

## **A contemporary systematic literature review of enogastronomic experiences**

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**Abstract:** Enogastronomic experiences are on the rise in the tourism industry, and the number of tourists travelling primarily to experience food and wine culture has increased. In addition, destination marketing organisations are increasingly using local food and wine as a differentiator when marketing a destination. Despite the growing interest in this field of tourism, there is a paucity of research on the importance and impact of enogastronomic tourism on a destination's image. This study thus comprises a systematic literature review on these topics, summarising the current state of knowledge on these areas and highlighting the potential for future research. The purpose of this research is comprehensively presents the literature on enogastronomic experiences using descriptive statistics and cluster analysis. This paper reports on findings from a review of 85 peer-reviewed studies that focused on enogastronomic tourism from 2012 to 2023. The findings reveal evolving trends in this field of study, namely, the VOSviewer program was applied to identify the most frequently used keywords associated with the enogastronomic tourism and the most active countries in publications. To provide an even deeper understanding of this topic, future research should also include other research areas in which enogastronomy has been studied to provide an overview of interdisciplinary perspectives. In addition, further examination of the dependent and independent variables is recommended to understand what predictors and consequences of the enogastronomic experience are.

**Keywords:** gastronomy tourism, wine tourism, enogastronomy, enogastronomic experiences, systematic literature review

**JEL classification:** L83

### **1 Introduction**

Research on enogastronomy has shown that it is a complex field that encompasses a wide range of topics, from the physiological and psychological effects of wine pairing, to the economic and social impact of enogastronomic experiences. The increasing demand for gastronomic and wine tourism, as

well as the tendency of destinations to seek new sources of income, have led to a today's race to position destinations as attractive consumption areas. Therefore, destinations promote culture, lifestyle, habits, local identity, food and wine as attractive values. Today trend has become creating cultural and enogastronomic touristic activities with focus on sensory (Schäufele et al., 2018), experiential (D'Amico et al., 2016), symbolic (Combris et al., 2009) and hedonic attributes (D'Amico et al., 2016). Consumer experience is considered as a concept that can greatly influence performance. Creating an engaging experience is a characteristic of any destination, and providing an excellent experience is critical to developing customer loyalty.

Destinations today need to focus on managing customer experiences, which underscores the importance of designing and managing customer experiences across industries, especially in guest-centric industries such as tourism and hospitality.

Customer experience has always been at the centre of the service sector (Otto & Ritchie, 1996). Therefore, it is not surprising that in the last few years the economy experience has attracted a lot of attention in the field of tourism (Prebensen, Chen & Uysal, 2018; Ritchie & Hudson, 2009; Uriely, 2005). The conceptualization of the experience gradually changed in the literature (Rašan & Laškarin Ažić, 2023). At first, scholars believed that experience represents the provision of services, while today they argue that experience refers to the creation of a memorable event (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Many studies in the literature have proven the connection between the tourist experience and future behavioural outcomes (Chen & Chen, 2010), such as word of mouth (Otto & Ritchie, 1996) and intention to revisit the destination (Zhang, Wu, & Buhalis, 2017). Increasingly, DMOs are becoming aware of how providing memorable experiences for tourists can be used as a tool for differentiation and attracting more visitors to a destination (Ritchie & Hudson, 2009; Neuhofer, Buhalis, & Ladkin, 2012; Chen & Chen, 2010).

Due to all the conceptual and practical changes in the tourism sector, the term tourist experience is very difficult to define. The difficulty in defining it lies in its subjective and personal nature, which means that it is difficult to observe even when objective variables exist (Ritchie & Hudson, 2009; Uriely, 2005). As each tourist has a different background, his perception of the event is subjective in nature (Otto & Ritchie, 1996). Henderson (2009) states that in addition to the historical background of the destinations, enogastronomic elements also have a great influence on the overall tourist experience. Thus, enogastronomy is an essential element for experiencing local culture (Wijaya, King, Nguyen, & Morrison, 2013; Holtzman, 2006). Also, food and drink in some studies have proven to be a stimulator in creating memorable tourism experiences (Stone, Soulard, Migacz and Wolf, 2018; Sthapit, 2017; Adongo, Anuga and Dayour, 2015; Green and Dougherty, 2008).

## **2 Theoretical background**

In the theoretical part of the paper, enogastronomic tourism will be described and its significance in the broader context of gastronomic and wine tourism will be explained.

Gastronomic tourism includes visits to food producers, participation in gastronomy festivals, visits to restaurants and special places related to special local food, tasting special dishes, observing production and preparation processes, tasting special dishes by famous chefs, as well as exploring how a particular dish is prepared (Hall and Mitchell, 2007; Mitchel Hall et al., 2003). Although in this definition gastronomy stands out as the main motive for tourists visiting a destination, there is a broader spectrum of tourist preferences in terms of the importance of gastronomy during journey. Some tourists go to a restaurant to satisfy their primary physiological need for food, while other tourists plan their entire trip according to gastronomic criteria.

Today's interest in local food is viewed through the prism of environmental, ethical, sustainability and health concerns, as well as consumers' desire to support local economies and reduce their carbon footprint (Pesonen et al., 2011). In addition, consumers perceive these products as "fresher", "tastier" and "more reliable" (Roininen et al., 2006). Furthermore, local food is seen as "simple" and "different" (Kauppinen-Raesaenen et al., 2013; Sims, 2009). This interest in gastronomy is often accompanied by a pairing with wines that characterize enogastronomy and wine tourism.

Wine tourism has long been a part of the wine business and can be considered one of the most flourishing segments of tourism today. Wine tourism should be seen as a holistic experience that encompasses many aspects of visiting a wine region, its lifestyle and culture (Mitchell & Hall, 2006). This holistic experience can be delivered in a variety of ways, most notably through events and festivals, cultural heritage, restaurants, hospitality, education, tasting and sales at the cellar door, and winery tours (Charters & Ali-Knight, 2002). These quality experiences can have continuous benefits in the wine regions, emphasizing consumer loyalty to the destination and the product, helping to promote the local brand (Mitchell et al., 2012).

## **2.1. Enogastronomy**

Enogastronomy is a concept that represents the symbiosis of food and drink. Although tourism scholars mostly investigate enogastronomy, it is actually an interdisciplinary branch of science (Kivela and Crofts, 2006). The above implies that enogastronomy is examined from different perspectives, such as the senses of taste, wine production, the influence of nutrition on the functioning of the human organism, etc (Shenoy, 2005). For example, from the point of view of medicine, the goal of enogastronomy is to maintain human health through optimal nutrition. On the other hand, from the tourist aspect, the wishes and needs of enogastronomic tourists are sought to be ascertained (Sormaz et al., 2016). The multidimensional nature of enogastronomy and its relations with other sciences have influenced the use of different terminology, therefore terms such as 'culinary tourism', 'gastronomic tourism', 'gastro-tourism', 'wine tourism', 'gourmet tourism' and 'enogastronomic tourism' appear in the literature (Zahari et al., 2009).

Gastronomic tourism is the search for a unique experience of eating and drinking typical of a place, region or country (Groves, 2001; Hall and Mitchell, 2007). Thus, enogastronomic tourism can be defined as any travel experience where the tourist gets to know, appreciate and enjoy famous local enogastronomic products. Moreover, enogastronomic tourism employs more people than any single other retail business, including 14 million in the USA and 8 million in Europe (Euromonitor International, 2016) and serves billions of meals every year (Gössling et al., 2011).

Many scholars believe that enogastronomic tourism refers to tourists who want to explore new tastes and use food and drink as a means of getting to know other cultures and ways of life. They see gastronomy as closely related to cultural tourism and consider food as an expression of the culture of the destination (Hjalager and Corigliano, 2000; Van Westering, 1999).

Enogastronomic tourism includes visits to food producers, wineries, participation in enogastronomy inspections, visits to restaurants and special places related to special local foods, tasting special dishes, observing the production and preparation process, tasting special dishes by famous chefs and researching how to prepare a certain dish (Hall & Mitchell, 2007). Moreover, the field of gastronomic tourism, in addition to traditional visits to restaurants and hotels, includes tourist trips in search of a personal experience of local food and drinks. Several important trends in enogastronomy have emerged in recent years:

☞ **Sustainable and organic practices:** There is a growing trend in the wine and food industry toward sustainable and organic farming practices. Consumers are becoming more aware of the environmental impact of their food and beverage choices and are seeking products that are produced in sustainable and environmentally friendly ways (Mariano-Juárez et al., 2023).

☞ **Locally sourced ingredients:** Another trend is the use of locally sourced ingredients for gastronomic experiences. Consumers are looking for food and beverages that are produced close to home and reflect local culture and terroir (Mwangi & Mwalongo, 2023).

☞ **Wine and food pairings:** Wine and food pairings are growing in popularity as they allow consumers to experience the full range of flavours and aromas of wine and food (Moss et al., 2022).

☞ **Personalized experiences:** Many restaurants and wineries offer customized experiences such as private tours, tastings and cooking classes (Carvalho et al., 2021).

☞ **Virtual and hybrid experiences:** With the pandemic, virtual and hybrid experiences are becoming more popular. There are virtual tastings and classes, online wine clubs, and even online cooking classes and meals (Çöl et al., 2023).

☞ **Wine and food education:** many consumers are increasingly interested in learning more about wine and food and are looking for educational opportunities such as wine tastings, wine and food pairing courses, and culinary tours (Yılmaz & Şahin, 2022).

Overall, these trends reflect a growing interest in high-quality, sustainable and authentic enogastronomic experiences that honour local culture and terroir.

## **2.2. Gastronomy experience**

Gastronomy, as one of the most powerful tourist motives, has a significant impact on the future consumption and behaviour of tourists (Kim, Park and Lamb, 2019; Dias & Cassar, 2005; Mowen, 2000; Fodness, 1994). Thus, it is inevitable that tourists increasingly travel to destinations in search of gastronomic experiences (Wijaya, King, Nguyen, & Morrison, 2013). There are various statements by authors about the factors of a memorable gastronomic experience, but mostly the gastronomic experience is perceived as the result of tasting food, price, atmosphere in the establishment, professional service and emotions (Rašan & Laškarin Ažić, 2023). While a few years ago gastronomy was considered a secondary activity, now is considered as a primary element to attract tourists to a destination (Lopez-Guzman, Uribe, Pérez, & Ríos, 2017). Apart from gastronomy itself as a motivation, there are a number of motives that are subjective for each tourist and lead to the desire to experience the gastronomy of a certain destination (Kim, Suh and Eves, 2010). Tourists travel because they are inspired by local food of a certain place (Devesa-Fernández et al., 2009). Namely, more and more people are traveling for gastronomic motives, and make a positive relationship between gastronomy and the tourist destination (Sánchez-Cañizares & López-Guzman, 2012). Karim & Chi (2010) stated that because of growing demand for local cuisine, DMOs are focusing on food as the core of their tourism product. Moreover, in recent years DMOs in many destinations has been promoted enogastronomy as an expression of the cultural identity of a geographical area. Gastronomy and tourism form a perfect symbiosis so that tourists get to know the destination and buy different products. We should not forget that food reflects the social, cultural and ecological heritage of the population (Brunori & Rossi, 2000). The importance of gastronomy for tourists is obvious, therefore it is necessary for providers to follow the wishes and needs of tourists in order to achieve a high level of gastronomic experience and causally and consequently increase their loyalty not only to the visited facility but also to the destination. So, although the gastronomic experience is a subjective phenomenon that is difficult to identify, if the expectations of tourists are realized, it can be a predictor of positive future behaviour of gastro tourists.

### **2.3. Wine experience**

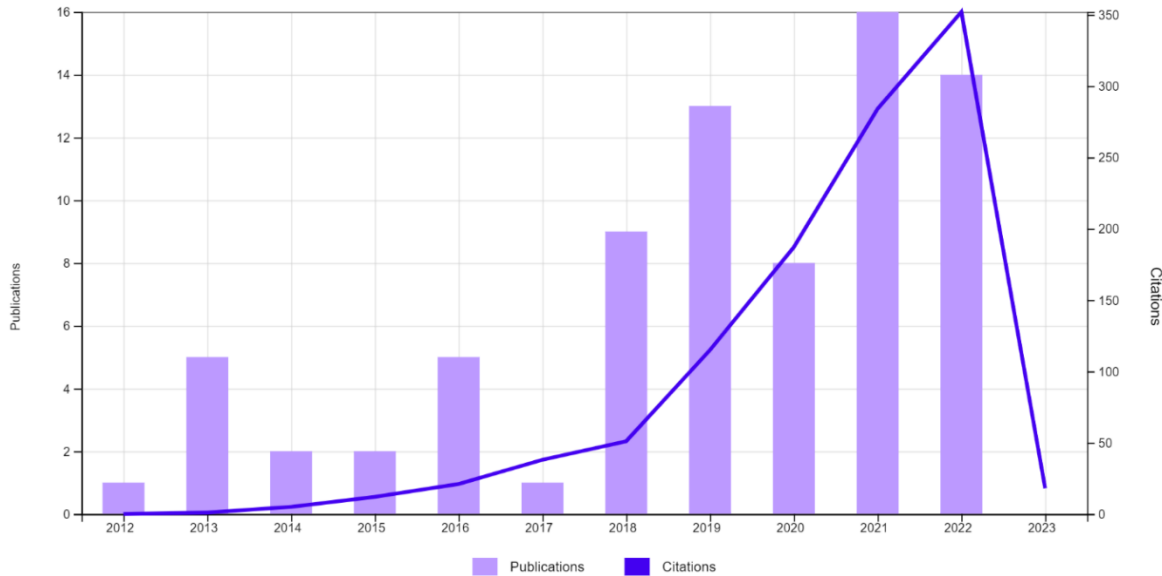
Numerous scholars in the literature examine tourist's perception about wine tourism. Wine tourism is generally characterized as a type of tourism based on visitors to vineyards, wineries, festivals and wine exhibitions (Dodd, 1995; Getz, 2000; Telfer, 2001; Cohen and Ben-Nun, 2009; Bruwer and Lesschaeve, 2012). Visiting wineries for wine tasting is the focus of many tourists. This interest in wine is usually accompanied by a connection with the gastronomic dishes' characteristic of a certain destination. Consequently, the motivation of wine tourists includes knowledge of the natural and cultural landscape as well as the lifestyle of the local population (Bruwer and Alant, 2009; Crespi-Vallbona et al., 2017; Hall and Macionis, 1998). Wine and food activities include everyday life and intangible aspects rooted in local communities, creating memorable experiences for tourists. An experience in a wine destination is a memorable event that brings positive emotions towards the destination. Although the functional properties of the product are important, consumer behaviour and wine purchase decisions are also influenced by other factors such as health (Mueller and Szolnoki, 2010), environmental (Wiedmann et al., 2014) and social issues (Sellers-Rubio and Nicolau-Gonzalbez, 2016; Charters and Pettigrew, 2003). In addition, the high quality of a memorable experience is subjectively interpreted as a function of the consumer's perception of the affective and cognitive factors of enogastronomy (Buhalis, 2000; Fuchs and Weiermair, 2003; Mitchell and Hall, 2001). Behavioural insights provide empirical evidence for predicting how people will react to consumption processes (Žabkar et al., 2010; Bresciani et al., 2016; Chrea et al., 2011). Recent research shows that the quality of the experience influences the behavioural intentions of wine tourists (Baker and Crompton, 2000; Cronin et al., 2000).

## **3 Methodology**

A systematic literature review of articles indexed in the Web of Science Core Collection was applied in this paper according to certain selection criteria. The main objective of this review is to identify and map the research landscape in the field of gastronomy and wine experiences (enogastronomy). In addition, one of the aims were to statistically address significant articles in terms of the number of citations. The protocol for reviewing the previous literature was guided by the objectives of this review. First, the keywords "gastronomic experience" OR "wine experience" OR "enogastronomy" were used in the search for relevant articles. Second, because the focus was on recent findings, only full articles published between 2012 and 2023 were selected. Third, the area of interest was set to Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism. After refining the obtained results based on the selected criteria, the final sample included 83 articles for analysis. Descriptive analysis was performed for the analysis of year of publication, research region, and methodology, while clusters were created using the VOSviewer programme for the visualisation of keywords.

## **4 Results**

The citation result per year was determined with the program Clarivate (Web of knowledge), in which the number of publications is compared with the number of citations (Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** Number of publications and citations in the observed period  
Source: Author's research (2023)

Figure 1 shows that the number of publications increases progressively, while the number of citations follows this increase. Following such growth, it is expected that 2023 will overcome 2022 in both cases. A decline in the number of published publications about the enogastronomic experience was recorded in 2020. This is not surprising given the fact that in 2019, the COVID-19 crisis broke out, which resulted in the introduction of quarantine at the global level. During that period, most of the catering establishments were not working, therefore it was not possible to conduct onsite research on the enogastronomic experience. But already in the next year, 2021, there is an increase in the number of publications, which indicates a positive recovery of tourism. According to the citation analysis between 2012 and 2023, the total amount of citations of 83 analysed articles is 1,427, while the average number of citations per article is 16.79 with an H-index of 19.

Clustering method via VOSviewer program revealed 4 clusters by applying minimum number of keyword occurrence to 4 and co-occurrence method with full counting. In addition, LinLog/modularity method was used to normalize link strengths between keyword. Out of the 309 keywords, 27 of them met the threshold. The figure shows that there are 248 links between clusters with total link strength of 499.

Following the size of the circles, the key terms “tourism”, “gastronomy”, “satisfaction” and “food” are used most frequently in the abstract and titles because the larger the circles, the more frequently the terms occur. Since the shorter the distance between terms implies the stronger relationship, among the strongest relations are food-quality, service-satisfaction, behaviour-loyalty and perception-destinations pairs.

Different colours of clusters indicate that there are four different clusters. First, red cluster include: wine tourism, destination image, routes, loyalty, behaviour, dimensions, visitors, service. Green cluster denotes perception, segmentation, motivation, model, gastronomy, while satisfaction connects publication on marketing aspect of gastronomic research. Yellow cluster indicates food tourism, consumption, place, hospitality. Blue cluster portrays tourism, quality, gastronomic experience, image, food, authentic.



## 5 Conclusion

The exponential growth and current scope of enogastronomic tourism research was the catalyst for this review. The goal of this article was to map the major areas of research by topic and academic category within enogastronomic experiences in order to understand the field and identify gaps and limitations in various dialogues and approaches. Research in this field can contribute to our understanding of sensory perception and how it relates to wine and food interactions. Also, culinary schools and programs can benefit from a thorough analysis of the literature to update their curricula and teach students about the principles of enogastronomy.

In examining the broad scope of the topic, this report has made recommendations that can help develop the field of research and the practical potential of enogastronomic experiences. The paper provides a comprehensive overview of previous research on the enogastronomic experience. The works analysed sublimates current research, with identified clusters guiding future research. That will facilitate the research field's establishment as a recognisable subject of critical inquiry, while allowing the dialogue on enogastronomic experiences to become more integrated into broader academic debates.

Although, this study has provided new insights into the enogastronomic experience, it certainly has several limitations that should be addressed. First, this study only includes articles written in English on the Web of Science platform and limited to the citation area of hospitality, leisure, sports, and tourism. To provide an even deeper understanding of this topic, future review studies should include other research fields in which enogastronomy has been studied to provide an overview of interdisciplinary perspectives. For future research, it is recommended that an analysis be done by dependent and independent variables so that the authors can get an idea of what has been used so far as predictors and what has been used as consequences of enogastronomic experiences. It is also suggested that other analyses be used, such as analysis by type of research, thematic analysis, etc.

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## Suvremeni sustavni pregled literature o enogastronomskom doživljaju

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**Sažetak:** Enogastronomski doživljaj u turizmu ima sve važniju ulogu, a broj turista koji putuje prvenstveno radi kulture hrane i vina sve je veći. Stoga, marketinške organizacije u destinacijama sve više koriste lokalnu hranu i vino kao dodanu vrijednost prilikom promocije destinacije. Unatoč rastućem interesu za ovo područje turizma, malo je istraživanja o važnosti i utjecaju enogastronomskog turizma na imidž destinacije. Istraživanje sadrži sustavni pregled literature, sumirajući aktualna znanja naglašavajući potencijal za buduća istraživanja. Svrha ovog istraživanja je cjelovito prikazati literaturu o enogastronomskim iskustvima korištenjem deskriptivne statistike i klaster analize. Rad donosi rezultate pregleda 85 znanstvenih članaka čiji je fokus na enogastronomskom turizmu od 2012. do 2023. godine. Rezultati istraživanja otkrivaju razvojne trendove u enogastronomskom turizmu, kroz program VOSviewer, identificiraju se najčešće korištene ključne riječi povezane s enogastronomskim turizmom i ističu se najaktivnije države zastupljene u publikacijama. Kako bi se omogućilo još dublje razumijevanje ove tematike, buduća bi istraživanja trebala uključiti i druga područja u kojima se enogastronomija proučava kako bi se dobio pregled interdisciplinarnih perspektiva. Osim toga, preporuča se daljnje ispitivanje zavisnih i nezavisnih varijabli kako bi se jasnije definirali prediktori i posljedice enogastronomskog iskustva.

**Ključne riječi:** gastronomski turizam, vinski turizam, enogastronomija, enogastronomski doživljaji, sistematski pregled literature

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