

The Role of a High-Quality Restaurant in Stimulating the Creation and Development of Gastronomy Tourism

Abstract: The aim of this research is to determine the role played by a Michelin-starred restaurant, such as El Celler de Can Roca, in stimulating the creation and development of gastronomy tourism products. This research is qualitative and descriptive, using the method of indirect observation and in-depth interviews. It was found that the restaurant object of study contributes to stimulating the creation and development of gastronomy tourism products, since it was possible to identify components and characteristics in its activities, innovation process, discourse and philosophy that add quality to the products and services offered by gastronomy tourism. This study contributes to expanding research on Michelin-starred restaurants, which boost local economies through tourism and its effects, as well as leading to new ways of thinking about gastronomy, beyond the academic relevance of the subject, since haute cuisine restaurants attract little research outside the field of management.

Keywords – El Celler de Can Roca, Michelin, food tourism, gastronomy tourism, Girona, restaurant.

1. Introduction

The 21st century has brought with it significant changes in demand (behavior, needs and expectations) for the tourism sector, which consequently requires significant changes in its communication, promotion and services (Lew, Hall & Williams, 2014). Tourists are more experienced and have greater purchasing power and more time to travel (WTO, 2012). They are therefore looking for concrete learning experiences, which is a fundamental feature of cultural tourism (Richards, 2002; Donaire, 2012). In this context, the tourist experience has diversified, leading to the emergence of a multitude of new types of tourism that seek to respond to a wide variety of tastes and preferences, and where experiences or emotional tourism become increasingly more relevant (Araujo Vila, 2015; Rivera Mateos, 2013). Nowadays, tourists are displaying more of an interest in experiences that involve them in the culture of the destination they travel to, increasingly

looking for a complete experience that includes leisure, culture, education and interaction (De Rojas, Waiter, 2008). Several authors agree that gastronomy is the study of the relationship between culture and food (Bessière, 1998; Scarpato, 2002; Contreras, 2007) and promotes values that contribute to the development of modern tourism such as a respect for culture, tradition, authenticity and sustainability (UNWTO, 2016/17). This type of tourism is therefore considered essential in promoting and diversifying a destination while maintaining local traditions and authenticity.

Our aim is to analyze the impact a restaurant with three Michelin stars has on its immediate surroundings by taking El Celler de Can Roca in Girona as a case study. To this end, the article is divided into different sections. First, we provide a review of the existing literature in order to identify the different concepts analyzed, the relationship between gastronomic tourism and identity and the impact of gastronomic tourism on the territory, and finally, the role played by restaurants with Michelin stars.

Food is an emerging field in the tourism and hospitality industry. To provide guidelines for the sector, in 2012 the World Tourism Organization drafted the first report on worldwide gastronomic tourism, including policies for its development and promotion. According to Hjalager (2010), gastronomy has become an important element for diversifying and defining the regional brand and image. Kivela & Crofts (2005) stated that food is an element of local culture that represents the history, habits and traditions of the community or its geographical aspects. Therefore, gastronomy is essential to the singularity of the tourism activity, not only because it is the central experience, but also because it has become a significant source of identity formation in postmodern societies (Richards, 2002). Although gastronomy/cooking has always been an anthropological, sociological and paleontological phenomenon, in recent years it has gained notoriety in other fields of knowledge, which recognize its significance in shaping the identity of a particular group. These ideas will be developed further in later sections.

The second section presents the object of the case study, El Celler de Can Roca. Considering that Michelin-starred restaurants receive much media attention and a considerable flow of customers, these establishments are intrinsically involved in boosting the local economy. The three-star Michelin restaurant, El Celler de Can Roca,

articulates and declares a discourse on its principles and philosophy rooted in the region (Aulet, Mundet & Roca, 2016) and attracts a significant volume of tourists (Serra, Blasco & Palou, 2016). In view of this, the question we pose here is whether a restaurant with three Michelin stars, such as El Celler de Can Roca, can contribute to developing gastronomic tourism in its immediate surroundings.

This article therefore advances knowledge regarding the theoretical and practical implications of a Michelin star restaurant's contribution to boosting the territory and its tourism products and services. It represents a new way of thinking about and understanding gastronomy through a restaurant, since haute cuisine restaurants attract little systematic research outside the field of management (Lane, 2010).

2. Methodology

This research is qualitative and descriptive. According to Flick (2009), qualitative methodology encompasses the perspectives of the participants and their diversity, denotes the reflectivity of the researcher and the research, is able to adopt a variety of approaches and methods, and provides in-depth interpretive data for understanding the social world.

The research was divided into phases. The first comprised bibliographical and documentary research, which for Martins & Theóphilo (2009) share several similarities, the difference being the nature of the sources themselves. The second phase involved indirect observation, which serves as a support to validate the research, helping the researcher to gain a better understanding of the context and phenomenon (Whyte, 1991; DeWalt & DeWalt, 2002; Mason, 2002). The third phase consisted of fieldwork, the aim of which is to investigate possible cause and effect relationships between a particular fact or phenomenon (Foddy, 1996). Lastly, the fourth phase entailed analysis of the results.

For our research, we looked for a Michelin-starred restaurant whose creativity and innovation is based on cultural and territorial interaction, incorporating local products, tradition, history and identity. Therefore, as data-collection procedures we opted for indirect observation and in-depth interviews.

An initial informative visit was carried out to the restaurant on 10/18/2016, allowing the researchers an insight into its operation, the relationship with customers (reservation system, food service, winery, other factors), the operation of the kitchen, the purchasing department, the press office, new projects, and the research and innovation department, among other important elements.

However, although the main focus of this investigation is the restaurant El Celler de Can Roca, all other establishments forming part of the Roca Group were visited and observed for a greater understanding of the activities, brand philosophy and underlying dimensions (with the exception of L’Espai Mas Marroch and La Masía - where an in-depth interview was conducted with the manager).

Visits, observations, tastings and informal conversations were carried out with the employees of Can Roca Restaurant on 03/23/2017 and 03/04/2017; of Rocambolesc on 03/03/2017, 03/11/2017, 03/19/2017 and 03/31/2017; of Roca MOO and Roca Bar on 04/24/2017; and during the exhibition celebrating the 30th anniversary of the restaurant “From the Earth to the Moon” on 02/11/2017, 03/15/2017 –including a guided visit - and 03/24/2017.

In addition, two individual and in-depth interviews were conducted with the aim of understanding the meaning respondents attribute to certain issues and situations (Marthins & Theóphilo, 2009). A separate semi-structured script was used to conduct each of the interviews carried out with two key employees of the restaurant, one person responsible for managing the clients (informant 1) and the other for innovation (informant 2). These were recorded and later transcribed. Both interviews were carried out on 04/07/2017 and had a duration of approximately one hour each. The interview can take different forms, but its fundamental characteristic is the opportunity for a detailed, in-depth investigation of the interviewee’s personal perspectives so as to gain a profound understanding of the context of the phenomenon being observed (Berg, 2000).

Aside from those collected directly at the restaurant, data were also collected and analyzed in the immediate environment (the Girona region) in order to determine the impact of the restaurant’s activity. Thus, data collected from the Girona Tourist Office,

Girona City Council's Economic Promotion Department and the Costa Brava Girona Tourism Board helped complement the study.

Following data collection, we focused on analyzing and interpreting the information in a coherent and organized way. The interviews were transcribed and a content analysis was performed on the administered questionnaires.

3. Gastronomy tourism and its relationship with the environment where it takes place

A brief overview of the food and tourism literature is provided to better conceptualize gastronomy tourism, highlighting different interconnected or associated terms and definitions.

Hjalager (2003) identified different tourist behaviors in relation to food: recreational, existential, for distraction and experimental. For the existential and experimental behaviors, gastronomy is an element to be valued at the destination (and not just a matter of subsistence), food and beverages being essential elements of the tourism experience (Hall & Sharples, 2003). The social and cultural significance of food has been the object of study in past research, including new perspectives for tourism (Bessière, 1998; Hall & Macionis, 1998; Hjalager & Corigliano 2000; Hall & Mitchell 2000; Hjalager 2002; Wolf 2006), and it is considered a fundamental form of attraction for tourist demand (González Turmo, 2007).

Food also offers a range of gastronomic opportunities for tourists (Quan & Wang, 2004; McKercher, Okumus & Okumus, 2008). Furthermore, food and wine are significant components of the contemporary lifestyle and have become an important part of tourism development and a new niche market (Hall & Mitchell, 2000; Kivela & Crotts, 2005). It is important to emphasize that food and eating contribute significantly to the images a traveler holds of the destination (Hjalager & Corigliano, 2000). Thus, food has come to occupy a distinctive position in developing a tourist destination (Quan & Wang, 2004), leading whole nations or cities to promote their own unique culinary appeal (Cohen & Avieli, 2004). Therefore, a wide range of opportunities and initiatives exists for the

development of food tourism products (Smith & Xiao, 2008). One study conducted in Mexico (Ortega, 2015, 24) claimed that 30% of foreign tourists were motivated by food. It is estimated that in 2011 the gastronomic industry in Mexico occupied nearly 1.3 million people directly and about 3 million indirectly.

Key terms related to “food tourism” include *culinary*, *gastronomy*, *cuisine*, *gourmet*, *tasting* and *wine tourism* (Hjalager, 2002; Smith & Xiao, 2008; López-Guzmán & Sánchez-Cañizares, 2012) and it can be defined as tourists visiting primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants and local food tasting sites (Hall & Mitchell, 2000). Therefore, this work assumes gastronomy tourism –and the other terminology described here- to be a cultural practice and typical cuisine to be sensory and experiential heritage.

The relationship between culture and gastronomy tourism is better understood when the activity offers or reflects an authentic experience (Bessière 1998; Jones & Jenkins, 2002; Hall & Sharples, 2003; Long, 2004). Gacnik (2012) considered authentic to be the opposite of universal; therefore, the inclusion of local gastronomic heritage as part of gastronomy tourism is considered from this perspective, a tool for differentiating destinations and promoting the identity of places. Gastronomy is a social practice with a cultural and symbolic dimension (Fischler, 1985, Richards, 2003) that allows a social group or territory to be identified (Calabuig i Tomas & Ministrall i Masgrau 1994; Everett & Aitchinson, 2008).

Many authors have presented the attractions of food as subsectors of gastronomy tourism in the literature, such as agro-tourism, farmers’ markets with a local menu and produce (Telfer & Wall, 1996), and special events such as food festivals or cooking holidays (Hall & Sharples, 2008). In general, this new generation of “gastro-attractions”, as Scarpatto called them (2002), improves local tourism, promoting gastronomic culture, diversity, and multi-ethnicity and providing global exposure. Furthermore, if developed properly, it is considered an important vehicle for providing sustainable tourism (Everett & Aitchison, 2008; Sims, 2009). Since food is a point of convergence for production, treatment, storage, transportation, processing, cooking and food preparation (Corigliano, 2002), many actors are involved in gastronomy tourism. The main actors involved in

gastronomic tourism are restaurateurs (who make up part of the complementary supply in tourism, according to Smith & Xiao); companies or organizations that link tourism supply and demand; and producers, who through their involvement in tourism can increase direct sales, create brand loyalty and have direct feedback from users (Hall & Sharples, 2003).

Likewise, gastronomy also represents an opportunity for revitalizing and diversifying tourism, promoting local economic development, involving different professional sectors (producers, chefs, markets, artisans, etc.) and awarding new uses to the primary sector.

In recent years, governments and institutions have begun to recognize the value of gastronomy, prioritizing food not only to promote a sense of authenticity and local identity, but also to protect products originating from the land, raise ecological awareness, stimulate exchange between cultures and improve health. Strategic and management plans for gastronomy have therefore been developed to this end.

By way of example, in 1992 the European Union initiated a policy of regulating differentiation among its agricultural products. It currently has a regulation with provisions for protected geographical indications (IGP), designations of origin for agricultural products and foodstuffs (DOP) and traditional specialty guaranteed (TSG), which are organized and recognized through the use of specific community symbols in product labeling. Consequently, many social benefits are achieved, such as boosting rural activity, providing objective information for consumers and increasing farmers' incomes (European Union Law, 2017). These types of official instruments also benefit the construction of a local food or taste image, creating a commercial context that can also work with the tourist imagination (Timothy, 2016). This image, created directly with the product's designation of origin, allows tourists a greater access to the receiving community and becomes a mechanism for the recognition and interpretation of culture and traditions, thus valuing producers, distributors and markets, restaurants with local cuisine, handicrafts and souvenirs related to gastronomy.

The relationship between gastronomic tourism and restaurants is a clear one, given that the latter are an identifying element of this type of tourism. One of the most popular

quality indicators for gastronomy around the world is the Michelin star system found in the Michelin Guide. Chefs have become celebrities in recent years and this phenomenon can be seen as a manifestation of the historical evolutionary pattern of eating habits and consumption observed mainly in Europe (Jacobs & Scholliers, 2003). Thus, Michelin-starred restaurants are firmly established within this postmodern paradox and respond to the needs of a new customer profile: gastronomic, gourmet tourists or “foodies” – those with a passion for eating and learning about food (Cairns, Johnston & Bauman, 2010). They are tourists who adopt practices related to food that reflect a certain set of privileged values over others (Naccarato & Lebesco, 2012). Although some studies have been published on Michelin-starred restaurants, these generally focus on management processes or the creative process, not on the impact or relationship these restaurants have with their immediate geographical environment.

4. Case Study: El Cellar de Can Roca

The history of El Cellar de Can Roca restaurant holds aspects that are essential for understanding the Roca brothers’ cuisine. El Cellar de Can Roca is located in Girona, in the northeast of the Iberian Peninsula. The Girona region belongs to the Costa Brava–Pyrenees tourism brand, one of the areas with most international visitors in Spain.

The restaurant was inspired in the restaurant belonging to the brothers’ parents (Josep Roca and Montserrat Fontané) -Can Roca Restaurant- opened in 1967 in a district on the outskirts of the city of Girona. Thus, the Roca brothers are the third generation of a family traditionally dedicated to the restaurant business, their grandparents (Joan and Angeleta) having run a small establishment in La Garrotxa, and then their parents having the aforementioned restaurant (Aulet, Mundet & Roca, 2016).

Joan (chef), Josep (sommelier) and Jordi (pastry chef) grew up learning typical recipes, traditional ways of preparing food and cultural values intrinsic to food heritage in a family environment (Massanés & Ortiz Ripoll, 2017). The three brothers then went on to continue their training in other specialized areas at the Girona School of Hospitality and Tourism, adding to their previous knowledge a broad and solid base that is at once evolutionary and innovative with regard to both the local and global gastronomy.

Recently, the serving and consumption of food has become a global industry, of which tourism forms an important part. Restaurants have become a tourist attraction because they are places where one has an experience (Muler, 1999). El Celler de Can Roca is no different in this regard. Opened in August 1986, the restaurant employs technique and innovation to offer its guests more than just a meal; it provides an experience full of local ingredients associated with the landscape, with meanings, reflections and ethical and aesthetic values, presented in an artistic, magical, innovative and technical style.

The esteem in which the restaurant is held is evidenced by the awards it has received. It obtained its first Michelin star in 1995, the second in 2002 and the third in 2009, after opening the restaurant in a new building close to the original one in the same neighborhood. The current building was designed by the architects Torruella Trenchs Studio, who received a nomination for its design in the Counties of Girona Architecture Prize in 2008. The unique design combines the kitchen space, dessert-making space and wine cellar, making use of the triangular-shaped dining room to this effect. This same architectural studio designed the Rocambolesc ice cream parlor, also a Roca brothers' project, for which they were nominated for the FAD prize in 2009.

The Michelin star system is the most respected ranking for quality gastronomy and haute cuisine in Europe, inspiring tourists and consumers who enjoy luxurious dining and great food. The Michelin empire began with its incursion into the auto industry in France in 1890. The guide was initially aimed at drivers and consisted of travel information, maps and mechanical tips. In 1920, it became a paid guide and included information on hotels and restaurants. In 1926, the star rating system was created with the aim of making the tourist experience a memorable one. The classification is based on five criteria: 1. the quality of the products; 2. the mastery of flavor and cooking techniques; 3. the personality of the chef in his or her cuisine; 4. value for money; and 5. consistency between visits. The three stars reflect exceptional cuisine, two stars excellent cooking and one star is a very good restaurant in its category (Michelin, 2017).

Besides the three Michelin stars it has obtained, in 2013 and 2015 the restaurant received the award of world's best restaurant from Restaurant Magazine; it came in second position in 2011, 2012, 2014 and 2016, and third in 2017. In 2004, Josep Roca received the

International Academy of Gastronomy (AIG) award for best *Maître*, and for best *Sommelier* in 2005 and 2011. Joan Roca received the *Grand Prix de L'Art de la Cuisine* from AIG in 2011 and the Chef's Choice Award in 2016. In addition, Jordi Roca received the award for World's Best *Pastry Chef* in 2014 and the *Prix au Chef Pâtissier* award from AIG in 2016. All these awards have helped the restaurant continue to foster innovation, originality and creative methods associated with local products, cooking style, with reflections of traditional Catalan cuisine.

Like other renowned chefs such as Gordon Ramsay, Jamie Oliver and Gary Rhodes - defined by Henderson (2011) as "modern celebrity chefs"- they have expanded their groups to offer new insights following the globalization process. The status achieved by El Cellar de Can Roca benefits its image and brand, which is also expanding at a fast pace, with the group involved not only in the field of gastronomy, but also in social, cultural and environmental actions. The Roca Group includes the following brands: El Cellar de Can Roca, Can Roca, Espai Mas Marroch - for events, Rocambolesc - handmade ice cream, Roca Barcelona (Roca Moo - gastronomy restaurant with one Michelin star, and Roca Bar - bar lobby at the Hotel Omm), La Masia - multidisciplinary laboratory for conducting complex research and projects dedicated to knowledge and innovation (Cellercanroca, 2017). The brothers have also authored books and sell products such as Rocook, chocolates and handcrafted beers, drinks with denomination of origin, perfume with their own aroma, and other items.

As we can see, the group is expanding on several fronts, though not in the manner highlighted by Urry (2002), who criticized some restaurant companies for taking advantage of their three Michelin stars by indiscriminately opening restaurants that would actually fall within the same category as a McDonald's outlet. The Roca brothers have always wanted to keep the restaurant in the neighborhood where they grew up and where their parents have their own establishment; even when they decided to look for another location it was in the same neighborhood. They have also refused to let other restaurants open in their name, one of their arguments being their emotional connection with the territory, but also because they consider the same type of service provision unfeasible without their own direct participation in the creative process. This is why their various different establishments (Mas Marroch, La Masia, El Rocambolesc) have all been opened

in the Girona region. The only one that has spread to other places is the Rocambolesc ice cream parlor, which is not a restaurant.

Fine (1996) specifies that a restaurant is an organization dedicated to producing physical and cultural objects capable of stimulating the imagination of tourists. The human sensory properties (smell, taste, touch, hearing and vision) can be perfectly stimulated through a gastronomic experience or taste sensations. Being aroused by color (tone, intensity and brightness), odor and flavor, taste, texture (oral and manual) and sound (Teixeira, Meinert & Barbeta, 1987; Hui, 1992; Anzaldúa-Morales, 1994). Therefore, in addition to nutrition, the gastronomic experience acquires multiple meanings, stimulating the senses and arousing cognitive and affective reactions.

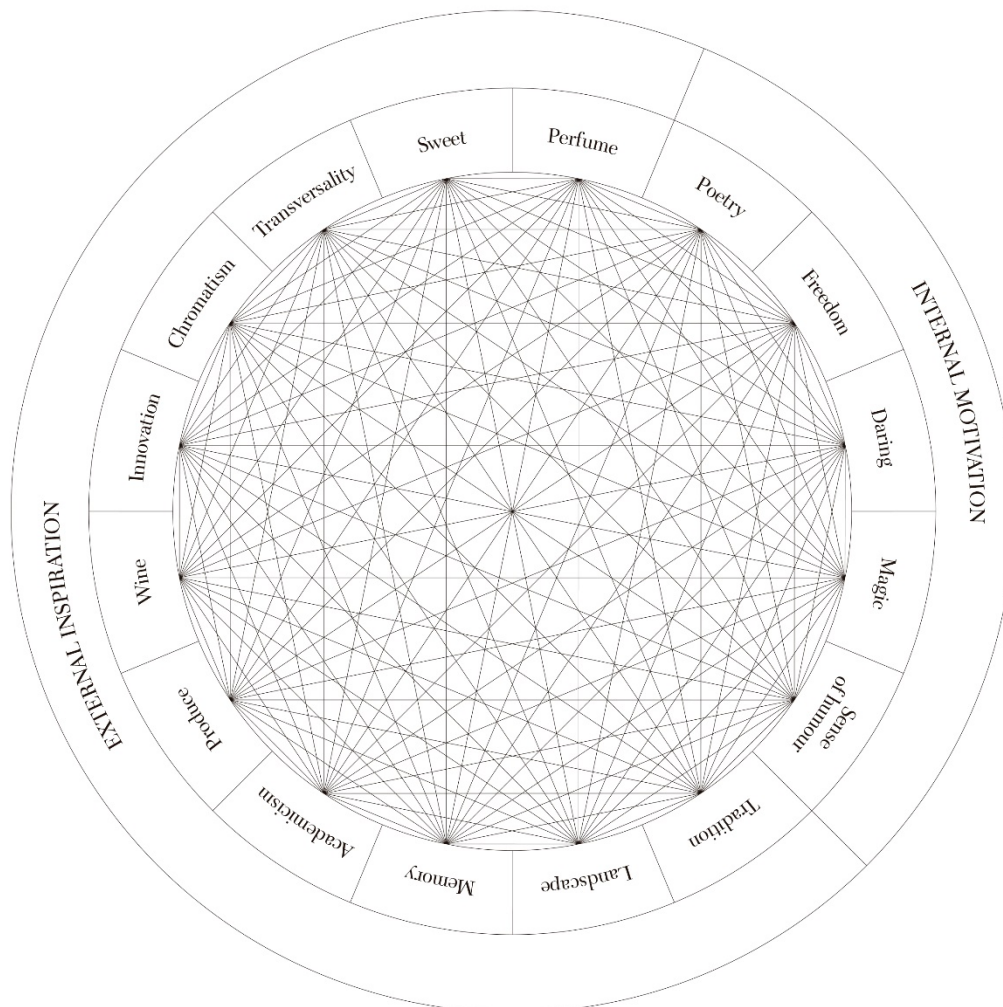
The El Celler de Can Roca menu is a source of hedonic experience, a point where production is directed, where social relations are formed and maintained, encompassing the social and cultural function, the arts and science. The Roca brothers' restaurant is defined as "free style", presenting a cuisine that exudes freedom but is committed to the creative and innovative avant-garde. The restaurant offers two menus with optional wine pairing. The dishes make use of fresh, local and exclusive ingredients, concentrating flavors and focusing on traditional Catalan gastronomy. Wines add something special, in every way. During meals, through being paired with food, they allow food to be combined with wines with different origins, textures, colors and aromas... which help to complement the experience. At the same time, an important part of the restaurant is the cellar, which is made up of five different spaces (as if they were chapels) which are dedicated to five different regions (Champagne, Riesling, Burgoyne, Priorat and Jerez). Everyone these chapels display the wine from a multi sensorial space where sight comes into play (images that you can see are of the vineyards, the producers and the wines themselves), with music (which emotions each wine can transmit) and touch (it tries to represent using materials such as silk, metal, etc. The personality of every one of the wines).

The creative process employed by El Celler de Can Roca "reflects its academic legacy: reproductions, reinterpretations, ruptures, and inspirations to enrich a cuisine open to conveyed wisdom" (Aulet, Mundet & Roca, 2016, 143). The brothers are personified as

a kaleidoscope; three faces or differentiated personalities that complement each other, with endogenous and exogenous inspirations. They present the process of creating their dishes in sixteen ideas or sources with internal motivations and external inspirations, all interconnected and interdependent (Figure 1).

Ottenbacher & Harrington (2007) studied and contrasted theoretical innovation processes, and found those adopted by Michelin star chefs to have both similarities and differences, revealing the creation process to be particular to each individual. These authors also pointed out that the innovation process helps restaurants keep their portfolio competitive and achieves long-term competitive advantages.

Figure 1: Creative areas – El Celler de Can Roca (2017)



Source: Exhibition El Celler de Can Roca – From the Earth to the Moon brochure (2017).

Some restaurants recognize the importance of innovation but are uncertain how to successfully create and design new dishes and menus (Ottenbacher & Harrington, 2006). This is not the case with the process adopted by El Celler de Can Roca, which is dynamic, constantly changing and complemented by the long history and evolution of its cuisine. As Aulet, Mundet & Roca (2016) have pointed out, the numerous elements involved in the Celler de Can Roca creative process are based, among other aspects, on memory, tradition and product.

We can cite various dishes that the Rocas have created throughout their career that exemplify this. The dish “*Timbal de poma amb foie*” (Apple timbale with foie) was created in 1996 and is based on a traditional festive recipe from the region of Girona (specifically L’Empordà). It is made using Girona apples, which have been awarded a stamp of quality (IGP). The same goes for the “*Tot gamba*” (All prawn) dish, which is based on the famed local product Palamòs prawns.

Other examples would be “*El blat verd*” (Green wheat), which is a recipe based on bread, oil, herrings and grapes and is inspired by the dish that Empordà merchants ate at breakfast. “*L’arrós amb botifarra negra i garotes de mar*” (Rice with black pudding and sea bass) is a version of a typical fishermen’s meal and a homage to them (Massanés & Ortiz Ripoll, 2017).

5. El Celler de Can Roca’s relationship with the surrounding area

A good restaurant can be a tourist destination in itself (Boniface, 2003). Food is not only a basic need for tourists, but also a cultural element that can present a destination in a positive light (Jones & Jenkins, 2002). Thus, the El Celler de Can Roca menu serves as an initial presentation of the destination, a means of territorial promotion, arousing the interest of clients to discover something new, and adding elements beyond the experience provided by the restaurant.

The Roca brothers are directly involved with the surrounding area and many parts of the chain. Thus, they have ongoing projects aimed at practicing sustainable gastronomy. By means of a discourse that is deeply rooted in the precepts of identity, authenticity and

belonging, informant 2 from the study describes the restaurant as being inserted within a community “formed by people”, which in some way is also favored by the activity itself without excluding anyone and with the interest of adding more people.

a) Projects aimed at developing technology and heritage:

La Masía - A multidisciplinary research center created in 2014 with the aim of conducting complex research and projects dedicated to knowledge, innovation and technology. At La Masia, different projects have been developed in cooperation with other institutions and agents such as the *Fundació Àlicia per al desenvolupament del Rotaval* (www.alicia.cat). The Rotaval is a tool that uses the technique of distilling solids at low temperatures using a vacuum pump. This is an example of applying technology to cuisine. There are also other examples of Joan Roca using vacuum technology in his cuisine. The Roca brothers also work in partnership with designers, industrial designers and artisans to develop new conceptual elements for their services.

El Somni - An opera in twelve dishes, a banquet in twelve acts - this project was called ambitious, unprecedented, and consisted of the first multisensory gastronomic opera. Comprising a dinner for twelve guests, who tasted twelve dishes, harmonized with twelve wines, with twelve reflections - thinkers and poets, twelve songs, twelve videos, twelve ideas and a card game spread out over each of the twelve acts of the dinner, the event was held in 2013 (El somni, 2017).

Animated land – A project aimed at recovering wild plants from the environment, for their incorporation into gastronomy, not only in a decorative way, but also with a technological, innovative and practical focus. Through this project, carried out jointly with the botanist Evarist March, the Rocas managed to record more than 3,000 species of edible plants in the territory of Girona that had been used in earlier times but whose use had been forgotten. More than 300 species have now been introduced into different dishes made by El Cellar de Can Roca and the brothers have also created a small vegetable garden with some of these plant species.

Roca Spirit – A project aimed at recovering lost knowledge about the artisanal production of distillates and formulating non-alcoholic beverages with fermentation based on vegetables. Informant 2 from the study highlights this as one of the best projects the Rocas have implemented, rescuing and valuing heritage concepts and resulting in a tangible product. The current result is 35 locally-sourced brandies and liqueurs.

Joint projects in the sphere of training. The three Roca brothers are also committed to training, not only at El Celler, where they train their employees and apprentices, but also in the city of Girona. In 2010, Joan Roca was named Doctor Honoris Causa by the University of Girona and continues to teach at the Girona School of Hospitality and Tourism. For his part, Josep Roca is a professor at the University of Girona's Faculty of Tourism and the three brothers collaborate on different teaching and research activities for this university.

It is also worth noting that each year the restaurant receives around 400 formal requests from trainee students from various parts of the world interested in transmitting the Rocas' knowledge (Serra, Blasco & Palou, 2016). Beyond pure knowledge, this means that future chefs from around the world come to Girona, which also helps project the image of El Celler internationally.

The process of creating El Celler de Can Roca dishes includes a broad dimension, with the creation of new dishes, products or services, and an abstract dimension, with the generation of new ways of thinking about food, its transformation and the act of eating. The Girona region has specific characteristics in its *terroir* and the restaurant's menu is prepared with local ingredients that allow travelers to experience the culture through a variety of senses. Thus, with all its attributes the Roca brothers' cuisine presents opportunities for protecting and promoting local food heritage via the creative presentation of the territory and the gastronomic landscape to tourists, and in doing so also guides gastronomic tourism.

The technology and heritage projects described above generate knowledge, which is the most important ingredient for the innovation process, contributing to reinforcing the unique elements of gastronomy found in the particular place. The dissemination of this

knowledge, whether in the form of a product or an experience, effectively contributes to the maturation of the activity, obtaining a return in itself.

b) Territorial dynamization projects:

The economic dynamism generated by the restaurant is clearly acknowledged by all informants in the study in relation to both suppliers and customers/tourists. The link between restaurants and their suppliers is referred to as a supply chain, comprising the producer, supplier/distributor and consumer. Thus, Informant 2 in the study says that the process El Celler employs to select its suppliers is a very dynamic one that has evolved over a 30-year period, meaning some are and will remain long-term suppliers. The brothers select products of "great quality" and maximum proximity. The connection with local producers is also reflected in joint acts, such as the DO Empordà presentations and wine tastings held at Mas Marroch or the participation by Josep Roca or other members of the El Celler team at events such as local wine sampling or product fairs. Hjalager (2002) argue that local products are essential to assert a reputation or expression of a regional food culture, as well as controlled quality.

Today, consumers expect businesses to engage in socially responsible behavior and some restaurants have begun engaging in green practices to respond to increasing awareness among consumers about the seriousness of environmental problems (Choi & Parsa, 2006; Schubert et al., 2010). The corporate social responsibility of the Roca Group is active through their daily actions and projects, which appear to be disinterested in media and notoriety, since many are unknown to their public because they are not explicit on the official website of the restaurant. Which, in a way, demonstrates the humbleness of the Roca philosophy of being.

Can Roca and Rocambolesc - hire staff from the region to perform services. Beyond all the employees of El Celler de Can Roca have lunch every day in their parents' restaurant, also establishing links with the place and experiencing the roots of the Roca brothers (<http://www.rocambolesc.com/>).

Ecological garden - has been commissioned by a retired man in need of work who shares his knowledge, as a way of perpetuating knowledge.

Recycle Roca - a glass-recycling project with an artist who was at risk of social exclusion (woman, unemployed and over 45 years old). The artist was identified via a foundation and commissioned to create and develop handcrafted pieces. The 22,500 bottles opened annually are recycled and partly processed into handcrafted pieces that are displayed in the restaurant, and are presented at workshops aimed at children, along with a booklet on recycling that was developed in partnership with a cooperative that carries out workshops in public libraries of Catalonia. Other elements of the restaurant are also intended for recycling such as cooking oil.

The brothers also participate in projects outside the restaurant, but which in a sense carry part of the Roca identity. As an example, feeding projects in hospitals, elderly homes and children in the region. The United Nations Development Program also honored them as Goodwill Ambassadors in 2016. According to Informant 2 in the study, the brothers carry out all their activities with commitment, engagement and responsibility, and that the current visibility and exposure in the media, requires them to accept certain compromises and positions "to talk about things that can awaken the minds of others or reach a wider audience". "Our position allows us to value the way we understand the trade and give visibility to our values" – Joan Roca (Cellercanroca, 2017). As an example the participation in 2015 of Joan Roca in the World Economic Forum of Davos.

The Tourist Agency Costa Brava Girona, in 2016 invested around 9,000 euros in communication campaigns and gastronomy diffusion and 1,300 euros in the promotion of the DO *Empordà* wine route and the *Vívido* festival. And promotional actions related to gastronomy, such as participation in 16 international specialized fairs, 12 fairs in Catalonia and 4 fairs in Spain; reation of a culture and identity club and an enogastronomy club; training days; the publication of specialized reports; making a promotional video "Food & Wine Experiences"; actions with media channels (bloggers, journalists and others); the "Welcome to *Pagès*" program; and further actions aimed at the target public, such as the Costa Brava Food Truck, supply markets and the Instagram campaign: "Your foodie city". The Roca brothers have collaborated on the different actions organized by

the Costa Brava-Girona Tourist Board on numerous occasions as ambassadors of the tourism brand.

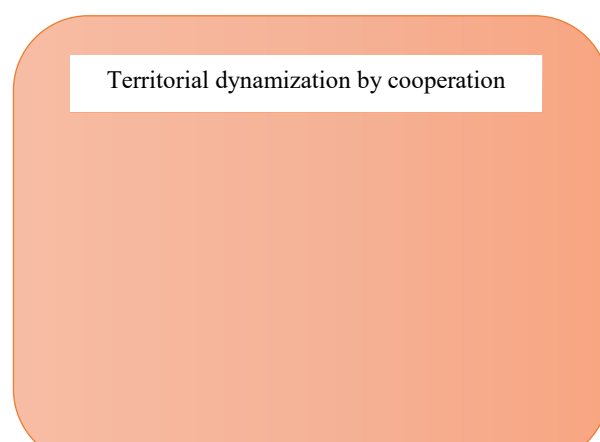
This description of the activities carried out by El Celler de Can Roca allows us to observe that a Michelin-starred restaurant does not only attract tourists but can also effectively contribute to the social, cultural, economic and environmental development of a destination, essential elements in the development of gastronomy tourism (Corigliano, 2002).

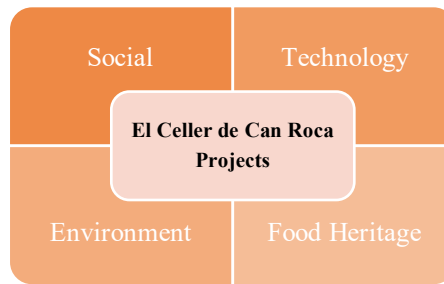
The data obtained in the course of this research have allowed us to identify chefs as agents of change (Rogers, 1995), influencing not only work practices and eating habits, but also sustainable socio-cultural changes and tourism. Scarpato & Daniele (2003) argued that global chefs are cultural specialists, and as such reflect the values, philosophies and aesthetics of their common culture. Thus, El Celler de Can Roca's gastronomy tourism model is based on products related to the territory, tradition, identity and cultural aspects, presenting an example of a high-quality and prestigious tourism product, which adds value to the destination image and brand.

The restaurant's activities help the region to stimulate its gastronomic diversity and service quality in accordance with the demands of its public. This entails awarding great importance to the place, having a qualified workforce, strengthening regional products and adapting basic tourist infrastructures, as well as constant changes and updates to public management and the tourism chain.

We have found that the projects promoted by the restaurant reflect the chefs' awareness of the roles they play in the various dimensions of their activity and in boosting the local economy (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Boosting the local economy - El Celler de Can Roca, 2017.





Source: Authors' own.

One of the overwhelming criticisms, among others, of the world that has formed around the Michelin guide and consequently the restaurants that compose it is the barrier imposed by the high cost and access to the service, and some chefs have already chosen to give up the guide. In light of this, the gastronomy presented by the Roca brothers cannot be interpreted only as an elitist art form, but as an important vehicle for the transmission of history, tradition, identity, knowledge, value and quality. In this way, it is possible to observe that the Roca Group promotes diversified gastronomical possibilities, ensuring that a wider range of customers with varied profiles can enjoy the Roca experience.

In order to provide an overview of the impact El Celler de Can Roca has had on its surroundings, Figure 3 presents the three major areas of study considered in the field of tourism in relation to sustainability, economic, socio-cultural and environmental impacts.

Economic impact	Socio-cultural impact	Environmental impact
Direct and indirect jobs generated Expenses generated by those who visit El Celler International recognition, visitors to Girona Attracting events such as the Michelin Gala Accommodating people coming to work from other places (visiting workers/apprentices and their relatives)	Knowledge generation Collaboration with the city's educational institutions Positioning of Catalan cuisine, recognition of tradition Opportunities for social insertion (<i>Roca Recicla</i> project) Collaboration with NGOs and other foundations, such as the Gasol Foundation Social commitment	Recognition for local producers Recovery of species (<i>Terra Animada</i> project) Collaboration through recycling (<i>Roca Recicla</i>) Commitment to the environment

Figure 3: Overview of impacts El Celler de Can Roca has had on the region of Girona

Source: Authors' own

Regarding economic impact and the number of visitors to El Celler de Can Roca, Cuevas & Espinoza (2016) have pointed out that the restaurant has maintained its percentage of local clients: 47% are from Catalonia, 20% from Spain and the rest international. This highlights the importance of the local population to the restaurant and its commitment to the Girona region.

In addition, both the Girona Tourist Office and the Costa Brava-Girona Tourist Board have highlighted El Celler de Can Roca's positive impact on the city's tourism. While 25% of the restaurant's international clients visit the city and stay there, visitors to the Tourist Office are showing a growing interest in El Celler and local gastronomy. As Donaire (2013) pointed out, 10% of guests at four and five-star hotels in the Girona area also visit El Celler. This percentage rises to 20% among foreign clients, revealing the restaurant's weight in the economy of the Girona area. Another indicator is that consultations regarding the Can Roca restaurant (the one belonging to the Rocas' parents), which is economically more affordable and does not have waiting lists, have increased considerably.

Donaire (2013) also stated that El Celler contributes to improving the image of the city and the country as a whole, as well as consolidating the Girona brand internationally. The Roca brothers define their cuisine as having traditional roots and being committed to the territory, which is why whenever possible they become ambassadors for local products and, above all, for small producers, farmers, fishermen, etc.

Another example is the fact that the 2017 Michelin Gala was held in Girona. According to some studies, the economic impact generated by the event in terms of media publicity was €137,616, although this impact was one-off and based on articles and news items that appeared a few days before, during and after the event (Canal, 2017).

This study corroborates data from other studies such as that conducted by Martínez Moreno, Cuevas Contreras & Espinoza Sánchez (2016), which stated that visitors arriving

in Catalonia (and Girona) attracted by gastronomy are also interested in cultural and identity values related to the territory (Long, 2003; Everett and Aitchison, 2008) and do not restrict themselves only to big cities (or Girona city in this case) but also explore other places, such as rural areas (Pardellas, 2009 and Bessiere, 1998).

Furthermore, the Roca brothers' social commitment is expressed through projects such as their collaboration with the Gasol Foundation, which promotes better eating habits among children, the Roca Recicla project, which recycles the glass generated at El Celler while providing work opportunities for the reintegration of people at risk of social exclusion, their collaboration on various other social projects and their involvement in training projects.

6. Conclusion

Food is undoubtedly linked to tourism, providing new prospects for destinations and making them more competitive by awarding them distinctive elements. Thus, a destination's characteristics related to gastronomy can be used as a factor for tourist orientation.

This article has revealed important aspects related to El Celler de Can Roca restaurant, providing the reader with detailed information on the object of research. It also allows for an understanding of the significant relationship between a Michelin-starred restaurant and its contribution to developing gastronomic tourism, as well as the economy of the region where it is located. We can therefore conclude that the restaurant promotes economic development, fosters the destination's image as a brand, and brings the effects of socio-cultural appreciation, recognition and belonging to the local cuisine, assuming the chefs' position as active agents for the territory.

However, this research does have some limitations. First of all, it should be taken into account that a qualitative and quantitative approach has been adopted from the point of view of demand but not supply. Therefore, with regard to future research, it would be interesting to conduct an in-depth quantitative study of the economic impact of El Celler

de Can Roca, as well as a study of the opinion of demand, both of users of El Celler de Can Roca and visitors to the city and region of Girona in relation to their knowledge of El Celler and the importance they attach to gastronomy. Another possible line of research would be to calculate the impact generated by news published about El Celler de Can Roca and Girona in the media, taking into account how much it would cost to place advertising for the restaurant that would have the same impact as the news appearing in the press for free. Similarly, methods for analyzing social networks could also be applied in order to collect comments from the different users of El Celler de Can Roca over a certain period of time. Other methods that are used in other areas and which would also be applicable, for example, would be to look at the impact of Instagram posts or to monitor the number of followers generated, for example, by stories and/or photos posted on this medium.

After analyzing the case of El Celler de Can Roca, we can state that it, like other similar restaurants, transcends the restaurant sector and enters other areas such as culture, tradition, agriculture, etc. Some restaurants are now providers of cultural elements and share this role with other segments of the cultural industry. Thus, even if the activities carried out by food-related tourists are not the main motivation for travel, they still have the potential to communicate the cultural impressions of a destination by providing more profound experiences.

As we have seen, the El Celler de Can Roca restaurant contributes to the creation and development of gastronomical tourism products. In view of this, the gastronomical value chain can be extended to include a range of economic activities with broader meanings. The peculiarities of local cuisine are the starting point for creating “gastro-attractions”, such as special or ethnic cuisines, special cooking heritage, ethnic and historical routes, industrial food heritage, seafood or farm products, culinary product stores, markets, product-based itineraries, slow food, registered products, food souvenirs, food processing facilities, wineries/breweries, vineyards, gourmet trails, creative cooks, fairs, exhibitions, food museums, food crafts, food designers, food trucks, cooking schools, gastronomic journeys, workshops, congresses, culinary adventures and accommodations, placing key characteristics at the center of territorial development strategies. Thus, tourism is not seen

only as a means of improving the economy and the image of the place, but also of providing all involved with an experience of culture and knowledge exchange.

On the basis of the above, although reflecting on a Michelin-starred restaurant's position in gastronomic tourism may be a fairly complex undertaking, it has helped us conclude that such restaurants increase a destination's notoriety due to their cultural, economic, social and environmental impacts.

Therefore, this unprecedented study contributes to reflecting on how a Michelin-starred restaurant embodies cultural elements and has the great responsibility of transmitting traditional values, local culinary and collective culture, stimulating new gastronomic tourism products.

As future lines of research, we suggest conducting a study with other Michelin-starred restaurants in the region, actors in gastronomy tourism and gastronomy tourists, as well as monitoring the development of the activity in the region.

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