



GASTRONOMY AS INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE FUNCTION OF RURAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Nako Taskov¹,
Anetka Atanasovska²,
Tanja Angelkova Petkova¹

¹“Goce Delcev” University of Shtip,
Faculty of Tourism and Business
Logistics - Gevgelija

²Student, second cycle of studies,
“Goce Delcev” University of Shtip,
Faculty of Tourism and Business
Logistics - Gevgelija,
section Gastronomy Nutrition and Dietetics

Abstract:

Gastronomy is the art and science of fine eating, which is in the main focus of today's human life, culture, tradition, and customs. Nutrition is as old as life itself and it is something that keeps us alive. Gastronomy as a science has an important function in rural tourism development because nutrition has a central place in the tourist experience. The number of tourist trips in the rural environments is increasing more and more, where the food itself, prepared and served in a traditional way, is becoming the main motivating factor for traveling. Religious holidays, traditional weddings, tourist manifestations are quite alluring for tourists because the food takes a cult place in these events (Metodijeski, 2012). The offer by ethno restaurants in rural areas, that are decorated in ethno style and are categorized as national restaurants, is increasing as well. In those restaurants, the visitors can see all the household items that are made of metal, wood and clay, which had been used by our ancestors for preparing and preserving food. They can also see some handmade items, made by the diligent hosts, such as mile, tapestry... When choosing short-stay destinations, a preference is always given to the rural farms, rural tourism, mountain tourism where the tourists would enjoy their choice of destination.

Keywords:

Tradition, food, travel, tourism, destination

INTRODUCTION

The word gastronomy derives from the ancient Greek words “gas-tros” that means “stomach” and “nomos” that means “knowledge” or “law.” It studies the beginnings of human nutrition, customs in food consumption, economic and geographic changes in the community. Gastronomy primarily deals with the human enjoyment in food and beverages. It can be said that by studying the gastronomy we are penetrating, unwittingly, into the history and culture of one nation and social norms of what is good to eat and drink, and what is not. Gastronomy has a long and well-known tradition of culinary specialties. It is known that the old Slavs, even before the beginning of the great migration from the Carpathians towards Europe's southern regions, grew lentils, cabbage, carrots, sugar beets, spinach, leeks, onions, parsley, garlic and various types of fruit such as apple, pears, plums, cherries and walnuts, and from these products they prepared food, but

Correspondence:
Anetka Atanasovska

e-mail:
anetka.atanasovska@yahoo.com



they collected stocks as well. The most famous dishes, that are preserved and prepared even nowadays, are the unleavened bread, the Argat soup which was prepared for the harvesters after the hard work on the field. Traditional dishes that are prepared are zelnik, kachamak, vitalnik, popara, tursija, lozeno meat. In domestic conditions, a brandy was prepared, in a traditional and primitive way, mostly from plums, apples, pears, grapes. For children they prepared juices; compotes were made of forest fruits such as blackberries, raspberries, blueberries, wild strawberries, bars and pears, plums, the apples were dried on the sunlight, and after that they prepared compotes during the winter (Tashkov and Veljanov, 2009). The cereals were grown, harvested and cultivated in a primitive way, and this is kept and practiced in villages even nowadays. Household items for nutrition are divided into: wooden household items, metal household items and clay household items. Rural tourism is the one that offers all services and activities that are offered in the rural area. The common elements of rural tourism are: rural space, accommodation in traditional rural households, bed and breakfast with the possibility of independent food preparation, traditional rural gastronomy, communication with the hosts, the tradition and the way of living of the local population (Statev, 2007). Also, there is a growing number of people who decide to deal with rural tourism, who aim to present the tradition, the culture and the customs of our ancestors and to transfer it on the next generations.

GASTRONOMY IN RURAL HOUSEHOLDS

In European countries there are various facilities offering food in rural households such as inn farms - that usually offer products produced on farms, where the food is served on a dining table and it often includes traditional specialties and products tasting. The nutrition in rural households should be prepared and served in a traditional manner, and to be served in appropriate traditional dishes as well. Tables should be covered with a handmade tablecloth that has an impressive place for the guest (Metodijeski, 2012). The participation of guests in food preparation poses a great attraction and this is the way to enrich the stay in the village households. The food in the village households prepared by diligent hands of housewives is of a great importance, they usually prepare various kinds of sweet, jam, natural juices, compotes, pies, homemade bread, and many other various specialties.

TYPICAL FOOD IN RURAL AREAS IN MACEDONIA

Macedonian cuisine has a long and well-known tradition of culinary specialties. Through centuries, the characteristic feature of the Macedonian national cuisine was the fruit, vegetables, honey, spices, dairy products, meat and the meat from wild animals. The fertile Macedonian soils, the moderate warm climate and the ecological environment, represent Macedonia as a treasure trove of many different types of fruit, vegetables, spices which are the main ingredients of many Macedonian specialties. Besides the plant wealth, the Macedonian cuisine is a treasure trove of aromatic veal, pork, chicken meat and the well-known Macedonian lamb. The forests are abundant with various types of wild animals, forest fruit, mushrooms, teas. All these contribute the rural areas in Macedonia to produce and offer ecologically clean and organic products.

Characteristics of products that can be produced and offered in the region of Bregalnica in eastern Macedonia are the following:

- ♦ Fruit Products: Fruit brandy from pears and apples, fruit compote, sweet from fruit, marmalade of fruits, etc.
- ♦ Vegetable products: lutica (smashed pepper), apetitka (tomato sauce), various types of fresh salad of vegetables.
- ♦ Dairy products: from sheep, cow's milk and goat's milk: cheese, cottage cheese, cheese, sour milk, buttermilk, butter.
- ♦ Meat products: stuffed pork meat, smoked meat, home-made sausage, that can be prepared by using various kinds of meat, barbecue lamb, ajduchko lamb, roasted pig meat.
- ♦ Wild animals meat: wild rabbit, wild boar specialties, etc.



- ◆ Spices: There are many herbs that are used as spices in the Bregalnica region, for example nettle, mint, sorrel.
- ◆ Honey: there are bee-colored families located alongside mountain ranges that offer branded Bregal honey.
- ◆ Mushrooms: The most common mushrooms in this region are parasol mushroom, penny bun, golden chanterelle mushroom, Caesar's mushroom, gilled mushroom, which are used to prepare the specialties.
- ◆ Teas: tea from pins, thyme, rigen tea, mint, wort. These teas can be prepared as hot drinks, and from these herbs various kinds of balms for treating people are made.
- ◆ Wild fruits: wild strawberries, wild blackberries, raspberries, blueberries are forest fruits from which homemade juices and sweet from forest fruits are made etc.

A real gastronomic treasure in the rural areas of Macedonia can be felt in baked beans with homemade sausage, grandma` pie, domestic meat, Turlitava (vegetable and meat stew) , banica (mixture of whisked eggs and pieces of cheese between filo pastry and then baking it in an oven.), moussaka with potatoes, homemade bread baked in an oven ,cheese, peppers with garlic, lutenica (a spicy vegetables), zetvarka salad (cucumber, garlic and spicy vegetables),lamb roasted in a ground ,oil of sour and fresh milk, puf porridge, topenica (flour dish), turshija (pickled vegetables), kachamak (maize porridge with pork meat), pogaca (bread baked in the ashes of the fireplace with soda),village stew (pork meat, potato with spicy vegetables), crvenik, nettles stew etc. Macedonian traditional beverages, grape brandy and mastic are widely sought after, which are made in a traditional way. Macedonian winemakers produce a lot of quality wines, which stand side by side with the quality of French and Italian wines.

THE LINK BETWEEN GASTRONOMY AND RURAL TOURISM

Gastronomy and rural tourism are inextricably linked. Each tourist wants to explore some new tastes that are different from the tastes inherent in the environment in which they live. The authenticity of the food produced as organic and the beverages as well, represent an important segment of every tourist product. The gastronomic tourism is a part of the cultural tourism where throughout food, the culture and the history of a particular environment can be explored and discovered. In addition to rural tourism, which is based on the old traditional dishes, the gourmet tourism is also based on certain traditional drinks, such as wine tourism. The authentic, the specific and the organic products are of great importance as they can contribute to development of both, tourism and agriculture, the food industry and many other branches, simply put, can contribute to the economic development (Tashkov, 2011). Gastronomy plays an important role in development of rural tourism because the food has a central place in tourist experience, and most of tourist destinations are being sold because of specific tastes of food and beverages.

RESULTS

According to the WTO's analyses (World Tourism Organization) and ETC (European Travel Commission), Europe as the number 1 tourist destination in the world shows a tendency to increase the number of tourists that use extended weekends as a way of a vacation to avoid stressful way of living in the urban areas (UNWTO, 2018). When choosing destinations for using extended weekends, for 3 - 4 days, the tourists always choose close destinations accessible by car and bus transportation or transport organized by low-cost airlines. When it comes to choosing destinations for a short stay, the preference is given to those destinations that offer various forms of countryside, mountain tourism and spa tourism where tourists have the opportunity to taste some traditional local products. Primary factors that influence the choice of destination are the following: promotion of destination on the Internet, comments from visitors and their recommended experiences, the authenticity of destination, the price of the package service (transport, accommodation, catering services, tickets and other costs), quality of service as a total perception of all points of contact with the locals, culture and a way of living.



DISCUSSIONS

The analysis of the individual characteristics and mere interpretation of rural tourism, gastronomy as a tourist product, tourism on the farm, agricultural farm tourism, cultural tourism, religious tourism, points to a common component, that is to say, the activities in the rural environment. Gastronomy plays an important role in development of rural tourism, because the food has a central place in the tourist experience, more and more tourist destinations are increasingly sold with the help of specific food and beverages. Gastronomic tourism is a new alternative form of tourism that embraces people's journeys to some certain destinations, in which, the locally prepared or produced food and beverages are the main motivating factor for travelling. In recent years, the rural areas are very interesting for the tourists, especially during the celebration of some holidays, rural tourism should promote the ethnic foods from its tourist region. There is a great number of national restaurants in the world that offer traditional cuisine like Serbian, Macedonian, Bulgarian, Italian, French, Spanish cuisine which are successfully branded. The goal of every national cuisine is to create its own gastronomic brand that will be easily recognizable and attractive for the locals and the tourists as well (Atanasova *et al.*, 2006).

CONCLUSION

Over the years, the tradition of the national cuisine has diminished as well as the customs connected with the food. Therefore, it is necessary to create a gastronomic brand for protection and development of national cuisine, the original culture and the cultural heritage of the globalization. Tourists are choosing those tourist destinations that offer tranquillity, peace, fresh air, organic food production, rural areas with ethnic food where guests can only enjoy. Especially, developed traditional cooking techniques such as: making ajvar in a traditional way, making cheese, preparing brandy, roasting lamb, baking bread, wine production, etc. are quite interesting for the tourists who even want to participate in the production process. From year to year, there are many tourist manifestations where the food has a cult place and most often on the manifestations themselves, competitions for the best made pie, best made sweet are organized. Through development of gastronomic and rural tourism, an economic progress, preservation of nature, preservation of traditions can be achieved. Europe as the number 1 tourist destination in the world shows a tendency to increase the number of tourists using extended weekends as a way of vacation to avoid stressful way of living in the urban areas.

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