Important

- **Map of gastronomy value:** knowledge and identification of the elements involved in the different steps of the value chain and their location on the destination's map of gastronomy value are relevant for determining synergies and networks of interest. This knowledge is also the basis for creating gastronomy tourism products as it allows for the identification of the potential and opportunities for gastronomic culture in destinations, and for the proposal of the main lines of strategy for promoting and galvanizing them as a sustainable, quality tourism product;
- **Gastronomy tourism, much more than food:** gastronomy tourism goes beyond the restaurant and leads to the discovery and integration of other agents in the food production chain;

Figure 1.2 Elements for analysing a destination's resources, products and gastronomy



Source: Basque Culinary Center.

- **Gastronomy tourism cuts across sectors** and may be unique in helping to maximize the distribution of the benefits of tourism in the communities and in the territory. Gastronomy tourism empowers all those who form part of the gastronomy value chain, especially local communities and professionals in their capacity as ambassadors for their territory, thus reinforcing the identity and feeling of belonging, and safeguarding the authenticity of each place;
- **The gastronomy tourism value chain is often very heterogeneous and fragmented:** this means that great efforts are needed to work in a collaborative way. It is necessary to establish programmes to create awareness and to offer training and qualification for agents, especially for those who are less linked to tourism activities (producers, industries, shops, etc.);
- **From the place of origin to the table:** relations between the tourism sector and the primary and secondary sectors are essential for connecting a territory's storehouse with the table so that endogenous products can be given greater value through tasting sessions, purchases, etc. NTAs and DMOs should promote these links by means of programmes to promote local gastronomic products; and
- **Inter-relations between the food value chain and other areas:** in addition to the sectors that are closely linked to the value chain of gastronomy tourism, also of importance are the relations between food and gastronomy and culture, biodiversity and the landscape, health and wellbeing, science and technology and education.

1.3 Analysis of trends in gastronomy tourism

By analysing trends in gastronomy tourism, we can find out about the context in which this activity takes place. This gives us an idea about the main trends in the tourism sector, helps us understand the role played by gastronomy in today's societies – especially as a key element in cultural heritage, as an instrument for innovation and regional competitiveness, or as a driver for the SDGs – and reflects on the specific dynamics of gastronomy tourism and its possible impact on the strategic tourism proposal of the destination.

The destination's management entity should set up a system for market intelligence that includes gastronomy tourism and allows the main trends to be observed and interpreted and the planning and management processes to be improved. For this purpose, a scorecard is proposed to record integrated information on international, national, regional and local entities, and new sources of information such as big data, social media, credit card firms, etc. This would make it possible to study, amongst others: the general evolution of the tourism sector and, in particular, of gastronomy tourism; the economic and geopolitical situation; changes in markets and in tourism demand; the strategy of other leading or competing destinations; the challenge of the digital economy and of the 'sharing economy'; the impact of technology and social media; concern about sustainability, climate change and the impact of tourism on destinations; gastronomic trends, etc.

The following sources of information are recommended:

- Documentation and official statistics on the tourism sector from international organizations such as UNWTO, the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), the World Economic Forum (WEF), and the World Bank and from national, regional and local organizations;
- Studies on trends on the digital economy from firms such as Google, TripAdvisor, Booking; and reports from firms that specialize in market research and market trends such as GfK or Phocuswright;
- Documentation and studies on gastronomy tourism, such as the UNWTO Global Reports on Gastronomy Tourism, Conclusions of the Global Fora on Gastronomy Tourism UNWTO/BCC, documents from organizations such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and reports from specialist entities such as the BCC; and

- Documentation and studies on trends, consumer patterns and gastronomic innovation.

In the framework of the gastronomy tourism strategy, it is also necessary to improve in the sources of primary information on the destination with surveys on demand, including the analysis of gastronomy tourism (motivations, activities, evaluation, satisfaction, etc.), focus groups or the promotion of university research on gastronomy tourism. Also relevant is the analysis of data on credit card use and comments by users and tourists on the various tourism and gastronomic digital platforms.

It is essential to periodically review the scorecard, to process and use the information and to communicate the results.

Results

A market intelligence system that makes it possible to know and interpret the main global trends on gastronomy tourism with the aim of improving planning and management processes.

Important

- **Institutional leadership:** the NTA or DMO should be responsible for promoting an observatory on gastronomy tourism;
- **Sources of information:** the main sources of information on trends in tourism and gastronomy should be monitored;
- **System of intelligence on the destination:** expansion of current systems for tourism intelligence, including relevant information on gastronomy tourism, using new sources of information on trends such as big data, social media, etc.;
- **Compilation of information:** a recurring protocol should be established for centralized compilation of information on gastronomy tourism of interest for the destination; and
- **Dissemination of information:** there should also be a procedure for the processing and periodic use of the information stored and the dissemination of knowledge via the NTA or DMO media for promotion.

1.4 Comparative analysis and analysis of competitors in the destination

A comparative analysis and an analysis of competitors are the first step for knowing the positioning of a gastronomy tourism destination.

As part of the gastronomy tourism strategy, it is important to carry out an analysis comparing the destination with other gastronomy destinations in order to find out how they are working in this area and to study their strong points. Such destinations should be selected because their geographical location and the type of product they offer are similar to those of the destination in question, or because their gastronomy tourism proposal makes them relevant.

This analysis should make it possible to identify the current gastronomic positioning of the destination and the desired positioning for the future.

Various selection criteria are recommended for this analysis:

1. **Natural and cultural environment:** landscape and cultural attractions of the location of the gastronomic activity;
2. **Product:** the quality of the produce/raw materials to be used for developing gastronomic experiences;
3. **Preparation:** the way the produce is processed to maintain its quality and naturally enhance its flavour;
4. **Quality of service:** this is related to the service provided to tourists and the clarity and transparency of the information they receive;
5. **Price:** the cost of the product for tourists;
6. **Experiences:** the number and quality of tourism experiences offered in connection with gastronomy;
7. **Connectivity of the destination:** the frequency and number of destinations connected to the gastronomy tourism destination, both national and international;
8. **Communication of the offer:** the quality of communication to promote the gastronomy destination;
9. **Variety:** the number of product categories in the destination;

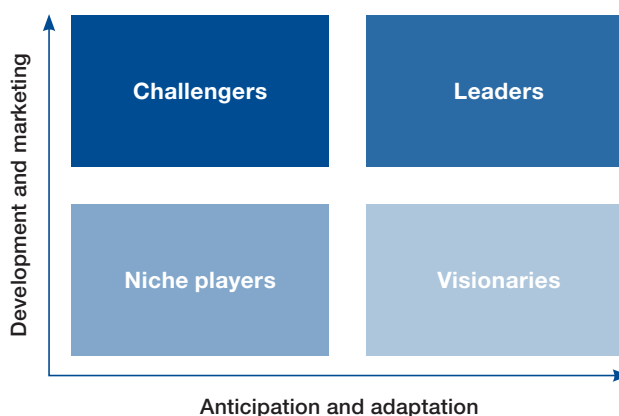
10. **Diversity:** the number of products per category in the destination;
11. **Professionalization:** the development and intention to professionally develop the gastronomy sector;
12. **Profitability:** the cost-benefit of the gastronomic activities;
13. **Positioning:** the conceptual territory occupied by the gastronomy destination and how it is projected;
14. **Visibility:** the presence of the gastronomy destination in its markets; and
15. **Innovation:** the degree of innovation in the gastronomy tourism offering and processes for relating with tourists.

To define the **positioning of the gastronomy tourism destination** it is necessary to make a strategic diagnosis from various perspectives:

Dimension/perspective 1: Gartner matrix, to analyse:

- The capacity for developing and marketing what is on offer; and
- Anticipation by the destination of trends and needs in the gastronomy tourism market and adaptation to them.

Figure 1.3 Gartner matrix



Source: Gartner inc. (2019), *Gartner Magic Quadrant* (online), available at: www.gartner.com.

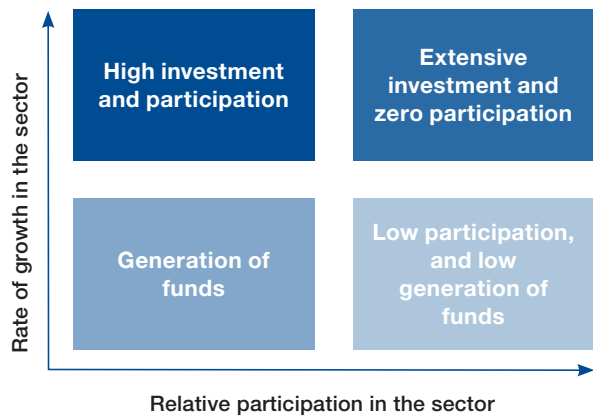
Dimension/perspective 2: Boston Consulting Group matrix, to analyse:

- The rate of growth of the gastronomy tourism sector; and
- Relative participation by the destination in the gastronomy tourism sector.

Dimension/perspective 3: McKinsey matrix, to analyse:

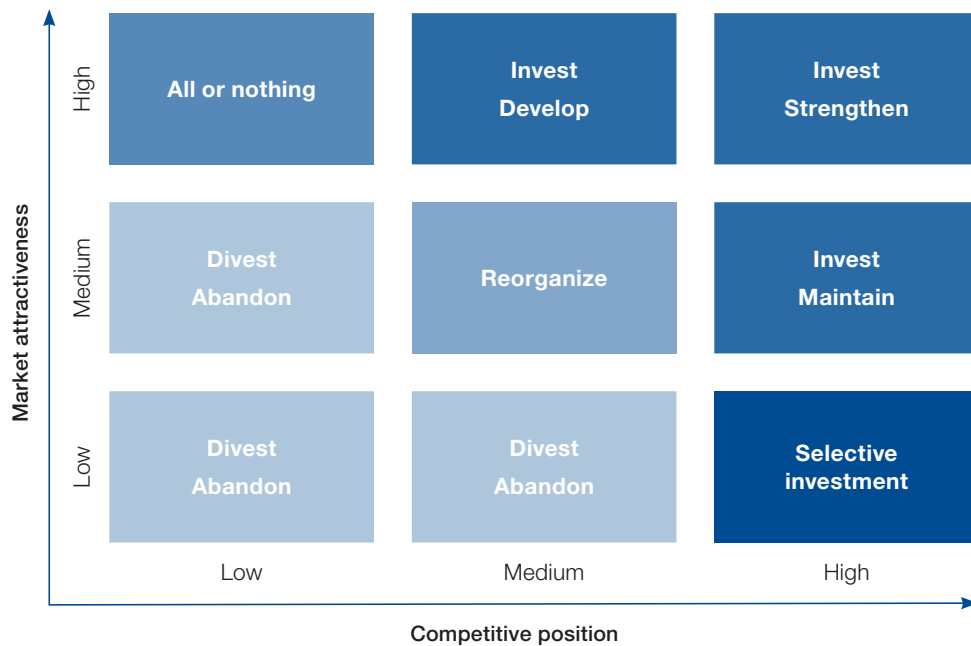
- The attraction of the gastronomy destination in the market; and
- The competitive position in the gastronomy tourism market.

Figure 1.4 Boston Consulting Group matrix



Source: Reeves, M.; Moose, S. and Venema, T. (2014), 'BCG Classics Revisited: The Growth Share Matrix', Boston Consulting Group (online), available at: www.bcg.com/publications/2014/growth-share-matrix-bcg-classics-revisited.aspx (23-04-2019).

Figure 1.5 Matriz de McKinsey



Source: McKinsey (2008), 'Enduring Ideas: The GE-McKinsey nine-box matrix', *McKinsey Quarterly*, September 2008 (online), available at: www.mckinsey.com (23-04-2019).

Results

A map showing the positioning of the gastronomy tourism destination in relation to its competitors, good practices of other destinations, and a strategic roadmap for achieving the desired positioning of the destination, that is, the place it wants to occupy for its stakeholders and target audiences.

Important

- **Good practices:** clearly identify competitors in the field of gastronomy tourism, and experiences of good practices in the various areas so that the destination can establish criteria for defining its strategy;
- **Values of the destination:** select appropriate criteria for the comparative analysis in line with the goals and values of the destination and with the dynamics of the gastronomy tourism demand;
- **Sources of prestige:** analyse primary and secondary sources to evaluate actions by competing destinations and good international practices; and
- **Professional tools:** use tools such as those proposed above (Gartner, Boston Consulting and McKinsey matrices) to map the positioning of the destination and to identify its possible strategic roadmap.

1.5 Quantitative and qualitative analysis of gastronomy tourists

One of the essential elements for an external analysis of a tourism product is to study both real and potential demand. Consumers are the main drivers of innovation and their motivations, tastes and needs change at breakneck speed, marking the natural evolution of markets.

To promote sustainable tourism development in a destination, it is essential to understand gastronomy tourists and their perspective of tourism and of gastronomy, as well as to know the impact on destinations. It is useful to study a variety of gastronomic profiles and interests in order to better understand how and when to act. Measuring the tourist experience is also essential for improving, developing and understanding the phenomenon, and for taking up the opportunities presented by gastronomy tourism.

The main actions to be taken in relation to gastronomy tourism demand from the destination point of view are the following:

- **Market research:** segment, characterize and evaluate the attractiveness of the gastronomy tourism segments for the destination, offering information on socio-demographic and psychographic characteristics, tourism consumption and gastronomic patterns (type of accommodation, transport, average stay, travel organization, tourist expenditure, spending on food and beverages, complementary/gastronomic activities performed, etc.);
- **Analyse and determine tourism consumption habits and gastronomic behaviour** in the main markets generating tourism towards the destination;
- **Analyse tourist traffic and their gastronomic behaviour in the destination** in order to understand the dynamic behind the travel experience: general data (duration of travel, frequency or use of the service, loyalty, first or repeat visit, price sensitivity, number of travel companions, means of transport used, activities carried out during travel, sales channel used, method of travel organization, advance booking, period of travel, type of accommodation used, average expenditure, information sources, etc.), and specific data on gastronomic behaviour (number and type of gastronomic activities, average expenditure per activity, etc.);

- **Analyse the degree of satisfaction** of gastronomy tourists in the destination; and
- **Analyse the economic, social and environmental** impact of gastronomy tourists in the destination.

Segmentation of gastronomy tourists and their in-depth knowledge is a challenge for destinations. The profiles of gastronomy tourism consumers can be segmented by demographic variables (place of origin, age, sex, etc.), socio-economic variables (income, occupation, education, socio-economic level, etc.), psychographic variables (lifestyle, personality, values, interests, tastes, opinions, etc.) and behavioural variables. But, **to understand the gastronomy tourist, perhaps the most important variable is motivation** because the place occupied by gastronomy in the tourist's intention to travel to a destination may vary:

- Gastronomy is the main motive or experience in the tourism activity;
- Gastronomy is a secondary experience or motivation for travel, that is, it is a relevant complement that gives significant added value to travel; and
- Gastronomy forms part of the tourist's routine. It meets the physiological need for food, in which case we would not be talking about a gastronomy tourist.

Gastronomy tourist profiles can be drawn up with the help of observation and research (surveys, focus groups, expert panels, etc.) and should be the basis for tourism product design. To characterize and value the different gastronomy tourism segments and profiles, and to decide on the target groups, aspects such as the following should be taken into account:

- **The size and potential of growth**, that is, the sales that might be generated in the activities selected and foreseeable growth;
- **The factors that a client in this segment takes into account when deciding on which gastronomic destination to visit** (price, nearness, convenience, service quality, extent of offer, destination's image, location, etc.); and
- **The degree of competitiveness** that exists in competing destinations for attracting this type of segment in comparison with the destination under consideration.

The above should make it possible to draw up a matrix for market and segment prioritization.

Certain tools and techniques can help explain the behaviour of gastronomy tourists, such as:

- The **customer journey**: this maps the stages through which a gastronomy tourist passes during purchase and travel, starting from when they first have the idea of travelling, and including planning, the actual visit and the post-travel stage when they share their experience, qualify the destination and recommend it if the experience was positive;
- A traveller profile describes behaviour in a specific situation. People may exhibit various behaviour models or profiles during their lifetimes. **Buyer personas** and **empathy maps** are illustrative methods that can be used to represent gastronomy tourists taking into account socio-demographic data and information on their behaviour;
- Digitalization and connectivity with consumers are a constant source of information. **Big data and neuro-marketing** technologies can help decipher the habits and behaviour of gastronomy tourists, anticipating their needs, designing offers adapted to each segment and offering services to facilitate purchases or integral solutions; and
- The **economics of behaviour, psychology and neuroscience** should be used to understand how gastronomy tourists behave and to design evidence-based products or services.

Results

- Quantitative and qualitative data on gastronomy tourists in the destination: main figures (number of entries, overnight stays, number of catering services), and knowledge of behaviour of the different profiles, expectations, needs, travel patterns and preferences related to gastronomy tourism. This should make it possible to attract more gastronomy tourists by developing attractive experiences and marketing them;
- Segmentation factors based on lifestyle (including demographics, leisure types, etc.);

- Matrix for prioritizing markets and segments; and
- Product-market approach: product/segment matrices (at national level and for the destination).

Important

- **Gastronomy tourists:** the UNWTO Second Global Report on Gastronomy Tourism: Sustainability and Gastronomy (2016) stresses, with regard to tourist motivation, that the gastronomic experience is as important today as visiting a museum, enjoying music or admiring the architecture in a destination. In this context and according to various studies, there is now a new, rising tourist profile: one whose main motivation when travelling is to discover and enjoy the culinary identity of the places visited. Tourists have changed the focus of their travel. Now instead of wishing to visit sites at the destination in a contemplative way, they wish to enjoy experiences and carry out memorable activities that allow them to connect and participate and that should be the expression of the atmosphere, lifestyle and gastronomic culture of the place. Today's gastronomy tourists want to find the essence of the place. They search for authenticity and identity, not only of the food products but also of the social context around them. They are interested in product origin and culinary techniques, and they see gastronomy as a means of socialization. Such tourists consume more than average, are demanding and discerning authenticity and reject uniformity;
- **Designing knowledge-based value for gastronomy tourists:** it is essential to acquire detailed knowledge of the main attributes tourists look for and the values associated with them in order to enhance value in gastronomy tourism today and in the future;
- In some cases, **less may be more:** therefore, instead of trying to attract various profiles of gastronomy tourist, it may be better to focus on just a few of them, studying them in order to find the **ideal customer**. The more research is done, the better target gastronomy tourists will be understood and it will become more feasible to personalize gastronomy tourism proposals to satisfy, or even go beyond, customer needs and expectations;

- **Destinations focussing on gastronomy tourists:** customer orientation is an area of constant improvement in firms. Knowing trends and changes in consumer attitudes, their reasons for buying, times of consumption and preferences should be a strategic priority. Processes of marketing and customer service for tourists should play a key role in all firms, placing consumers at the centre of strategies. Gastronomy tourists are today at the heart of the travel cycle. NTAs or DMOs should play the role of facilitators or drivers of gastronomy tourism firms and should transfer any knowledge generated to the sector;
- **Measuring the tourism experience during the post-travel in the digital age:** social media serve as a platform for communication to the gastronomy sector during the inspiration and the sharing phase, and they provide information allowing tourism experiences to be measured. The use of big data to analyse online reputation can provide very valuable information for the destination and companies. Today the online reputation of tourism destinations lies with the catering sector. Studying the online reputation of the catering sector can provide valuable information on aspects such as the degree of satisfaction with the experience in various dimensions (service, price, ambiance, food quality), and this can be segmented according to various criteria, origin of opinions, etc.;
- **Future research methods:** discoveries on the importance of emotions in decision-making have given rise to improved market research and competitive intelligence solutions in which traditional techniques are used alongside technology from the fields of medicine and neuro-marketing (attention measurement, galvanometer, etc.), and alongside more recent methodologies, such as qualitative/quantitative research (linguistic and semantic analysis of what is stated on the Internet, in conversations between customers and operators in call centres, etc.) and predictive inference (the use of statistical models to define the perceptive aspects that have an impact on certain behaviours); and
- **Scorecard, transfer of data to the sector:** in order to monitor trends, it is necessary to create a scorecard including the main indicators. It is essential for the results obtained to be comparable from one destination to other so similar methodologies should be used in all regions, and also for the results of research to be transferred to the sector.

1.6 Analysis of the destination's image and gastronomic positioning

To further the development of a gastronomy tourism strategy, it is relevant to analyse the destination's image to find out how potential clients think, what their attitude is and how they behave when travelling as well as the role played by gastronomy during travel.

The methodology for analysing the image of a gastronomy tourism destination comprises three types of work:

1. **Research and analysis of generating markets:** first, the main national and international markets generating gastronomy tourists should be identified. For this purpose, a set of criteria may be established to facilitate selection:
 - Connectivity;
 - Number of tourists per generating market;
 - Number of potential tourists per generating market;
 - Per capita expenditure on tourism;
 - Per capital expenditure on gastronomy tourism;
 - Degree of knowledge of, and familiarity with, the destination;
 - Travel culture; and
 - Gastronomic culture.

Once the priority markets have been selected and the potential specific weight of such markets for the destination has been analysed by their levels of tourism expenditure, proximity and familiarity, a more qualitative analysis should be carried out regarding their habits and gastronomic trends as well as their expectations and motivations when planning travel, and what they miss from their home country when they are in a new destination.

This will allow us to identify patterns and insights that enable us to detect drivers that we can use to help attract tourists from such markets, based on the following sources of information:

- Publications in mass media in generating markets;
- Opinions of opinion leaders on tourism and gastronomy;
- Blogs on gastronomy and tourism;
- Image of the destination in generating market search engines;
- Rankings in international publications;
- Portals such as Tripadvisor, La Fourchette, The Fork, etc.;

- Reports from market research institutes; and
- Interviews with decision-makers on outbound tourism from such markets and focus groups with participants from generating markets.

With the results of all this work, a diagnosis can be drawn up of the destination's image which will identify the most relevant drivers to be included in the gastronomy tourism strategy.

2. **Analysis of the customer journey of the gastronomy tourist:** the image of the destination associated with gastronomy in the different stages of the gastronomy tourist experience based on analysis in digital environments (big data) and qualitative studies on influencers in potential markets, marketing, experience and reputation.
3. **Analysis of marketing in the gastronomy tourism destination:** to assess marketing media and actions for gastronomy tourism, an analysis should be carried out into the media and content of promotional actions taken by the management entity and by other relevant public and private institutions affecting the destination. Specifically, the following should be considered:
 - Promotional media for gastronomy tourism in the destination, especially the website, presence on social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.), video networks (YouTube) and photograph networks (Instagram, Pinterest, Flickr, etc.), publications, audiovisual products and tourism leaflets;
 - Actions taken in the destination to promote gastronomy tourism: participation in events, trade fairs, familiarization trips, tourism products, etc.; and
 - Presence of the destination in the catalogues of the main gastronomy tourism operators.

Results

Definition of the positioning and top-priority generating markets for the destination and of the patterns of consumption, lifestyle and quality of life in order to identify the drivers for the gastronomy tourism strategy and promote the attraction of tourists from those markets.

Important

- **Tourism intelligence:** the destination should have a good system of tourism intelligence so that it can identify the top-priority markets for gastronomy tourism, from both its own sources and market research institutes;
- **Orientation to demand:** to generate knowledge on trends among gastronomy tourism customers from the main generating markets. The gastronomy tourism strategy targets an individualised and demanding audience. Therefore, knowledge of the needs, preferences and behavioural habits of current and potential consumers is important for preparing the destination's gastronomic offering and the channels for promotion and communication;
- **The travel experience cycle:** to analyse the destination's image in the different stages of the travel experience: planning, booking, experience and sharing. The challenge for the destination is to know how it can be present in each of these stages of the gastronomic tourist experience; and
- **Evaluation of the marketing:** to evaluate the presence of gastronomy in the different media and channels for promotion and marketing of the tourism destination.

1.7 Defining the destination's competition strategy

The destination's gastronomy tourism strategy should be built around the following four pillars:

1. The **tourism development model:** the mission and vision, the main inspiring principles and the strategic goals of the destination;
2. The **territorial strategy;**
3. The **competitive strategy** of the gastronomy destination; and
4. The **basic strategies:** product strategy, top-priority target audiences, markets and positioning.

Tourism development strategy

What role should be taken by gastronomy and what weight should it have in the tourism development of the destination? How should it be related to other economic and social sectors? The development of gastronomy tourism should go hand in hand with other sectors and activities. Both the **mission** and the **vision** of the gastronomy tourism strategy must be defined:

- They should be conceptual formulations/statements, so should be ambitious and inspiring;
- They should serve as a reference for the destination's strategic goals. All important decisions affecting the development of the gastronomy tourism strategy should be consistent with such formulations;
- They should be conceived over a (very) long term: as cross-cutting activities, tourism and gastronomy have a long lead time and impact on the territory. They require long-term investments, they create inter-dependence among different sectors of the destination's economy, culture and society, and the functioning of the project's basic product, gastronomic culture, obviously falls outside the timescale of any strategy; and
- They should therefore be based on consensus and should be validated by the different agents in the territory to guarantee acceptance, understanding and continuation in the long term.

The mission of gastronomy in the destination's tourism proposal should define the main goals pursued by the NTA or DMO by focussing on this sector of activity.

The vision should offer a long-term snapshot of what the project will be in the future. It is a desired scenario so should be inspiring and define an ideal for the plan.

Territorial strategy

- How gastronomy tourism should be structured territorially?
- What role is assigned to each area of tourism and/or to each resource?
- How should the gastronomy proposal be structured in relation to the destination's territorial reality?

The aim is for the territorial adoption of gastronomy tourism to be optimal from the points of view of cultural, social and environmental sustainability and from that of competitiveness, looking towards the goals of improving the quality of life for the local population.

Competitive strategy

We consider competitive strategy to be the choice between various alternatives, a long-term vision, providing the greatest competitive advantage for the destination's gastronomy tourism strategy. The alternatives are:

- Leadership in cost: this is a strategy based on efficiency which minimizes costs and allows for competition in the market with lower prices than those of other similar destinations;
- Approach or specialization: this is a strategy based on an area of almost exclusive specialization but in which the destination is acknowledged to be the *best* option;
- 'Blue Ocean': this is a strategy based on an area of specialization in which there are no competing destinations; and
- Differentiation: this is a strategic option based on singling out and focussing on the values of the destination's offering which characterize it and set it apart from its competitors.

The competitive strategy that is normally proposed for a gastronomy tourism destination is differentiation.

Therefore, the vectors and attributes that set apart the destination's gastronomic offering and on which the strategic proposal for the gastronomy tourism destination will be based must be identified.

Basic strategies

The basic strategies to be defined are:

- **Product strategy:**
What gastronomy tourism products or activities must be promoted and what will the priorities be?
The methodology proposed is that of the Potential/Attractiveness Matrix which makes it possible to define the portfolio of gastronomy tourism products.
- **Market strategy and target audiences:**
Who will the customers be?
Determination and prioritization of the target audiences for each of the tourism products or activities proposed. For this purpose, the main stakeholders, target audiences and the top-priority markets must be identified.
- **Positioning strategy:**
We define the positioning of the destination's gastronomy tourism as the 'place' it wants to occupy in the mindset of its stakeholders and its target audiences. That is, the image that we want to be perceived of the destination, for each of the stakeholders and target audiences both singly and together. The positioning of the gastronomy tourism destination will take the form of a single value proposition, a **unique selling proposition** (USP). This is a simple sentence that should summarize almost completely the set of values associated with the destination's gastronomic positioning.

Results

Definition of the gastronomy tourism strategy formulating the tourism model proposed, identifying the gastronomic landscapes, the attributes on which the competitive strategy is based and defining the portfolio of products, target audiences and priority markets and the positioning of the destination.

Important

- **The destination's tourism strategy:** gastronomy tourism is not an isolated initiative but forms part of the destination's general strategy. The general strategic framework of the destination should therefore be analysed together with the integration and linking of gastronomy with other sectors and activities in the territory;
- **Gastronomic culture:** the cultural and gastronomic identity of the territory must be included as a key element for differentiating the destination, together with international conventions on intangible cultural heritage;
- **Sustainability:** a strategy should be based on the guidelines stemming from the main international declarations and conventions on sustainable development such as the SDGs and the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism²;
- **Participation:** the process of drafting the destination's strategy should encourage participation by all the agents, whether public or private, and civil society that are involved in the value chain of gastronomy tourism;
- **The travel experience cycle:** the strategy of the gastronomy destination is conceived from the point of view of the travel experience: dreaming of the trip, planning, booking, the experience and sharing. The challenge for the gastronomic destination is to be present in each of these stages of the tourist experience; and
- **Orientation towards demand:** a destination's tourism strategy proposal should be oriented towards demand and the creation of experiences based on the local culture and gastronomy.

1.8 Promoting product development and innovation

The product strategy aims to identify and classify all the types of gastronomy tourism product that could potentially exist in a destination, so that they can be formulated and launched on the tourism market.

Creating a gastronomic product in a destination requires that strategies be defined to offer products, services and experiences to consumers that allow them to connect with the essence and personality of the destination's gastronomic culture, including proposals for gastronomic enjoyment in line with the territorial reality that are appealing and capable of attracting new customers.

Product design must be in line with the gastronomic resources that are characteristic of the various parts of the territory and with the needs of demand. If the offering includes a large element of experience and emotion, then the products can connect with the feelings of potential visitors from the different generating markets.

The product strategy must focus on developing, above all, the products that best suit the demand, identifying markets and target audiences and finding out their expectations in order to meet them. This strategy should be outlined on a Potential/Interest matrix so that both priorities and the weight of products can be analysed.

The main tasks to be carried out by an NTA or DMO when defining and structuring gastronomy tourism products are:

- **Identification of the icons of the local gastronomy** (primary or processed) that have greatest potential for introduction into the tourism market. Giving value to the gastronomic resources of a territory is one of the challenges faced by gastronomy tourism destinations. It is therefore important to define the heritage and natural gastronomic resources to be converted into tourism products that will identify the territory.
- **Identification of the agents involved in the product:** generally speaking, a tourism product involves:
 - Firms providing gastronomic services for tourists (food producers and industries, accommodation establishments, restaurants of all types, markets, gourmet stores, shopping, culinary activities, experiences, festivals and events related to the gastronomic products of the destination, gastronomic centres and museums, etc.);
 - Facilitators: district and local management entities in the destination, tourism associations,

associations of cooks and producers, universities and training centres, etc.; and

- Opinion leaders: tourism offices, local gastronomy media, etc.
- **Definition and structuring of consumer proposals:** the various proposals for product consumption which will form the product structure must be defined:
 - Product for the destination as a whole made up of all the others together;
 - Themed routes or itineraries based on products or the most appealing dishes;
 - Gastronomic districts and municipalities: areas, districts and municipalities marked by a gastronomic product and all their culture;
 - Gastronomic experiences: original proposals for consumption that will be striking and memorable for tourists; and
 - Gastronomic events: festivals, trade fairs, sessions and events related to the gastronomic culture.

These consumption proposals will be created from what already exists and by grouping, standardizing and enhancing resources that were identified as having potential during the analysis phase.

- **Creation of a product manual:** in cases in which working networks or product clubs are set up voluntarily, there should be rules for self-regulation

of the product laid down in manuals which identify the product, as well as the agents involved, and the main criteria to be followed by the various types of participants, in order to guarantee a specific level of quality, specialization and adaptation to gastronomy tourist demand. The collective brand is also usually defined as the gastronomy tourism destination.

There are tools that facilitate the creation of products and experiences, such as Design Thinking.

Gastronomy tourism should be based on the very great variety of forms of consumption and should cover them all, including those of a more popular, social, familiar and everyday nature. Promotion of interaction between visitors and the people who are 'behind the gastronomy scene' in destinations should not be neglected. Nor should gastronomic excursions.

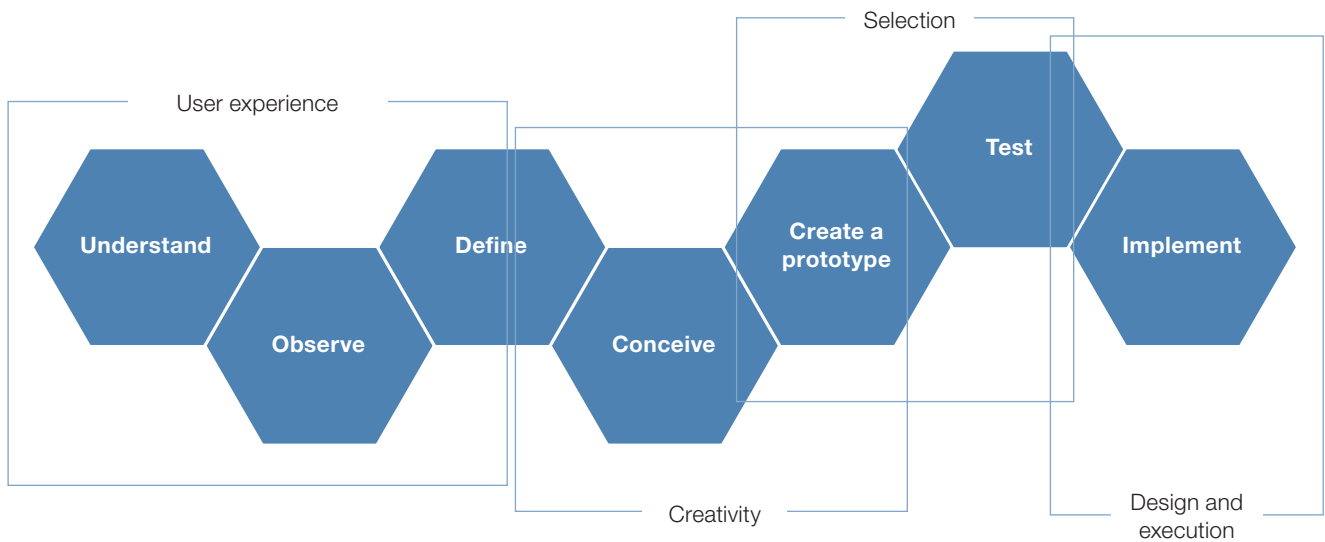
The offer made by gastronomy destinations, if made with authenticity and based on experiences, should be backed by the values of cultural identity, sustainability, quality of tourism products and services and consumer protection.

Figure 1.6 Some proposals for gastronomy tourist consumption



Source: Basque Culinary Center.

Figure 1.7 Models of Design Thinking



Source: Hasso-Plattner Institute of Design, University of Stanford.

Results

The process results in the portfolio of the destination's gastronomy tourism products.

Details on how the product is created should be recorded, including at least: the name and description of the gastronomy product, the target audience, the values to be projected, the process of providing the service, the product's technical specifications (duration, retail price, people involved, facilities, consumables, necessary investment, internal cost, elements that differentiate the product, intangible elements, etc.).

Important

- **Promotion of the endogenous gastronomy resources in the territory:** to build a gastronomy tourism product, it is important to define which gastronomy resources are special and different and are to be converted into tourism product. They will be those that allow visitors to learn about cultural and historical heritage, culinary techniques, etc. of the destination by tasting, experiencing and purchasing. Enhancing these endogenous resources is precisely one of the main challenges faced by gastronomy tourism destinations.
- **Promotion of the destination's culinary identity:** the destinations that stand out from a gastronomic point of view set up projects for enriching their gastronomic heritage, creating awareness and enthusiasm, passing on the culinary heritage, conservation, etc. They have resources that are distinctive, and they promote the protection, recognition and development of local products and local gastronomy.
- **The product development programme** draws up a holistic roadmap based on research and analysis and including topics such as governance, links in the value chain, products, skills, territorial tourism intelligence, brand identity, communication and marketing.

- **Promotion of hubs, incubators and accelerators** for the creation of firms that offer innovative gastronomy tourism products.
- **Product clubs, collaboration networks:** the development of successful tourism products requires the commitment of all agents involved. Synergies and potential connections must be found among the various agents in the value chain in order to generate voluntary groups of public and private entities that work on the creation of products and innovative experiences and promote them in markets under a common brand and covered by product self-regulation.
- **Technology at the service of product creation:** technology makes it possible like never before to provide support for gastronomy tourism products. Some examples: self-guided routes (by creating leaflets and mobile applications) with gastronomic themes to encourage visitors to explore the rural area and to spend locally, augmented reality recreating scenes showing the production and/or harvesting of gastronomic products, mobile applications helping visitors to find a local restaurant or a food market, etc.
- **Gastronomic tourism products to meet the different needs of gastronomy tourists:** tourism products proposed by all agents in the primary, secondary and tertiary sector should meet tourists' different needs and expectations.
 - **Biological needs:** the simple fact of eating, which tourists need to do several times a day. The proposals of restaurants, accommodation facilities and other hospitality establishments must meet these basic needs;
 - **Cultural needs:** getting to know, learning about and discovering the origin of products, how they are made, their characteristics, etc. Producers and industries that can be visited, museums with guided visits and other such activities can help visitors get to know the local products and how they are made; and
 - **Hedonistic needs:** carrying out unusual activities, joining a club, sleeping in a vineyard or olive grove, tasting gourmet products and experiencing pleasure and delight, buying products, etc.
- UNWTO actively supports the promotion of gastronomy tourism in various countries, in terms of both knowledge and the practical application of models for creating products through its **Product Development Programme**.

1.9 Training, professionalization and job creation

Human capital is acknowledged to be a determining factor in the competitiveness of any industry, especially in tourism in which the 'moments of truth' are key for customer satisfaction.

It is also undeniable that education and tourism training play a key role in the strategies for competing in the sector, in which private institutions, entrepreneurs, workers, the public sector, universities and vocational training centres, among others, are essential for achieving the development of a sound, sustainable sector.³

The undoubted influence of gastronomy during travel, the increasing demand for gastronomy tourism and the fact that it cuts across other sectors make this type of tourism one of the tourism segments with greatest potential for the future. This sector therefore needs to have highly-specialized professionals, not only in tourism and gastronomy but also specifically in gastronomy tourism.

The training required by gastronomy tourism must be multi-disciplinary, flexible and evolving. It must also promote creativity and entrepreneurship and include the latest trends in gastronomy consumption, so that they can be applied fast in the sector.

Gastronomy tourism may amount to an important mechanism for creating jobs providing that framework conditions oriented towards competitiveness are created, and policies are designed to optimize job opportunities. These should include aspects such as the creation of a facilitating framework for micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in tourism and for proper training of people working in the tourism sector.

Networking is also a key tool for learning. It can be developed by holding congresses, trade fairs, meetings and gastronomic fora, all of which are especially relevant for training new talents for the future.

Gastronomy should also be included in school curricula from the earliest age and should be recognized and protected as part of the people's cultural heritage.

The far-reaching changes noted by participants in gastronomy tourism indicate that new training needs are arising, with the definition of new professional profiles that master new techniques and digital environments while also understanding the values and content of the very varied proposals offered by gastronomy tourism all over the world.

In their role as facilitators, NTAs and DMOs should help make firms in the sector more competitive by means of training plans and programmes, with support from academic entities, universities, etc. and experts from the sector. The goal of such plans or programmes is to provide the necessary training for the various agents involved in the gastronomy tourism product and to establish specific guidelines for work as well as tools to improve the gastronomy tourism offer. This will allow for the creation of an experience-based product adapted to the needs of demand and considering the environment and other trends. All these programmes will address the different actors in the value chain (producers, tourism fabric and the administrations, etc.), while in the launch phases it will be necessary to set up training programmes with the aim of including food producers in tourism activity.

Therefore, in order to build competitive gastronomic destinations, it will be necessary to provide multi-disciplinary training that adapts to the latest research-based trends and can be applied fast throughout the sector. For this purpose, NTAs, and DMOs should take the following actions:

- **Identification of needs for training and/or skills:** identify the needs for training among the human resources that provide or will provide gastronomy tourism services in the destination;
- **Definition of competencies for each job position in gastronomy tourism:** determine requirements and draw up the professional profiles for all job positions related to gastronomy tourism;
- **Human resources training:** design and adopt **annual training plans** for the various sub-sectors of gastronomy tourism in line with needs detected, with strategic and operational targets, and evaluate progress by establishing strategic alliances with academic institutions and public and/or private organizations;
- **Adaptation of training formats to the characteristics and profiles of the sectors involved:** training pills, classroom and/or online training, publication and distribution of manuals on good practices and/or practical guides; and
- **Create systems to promote and support startups.**

Results

The adoption of a programme to strengthen businesses, stimulate entrepreneurship and improve competitiveness in the sector should result in processes to generate and retain talent. That is, there should be highly-qualified and properly trained human capital in both the public and private sectors that can develop, manage and provide gastronomy tourism services.

Important

- **Improved personal and professional skills** not only in gastronomy, management, communication, marketing, etc. but also in 'soft skills'. Experiences such as exchanges of chefs and/or professionals among countries or regions can help to increase certain skills such as the capacity to work with others, to solve problems, communicate, etc.;
- **Manuals of good practices in gastronomy tourism.** Manuals of good practices should be drawn up and promoted by Ministries of Agriculture and Tourism, NTAs and DMOs;
- **Knowledge and technology transfer** from universities and research centres to the gastronomy tourism sector;
- **Cooperation by NTAs and DMOs with universities** and academic institutions for the design and provision of training;
- **Regular needs for training** in gastronomy tourism: managing an agrifood business from the tourism point of view, knowledge of local products, marketing and sales techniques in the digital environment; and
- **Promotion of entrepreneurship.** To develop an entrepreneurship ecosystem, it is necessary to bring together six main agents: startups, corporations, venture capital investors, universities, institutions and governments.

1.10 Offering memorable experiences: guaranteeing quality services

The travel experience has changed and is no longer limited to the actual travel days but starts long before, with preparation (inspiration, search for information, comparison, booking) and finishes when the tourist evaluates and shares experiences on social media.

Key agents in the tourism sector are beginning to humanize the way in which they communicate, replacing heritage and views with the promise of unforgettable experiences and focussing their messages on the opportunity to connect with others.

Gastronomy tourism has always been experience-based, but it is now more necessary than ever for proposals to stand out for their creativity, originality, sensitivity and singularity and to arouse feelings and emotions. It is a matter of wooing the customer, providing memorable and unforgettable moments, involving them in a totally personal way so that their enjoyment involves all five senses.

In today's global environment, destinations are faced with the challenge of developing gastronomy tourism products that are clearly experience-based, can meet the needs of increasingly demanding tourists who have more specific

expectations and are searching for authentic, significant, unique and memorable experiences.

In advanced societies, food is no longer a mere physiological need and has become a more aspirational activity, one that aims to stand out in everyday activities. This trend refers to food products that aim to generate an impact on all five of the consumer's senses, generating a full, internal sensory experience. Consumers search for different, original sensations that are closely related to pleasure. It will therefore be necessary to develop well-kept, attractive venues and destinations that give pleasure to the sense of sight, among others, and that are a delight to visit.⁴

Some authors consider that memorable tourist experiences are those that meet the following requirements:

- Develop a singular environment or scenario;
- A singular environment or scenario;
- Present limited access;
- Allow for socialization or interaction with the environment;
- Promote a high potential for learning;
- Theme-based;
- Offer enjoyment, relaxation or evasion;
- Provoke venting of emotions;
- Integrate resources from the territory; and

Figure 1.8 Pyramid of needs and type of tourism service product



Source: based on: Tejo Alonso, D. (2016), *La nueva pirámide de Maslow: el cambio en las necesidades básicas en el siglo XXI y su influencia en el lifestyle actual* (online), available at: www.davidtejo.com (24-04-2019).

- Include tangible elements or souvenirs that the customer can take home.

The *quality of a tourism destination* is the result of a process that implies the satisfaction of all tourism product and service needs, requirements and expectations of the consumer at an acceptable price, in conformity with mutually accepted contractual conditions and the implicit underlying factors such as safety and security, hygiene, accessibility, communication, infrastructure and public amenities and services.⁵

Quality management is based on processes of ongoing improvement in tourism businesses and destinations, in which all the services accredit a high level of satisfaction of tourists' expectations and needs.

Offering quality experiences is an essential requirement for competitiveness in the tourism sector. Destinations must include the concept of ongoing improvement in the quality of their gastronomy offer, not only because of tourist demands but also because they acknowledge that better quality results in higher revenue.

Destinations that wish to promote gastronomy tourism are obliged to work at several levels in relation to quality:

- Protection and recognition of local products;
- Development of a competitive and experience-based offer;
- Professional human resources throughout the value chain of gastronomy tourism, based on initial and ongoing training;
- Hosting and protection of consumers, to increase visitor satisfaction; and
- Establishment and adoption of a methodology to identify and interpret the degree of tourist satisfaction.

Possible actions in this respect include:

- Adoption and promotion of quality labels;
- Certification and promotion of products, food producers and restaurants; and
- Renewal and updating of cultural and gastronomic traditions.

Results

- Portfolio of experience-based gastronomy products;
- Quality assurance system for gastronomy tourism; and
- System for measuring quality as perceived by gastronomy tourists.

Important

- **Dream society:** the weight of the individual's emotional behaviour (linked to values, emotions and feelings) is more relevant than rational behaviour (based on knowledge acquisition);
- **Authenticity is a key element in gastronomy tourist satisfaction:** the concept of authenticity, in the framework of the tourism sector, refers to the offer of situations, places, natural attractions, objects and people who are not only genuine and original but have not been changed or staged for visitors – that is, they exist irrespective of the presence of tourists. Eating habits and local production are elements that exist in the territory, transforming it and moulding it to give rise to spaces and landscapes that form part of the local culture and should constitute the DNA of the gastronomy tourism offer. The local gastronomic culture connects up directly with the history of the region, the soul of its people and the rhythm of daily life;
- **The subjectivity of the experience:** experience in gastronomy tourism is a coming-together of aesthetics, service and hospitality. This makes the analysis difficult to delimit and it varies in line with the customer's expectations and knowledge of gastronomy. Not all customers enjoy a meal or a gastronomic experience in the same way;
- **Hybridization:** hybridization, in the sense of developing activities based on open, multi-disciplinary innovation, requires the creation of new associations that might not initially seem obvious between sectors, branches, disciplines and/or people that would otherwise seem unrelated;

- **Multi-sensory experience – eating and drinking with all five senses:** tasting is a multi-sensory activity: perception is affected by what we can see, feel and hear, and by what we smell and taste. Emotion is also involved. For example, stress makes food and drink taste bitter;
- **The importance of storytelling:** people and their stories make experiences and destinations attractive and distinctive. It is essential to work on *storytelling*, on the narrative of gastronomy from a human perspective, seeking new angles with an impact on the destination's culinary identity. Foods with a message, chefs as interpreters of the territory, etc. The construction of an inspiring message is vital;
- **Perceived quality – tourist satisfaction:** a methodology should be set up and applied to identify and interpret the degree of satisfaction of tourists;
- **Certification systems and quality labels** associated with gastronomy/tourism and with gastronomy tourism. The NTAs or DMOs should make known, promote and support initiatives relating to the adoption of quality management in establishments and in public and private tourist services in the destination and should work on customer service, hosting and consumer protection to raise visitor satisfaction; and
- **Minimizing food risk:** an essential premise must be borne in mind with regard to food safety: there is no such thing as zero risk. However, control systems, such as Risk Analysis and Critical Control Points, and preventive or control measures are basic pillars for reducing risk and guaranteeing consumer safety. Acting to minimize food risks for tourists, especially with regard to certain activities such as street food, food trucks, etc. is important not only for consumer safety but also to protect the image of the destination.

1.11 Governance: promoting public-private collaboration

Governance in the tourism sector is a measurable practice of government whose aim is to effectively manage the tourism sector at the various levels of government, through efficient, transparent and accountable forms of coordination, collaboration and/or cooperation, for the pursuit of goals of collective interest shared by networks of actors impacting on the sector with a view to developing solutions and opportunities on the basis of agreements that recognize interdependencies and shared responsibilities.⁶

Managing a sustainable gastronomy destination with its triple dimensions – territorial, sectoral and social – requires a tourism governance model that is based on shared leadership and on participation by all the agents in the value chain of gastronomy tourism, to the benefit of a common goal.

From a more operational point of view, governance entails establishing channels that allow for joint work among all the agents involved in the destination's value chain. All these agents become fundamental for structuring and generating a range of quality gastronomy tourism products and experiences that are singular, attractive and can seduce travellers who wish to learn about the gastronomic culture of the territory visited.

The development of sustainable gastronomy tourism in any destination therefore involves the great challenge of joint work among the various public and private agents both together and with other sectors.

The following are therefore necessary:

- **Integration and promotion of cooperation among all the sectors of the destination's value chain**, defining a clear strategy and a roadmap and working in the same direction, with a shared and consensus-based vision;
- **Work, links and interaction among the various agents** involved in the value chain of gastronomy tourism, generating mutually beneficial relations and searching for balance between preserving the values of a territory and developing functions in it (economic, environmental and social);
- **Alignment of interests among all the agents involved and coordination of efforts to benefit a shared project.** Such cooperation is especially vital

considering that gastronomy tourism cuts across sectors, reaching some that are not traditionally linked to the tourism activity, and considering the size of small local producers with a weak structure that need support;

- **Instruments to allow the various agents in the territory to participate**, sharing common principles, planning, reinforcing decisions and achieving a consensus to take up opportunities and resolve any conflicts arising;
- **Institutional capacity** to guarantee the efficiency of public policies and programmes related to gastronomy tourism; and
- **Participation by the local community in the process**. Definition of the specific processes and locations for information, debate, consultation and participation by the local community – both individually and/or through local associations – in initiatives of interest for tourism, taking up the potential offered by the new information and communication technologies.

Results

A better institutional framework for the development gastronomy tourism in the destination and a model for public and private participation in decision-making processes and policy-making leading to the development, management and promotion of gastronomy tourism.

Important

- **Creating awareness** of the benefits and possibilities of collaboration between the public sector, the private sectors and the communities in the development of gastronomy tourism and providing models of suitable practices that can be adopted in the territorial context of the NTA and the DMO;
- **Identification of the roles and functions of the various agents**: identification and clarification of the functions and roles to be played by the various entities and public and private organizations in the development of gastronomy tourism;
- **Importance of internal branding**: generating relations of complicity among the agents, strengthening links, creating relations, partnerships and collaboration with and among the public sector,

the private producing sector, associations and the tourism and gastronomic sector, etc. Always with the goal of creating synergies that can improve the competitiveness and positioning of the destination;

- **Joint effort**: the success of any destination receiving gastronomy tourism is based on close collaboration among the institutions and all the necessary links in the chain for developing tourist products: agricultural producers, cattle farmers, the fishing sector, retailers, markets, restaurants, chefs, hotels and sector associations, etc.;
- **Model(s) for cooperation**: there are different experiences of models of public-private collaboration in gastronomy tourism and on different territorial scales: gastronomy tourism product clubs, gastronomic networks, clusters. Several factors must be taken into account when promoting the model for collaboration: tradition and culture for developing cooperation, the type of gastronomy tourism product, the agents in the industry, their profile, etc. Networks involve businesses of all sizes in various combinations and may be local or international. They may arise at all stages of the value chain and range from highly informal relations to structured relations in the form of legal entities;
- **Involvement of the local population**: gastronomy tourism empowers all those who form part of the gastronomic value chain, especially the local communities, and also professionals in their capacity as ambassadors of the territory, thus strengthening identity and a feeling of belonging and safeguarding the authenticity of each place; and
- If there is a single common denominator in these territories that stands out from a culinary viewpoint, it is that **the local population cares about its gastronomy**. These are destinations that see gastronomy as an inseparable part of their culture and which, in spite of globalization, endeavour to pass on from generation to generation the culinary heritage they have received, to preserve, improve and develop it and to make it known by innovating.

1.12 Control and monitoring mechanisms

The reality of gastronomy tourism is complex, dynamic and changing, while also very competitive. As with other types of tourism, technological, social, economic and political factors, amongst others, generate changes in both the tastes and habits of consumers and in the competitiveness of destinations, forcing them and their businesses to transform and adapt their strategies.

This makes it necessary for planning instruments to be conceived as dynamic, vigorous and versatile plans that can be adapted to tourism scenarios and to the constant and multiple changes taking place. For this reason, correct management of gastronomy tourism should include a firm focus on research and on establishing mechanisms for control and monitoring of the impact of actions taken in the framework of plans, of trends and competitors.

In this context, the monitoring and comparative assessment of gastronomy tourism is a key activity. It is not only public administrations that need reliable statistics for drawing up policies and plans of action in gastronomy tourism, but other agents in the value chain (entrepreneurs, professionals, investors, associations, researchers, educational entities, etc.) also need to have information for analysis prior to taking decisions on aspects such as: marketing plans, investments in the sector, the design of market strategies, identification of new tourism products, human capital development, etc.

Monitoring and comparative assessment of any form of tourism may be a complex task for the tourism administration. This complexity stems from limited information and data availability as well as different methodologies used by different countries and cultures that make comparison difficult.

In gastronomy tourism, the difficulty is even greater because gastronomy tourists are difficult to delimit and define and it is hard to discern between them and the gastronomic behaviour of a general tourist or a tourist motivated by other types of tourism.

When adopting a plan, it is necessary to have a model for assessment and monitoring involving a set of indicators to facilitate the evaluation of results. The following are needed:

- **The establishment of a specific observatory on gastronomy tourism**, which systematically applies techniques for monitoring, evaluation (sustainable gastronomy tourism indicators) and management of information as basic tools for drawing up and adopting policies, strategies, plans and management processes. Both quantitative and qualitative methodologies are recommended;
- **The creation of management indicators** allowing for evaluation and monitoring of adoption of the actual Gastronomy Tourism Strategic Plan and orientation of decision-making in relation to the targets set. Such indicators will be of two types:
 1. **Input indicators:** these will indicate the degree of execution of actions and the budget invested in the different areas covered by the plan, measuring the implementation of programmed actions; and
 2. **Output indicators:** these offer a perspective on the degree of effectiveness of the various actions, assessing the results achieved.

They should also meet certain requirements, as follows:

- Source of information must be easily accessible. This is one of the main shortcomings detected in process of tourism planning and evaluation;
- Indicators must be easy to interpret so that the agents involved can understand trends once the knowledge has been duly transferred;
- They must reflect the evolution seen during the period analysed (short and medium term); and
- They must be related to the strategic and operational goals set in the planning process, so that they work as tools for follow-up that identify new responsibilities for the agents participating in the process of building gastronomy tourism in the destination.

- **Definition of the main indicators of specific results of gastronomy tourism in the destination** (indicators of outcome and final impact on the system) and studies to analyse how they evolve, in order to characterize the gastronomy tourism industry and to assess its contribution and impact on the territory's tourism activity as a whole. Such indicators should allow for:
 - Analysis of gastronomy tourism as an economic phenomenon starting from the offer and including the main macro figures for the sector: number, capacity, jobs, etc. in establishments by type of gastronomy tourism (farms and food industries open to visitors, markets, restaurants, etc.);
 - Analysis of the traffic of real and potential gastronomy tourists to understand their travel experience;
 - Evaluation and monitoring of environmental impact: production landscapes, recovery of native breeds and local products, etc.; and
 - Evaluation and monitoring of the socio-economic impact of tourism, measurements of quality of life, employment, inclusion, etc.
- **Definition of the main indicators in order to analyse the gastronomic behaviour of other types of tourist in the destination**, including specific items related to gastronomy in the destination's general tourism statistics.

Results

- Model for regular and reliable measurement of statistics and studies on gastronomy tourism in the destination and/or the gastronomic behaviour of tourists; and
- Improved knowledge for following up and managing information to support decision-making and policy-making, to achieve greater sustainability in the gastronomy tourism destination.

Important

- **Competitive intelligence:** it is important to have up-to-date information on market trends, market segmentation, demand profiles, competing and landmark destinations, so that a competitive and attractive gastronomic offer can be set up, transmitting the distinctive values of the destination's culinary identity;
- **Technology at the service of knowledge:** the application of technology (big data, the Internet of things, augmented reality, blockchain, etc.) makes it possible to improve decisions, the experiences offered to visitors and the quality of life for residents. Technology helps us to manage effectively but does not replace the human factor, which is essential for transforming data into knowledge; and
- **Knowledge management:** there should be a system of intelligence providing data on any changes taking place in the environment, with the aim of establishing strategies to correct impacts and improve competitiveness.

Endnotes:

- 1 World Tourism Organization (2019), *UNWTO Tourism Definitions*, UNWTO, Madrid, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284420858>.
- 2 World Tourism Organization (1999), *Global Code of Ethics for Tourism*, UNWTO, Madrid (online), available at: www.unwto.org.
- 3 Lillo Bañuls, A. (2009), 'El papel del capital humano en el sector turístico: algunas reflexiones y propuestas', *Cuadernos De Turismo*, número 24, Murcia University, pp. 53–64.
- 4 Mintel (2019), *Global Food and Drinks Trends 2019* (online), available at: www.mintel.com/global-food-and-drink-trends (20-03-2019).
- 5 World Tourism Organization (2019), *UNWTO Tourism Definitions*, UNWTO, Madrid, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284420858>.
- 6 Duran Fuentes, C. (2013), 'Governance for the Tourism Sector and its Measurement', *UNWTO Statistics and TSA Issue Paper Series*, UNWTO, Madrid (online), available at: www.e-unwto.org.



Chapter 2 Recommendations

Some recommendations and considerations for the development of gastronomy tourism in the destinations are proposed below, as well as a series of possible intervention proposals and activities for the implementation of said recommendations.

2.1 Promote a model of governance that is transparent, participatory and offers leadership

- Design a strategic plan to develop gastronomy tourism – a roadmap for the medium and long term – with a vision that is shared and based on consensus among the agents in line with the global vision of the destination and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
- Structure a cross-cutting value chain for gastronomy tourism that includes agents from the various sectors related directly or indirectly to gastronomy;
- Set up mechanisms for cooperation, communication and collaboration – public-public, public-private and inter-sectoral – among those involved in gastronomy tourism in the destination;
- Establish instruments allowing the different agents in the territory to participate, share common principles, plan, strengthen decision-making and achieve a consensus on the policies needed to achieve the desired scenario for gastronomy tourism;

- Support the creation of partnerships, working networks, product clubs, clusters, etc. to generate synergies and gain critical mass;
- Provide institutional leadership and sufficient resources (both economic and human) for implementing the action programmes required by the strategy to develop gastronomy tourism in the destination; and
- Promote working spaces shared among the various actors.

2.2 Promote the recognition of the local gastronomy as a cultural heritage: strengthen culinary identity, local products and the gastronomy of the destination

- Draw up an inventory of the tangible and intangible food-related heritage (utensils, customs, recipes, products, etc.) to provide a basis for creating or updating the gastronomy offering;
- Provide stimulus for projects to recover, maintain and enhance the gastronomic heritage, for example, to recover native cattle breeds and varieties, traditional recipes, tracks or lookouts over agricultural landscapes, etc.;
- Develop programmes to create awareness of the gastronomic culture and of local products at

various educational levels: primary and secondary, baccalaureate, vocational training and universities;

- Promote the transfer of gastronomic culture to future generations to prevent the loss of authenticity and of values;
- Design and develop a programme to protect and promote local products by fostering links among producers, chefs, shops, consumers, etc.;
- Draw up programmes to encourage chefs to serve as interpreters of the territory;
- Cooperate with other social agents to foster and socialize the advantages of the local gastronomic culture and create awareness among the people of the advantages of a healthy, sustainable diet with short-circuit products;
- Encourage the local people to be proud of their gastronomy and to feel part of it; and
- Manage quality labels and branding policies for endogenous food products to prevent standardization and the loss of heritage value, while strengthening actions to generate relevant branding, image and communication.

2.3 Take actions to improve the scenario, environment, venues and system for hosting gastronomy tourists

- Set up amenities to enhance the gastronomic heritage: museums, venues, gastronomy interpretation centres, etc.;
- Develop a signage plan and elements for the interpretation of the gastronomic heritage and programmes to enhance aesthetic and themed aspects of gastronomy;
- Set up activities to encourage the various communities to celebrate their gastronomic traditions, fostering pride in their community and preserving their cultural identity; and
- Promote themed and enhanced gastronomic content in tourist information offices and points within the territory.

2.4 Foster the creation and development of products and of gastronomy tourism experiences associated with the endogenous potential of the destination. These should be innovative, distinctive, and varied to attract gastronomy tourists and help position the territory as a gastronomy destination

- Draw up an inventory of the gastronomy offering;
- Identify the local gastronomy products that have greatest potential for introduction into the tourism market;
- Promote the most cultural aspect of gastronomy and how it is reflected in the social and economic life of the territory by making proposals for tourist immersion in the local gastronomic culture, enabling them to participate in local customs, markets, festivals and events and to enjoy the local gastronomic culture;
- Foster the development of guided gastronomic tours to resources that are difficult to reach, as either temporary or permanent products;
- Generate geographical or themed food routes (dishes, products, people, agricultural landscapes, etc.) that can contribute to the socio-economic development of the region as a whole, helping to distribute tourism flows, strengthening the local economy and improving territorial balance;
- Create product networks and prestige clubs by selecting the best proposals in line with certain standards;
- Create product clubs bringing together a set of agents involved in the territory's gastronomy;
- Organize activities to galvanize the sector: cookery competitions, gastronomic meetings, awards and recognitions, etc.;
- Organize singular events and activities to help attract tourists to the territory, enhance endogenous resources, give visibility and reduce seasonality;
- Draw up a calendar of gastronomic activities, defining clear criteria for the development and participation of agents in events that enhance the destination's products and professionals; and

- Use technology to interpret and disseminate elements of the gastronomic culture (virtual reality, Internet of things, etc.).

2.5 Promote competitiveness of all actors in the value chain, based on excellence, knowledge, talent management, innovation and cooperation of all actors

- Define plans to consolidate and foster projects for gastronomic excellence;
- Encourage firms to participate in tourism and gastronomic quality assurance programmes;
- Encourage restaurants to obtain gastronomic quality seals;
- Draw up gastronomy training plans for different sectors, based on prior identification of their training needs. For example, promote training on the local product, marketing and sales techniques, adaptation to the digital economy, etc., organize trips to other destinations as well as fora, congresses and meetings for discussion, networking, etc.;
- Set up programmes to develop, attract and retain talent and for the inclusion of strategic professional profiles in firms and in destination management organizations;
- Foster a culture oriented to value people and professions of gastronomy tourism;
- Promote strategic technological investments by businesses that can exert a pull effect on the sector;
- Promote funding instruments to support businesses;
- Set up programmes to accelerate start-ups in gastronomy tourism in collaboration with agents in the gastronomy ecosystem and with influential, landmark firms in the value chain;
- Set up scholarship programmes for entrepreneurs through open innovation initiatives to encourage participation by students and young entrepreneurs in the search for solutions to the challenges faced by the sector;
- Promote the dissemination of successful innovation projects set up by gastronomy SMEs that had an impact on businesses or processes;

- Facilitate the development of projects that are transformative and attract investment to the sector;
- Promote awards and recognitions in gastronomy tourism; and
- Work on consumer service, hosting and protection, with the aim of increasing visitor satisfaction.

2.6 Develop mechanisms for gastronomy tourism intelligence in order to quantify, know and characterize gastronomy tourists and analyze the dynamics of the destination

- Develop programmes for research and monitoring of gastronomy tourism markets;
- Segment and analyse the different types of gastronomy tourists;
- Identify the segments that best suit the destination's characteristics and development goals;
- Develop plans for orientation towards specific demand profiles;
- Study and monitor the dynamics of the gastronomy tourism value chain and the effects of this activity on the territory; and
- Cooperate with agents in the different areas (banking, telephony, social media, etc.) to gain greater knowledge about the profile and behaviour of gastronomy tourists.

2.7 Develop an authentic, credible storyline about the destination's gastronomy as a brand argument – gastronomic branding

- Define the brand strategy linked to the values of the destination's gastronomy and its global brand;
- Provide the destination with an identity in line with the vectors and attributes for differentiation, the proposal for positioning and the target audiences laid down in the gastronomy tourism strategy: creativity, claim, advertising discourse, etc.; and
- Include in the brand strategy the various agents participating in the territory's gastronomy value chain.

2.8 Define and adopt a plan to promote and support the marketing of gastronomy tourism with the participation of all agents in the sector – gastronomy marketing

- Promote a strategy and specific marketing tools for gastronomy tourism that will allow the destination to reach its various target audiences, with messages adapted to their tastes and needs, and to be present in every stage of the traveller experience;
- Develop tools to improve online positioning: website, blog, social media profiles, campaigns to improve positioning on search engines and advertising;
- Generate relevant, attractive, interactive content on the gastronomy tourism proposal for different B2B and B2C channels;
- Define tools and key performance indicators (KPIs)¹ to measure the impact and the return on investment (ROI) on marketing actions; and
- Create networks of gastronomy tourism ‘ambassadors’.

2.9 Maximize the power of technology as a driver for developing gastronomy tourism

- Facilitate customer approach for businesses throughout the value chain by combining digitalization, big data management and artificial intelligence to anticipate consumer behaviour and needs;
- Create programmes for ‘ambient intelligence’ development to promote gastronomy tourism experiences for visitors (connectivity, use of mobile proximity applications, social networks, augmented reality for the interpretation of resources, etc.);
- Encourage the use of technological developments applied to tourism marketing, personalization, the development of quality audiovisual content, the use of interactive tools, etc.;
- Promote the use of interactive communication applications, especially social networks, which make it possible to know the degree of satisfaction of tourists and apply continuous improvement to the systems, as well as develop new loyalty systems; and

- Promote technological developments applied to energy and sustainable development, which reduce the environmental impact and costs associated with tourism, either by improving energy efficiency, reducing the consumption of resources or ensuring sustainable management of waste.

2.10 Promote gastronomy tourism as a tool to progress towards sustainability in the destination and the contribution of tourism to the SDGs

- Encourage firms and destinations to participate in systems for sustainability certification and codes of good practice;
- Promote the concept of gastro-diplomacy to further intercultural understanding and enhance cultural sharing through gastronomy;
- Set up visitor awareness programmes so that they respect the socio-cultural authenticity of the host communities and preserve their cultural heritage and traditional values, both built and living;
- Promote training and integration in the value chain for women, young people and underprivileged segments of the population;
- Develop programmes to encourage the use of sustainable local products and services to generate employment and local benefits, supporting campaigns to take products direct to the table;
- Encourage the inclusion of local products and techniques in the tourism value chain, especially in hospitality;
- Promote sustainable cooking with local products. (For example, in Japan, restaurants display a green light to mean that x% of the products used are local);
- Promote good practices relating to the circular, green and blue economy, such as the rational use of plastic and energy, food waste reduction, etc.; and
- Encourage universal accessibility as integral part of the Gastronomy Tourism Strategic Plan.

Endnote:

- 1 For further information please consult: World Tourism Organization (2017b), *Handbook on Key Performance Indicators for Tourism Marketing Evaluation*, UNWTO, Madrid.

Methodology and list of participating experts

The work process has been supported by the participation of several experts in gastronomy tourism. They are also professors in the Master of Gastronomic Tourism of BCC.

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The guidelines aim to serve as a practical toolkit to support the development of gastronomy tourism in destinations by providing recommendations on key aspects such as planning and management by national tourism administrations (NTAs), national tourism organizations (NTOs) and destination management organizations (DMOs).

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