

# **The value of popular cuisine in tourism: A Costa Brava case study**

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Catalonia is a Spanish region with a broad gastronomic culture that reinforces its identity, with its long tradition rich in local products. This article analyses the knowledge that tourists who visit the Costa Brava have of Catalan gastronomy, cuisine and popular dishes; their degree of motivation towards culinary tourism when visiting the place; and the importance given to this cuisine once at the destination. For this study, surveys were used to observe how much tourists know about traditional Catalan gastronomy. By analysing the results for the most typical dishes of the region, it was identified which dishes were known by different socio-demographic profiles. The results indicate a notable lack of awareness of regional Catalan products and some confusion regarding the rest of Spain and other Mediterranean dishes. By analysing respondents' comments, it was detected that the problem may stem from a lack of supply at destination. This study highlights the importance of a good marketing strategy when aiming to popularize local cuisine for tourism in the region.

Keywords: culinary tourism, culinary heritage, traditional cuisine, cultural tourism, Catalonia.

## **Introduction**

Tourists travel to other destinations for many different reasons: meeting friends or family, leisure, sun and beach, business or sports events, and cultural visits, among others. They also require food during their stay, an adjacent need that can in some cases become the principal motivation – a gastronomic motivation – for their trip.

As explained below, several authors have linked the physiological need for food with tourism, finding that this need can become a principal motivation for travel in some cases,

since, as noted by Clemente Ricolfé, Roig Merino, Valencia Marzo, Rabadán Ferrandis, and Martínez Rodríguez (2008), tourists could travel without visiting a monument or place, but not without eating; it is possible for tourists to remember a place first and foremost for what they ate, and then for what they saw. The same authors highlight an increase in people visiting a destination to find out about and taste their gastronomic products (Clemente Ricolfé et al., 2008). In the same way that ‘while [tourists] may forego a sightseeing trip on their program if they find it unattractive or intimidating, they cannot avoid eating (and drinking), even if the available food is unfamiliar, unpalatable, and even disgusting or frightening’ (Cohen and Avieli, 2004, p. 758).

According to Oliveira (2011), tourism is increasingly leaning towards specialization and seeking to meet the new desires of tourists, with the appearance of new products that go beyond mass sun and beach tourism in an attempt to satisfy diverse market niches, of which gastronomic tourism is one of the fastest growing in recent times. In spite of this, and the fact that uncovering the gastronomic legacies of a territory can generally be a strong motivation to embark on a trip, gastronomic tourism still plays a secondary role at times, behind environmental and architectural attractions (Bessiere and Tibere, 2013). This fact, although still secondary, leads us to view tourism as a tool to promote the local identity and traditions of a region. For Fields (2002), in an age when most of the things are based on experiences, tourism and gastronomy will tend to converge as complementary elements within the wide range of activities that consumers can experience, since gastronomic elements have become vital for many tourism products, from theme parks to independent rural vacations.

Whether gastronomy is a motivation or not, the incorporation of cuisine in the design of any tourist product has become a requirement for destinations to where visitors choose to travel during their holidays, and where they have the daily need to feed themselves (Melgar Ramirez, 2013). For this reason, the relationship between tourism and gastronomy has

increased in importance and interest in Spain in recent years, it having a strong culinary tradition and a high number of Michelin-starred restaurants. The fact is that gastronomic motivation can be related as much to the fact of going to eat in a restaurant with Michelin stars as to tasting regional products in specialized restaurants or at markets and fairs. This study will focus on the latter, that is, knowledge about and the tasting of regional products in restaurants or markets available to all, based on the fact that, as Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen (2014) state, ‘contemporary consumers are increasingly showing their interest in local food’ (p. 294).

As Tresserras, Medina, and Matamala (2007) point out, in Spain gastronomic tourism is beginning to establish itself as a product with a cultural base and its own market, strengthened by the continued development of the tourism sector and its need for diversification.

When referring to gastronomic tourism, a wide range of possibilities opens up, including innovative cuisine, traditional cuisine, regional cuisine and fast food, among many other areas that have been analysed from different academic perspectives in recent years but for which there is still much to study.

Given such a variety of cuisines, the appearance of culinary establishments aimed at tourism is a precondition for developing destinations for two opposing reasons: to provide neophobic tourists with familiar food to eat; and to make innovative food accessible and attractive for neophylic tourists (Cohen and Avieli, 2004). Therefore, it is reasonable to be aware that destinations with a greater number of tourists will have more varied eating options available, as they are able to offer a more international cuisine to the detriment of regional foods. That said, Fields (2002) points out that the most basic of meals can offer a new gastronomic experience. According to the same author,

Such basic gastronomy can also satisfy status-related motivations as tourists explore new cuisines and foods that they or their friends are not likely to encounter at home. While the less experienced or less adventurous traveller may seek comfort in familiar foods in mass tourism resorts, the modern status-conscious traveller is likely to seek out the local cuisine, very often the 'traditional' or 'peasant' food not supplied by the mainstream tourism industry. (Fields, 2002:40).

As Timothy (2016:180) states, 'cuisine, gastronomic routes, epicurean traditions and gastronomic patterns are all critical elements of cultural heritage worthy of further investigation'.

For Ohlsson (2000), the concept of culinary heritage comprises three factors:

- Consumers: throughout Europe consumers are showing a greater interest in food from specific regions, leading to an increased demand for different types of regional foods.
- Businesses: there is a need to develop businesses based on regional identities within the agriculture, food and hospitality industries.
- Regional characteristics: it is becoming increasingly more important for European regions to develop and promote their unique characteristics as a region (p. 134).

As commented earlier, several authors have highlighted tourists' increased interest in cuisines at the destinations they visit. This interest also increases the range of traditional gastronomic products on offer, benefiting local economies, and, according to Armesto López and Gómez Martín (2004), the development of gastronomic tourism is contributing to horizontally integrating the traditional primary productive and the tertiary specialized sectors, increasing sources of income and improving levels of income and employment in the local population, mainly in rural areas. This horizontal integration is mainly due to the fact that gastronomic diversity is influenced by aspects as diverse as a region's variety of agriculture, livestock, agroindustry and restaurant business (Feo Parrando, 2014).

This article analyses popular cuisine, referring to that which has been passed down from generation to generation and the inhabitants of the region consider as the most significant dishes in their culture; that is, they form part of the region's culinary heritage.

In turn, the study presented here aims to observe the impact of a region's popular gastronomy on its tourism. This is based on the premise that the relationship between food, culture and heritage is important for tourism because, as Van Westering (1999) states, 'local dishes eaten with the local population in a local setting, may provide tourist with the closest of encounters with the authentic' (p. 79). And as Feo Parrando (2014) points out, one of the best ways to discover a country, region or town, as well as its history, culture, traditions, infrastructures, etc., is by its food.

To this end, the topic of study is broken down into four objectives. The first is to determine the percentage of tourists who visit the Costa Brava for gastronomic reasons and the value they award this motivation. The second objective is to determine how many are familiar with popular Catalan cuisine, whether from their place of origin or having come across it before at the destination. The third objective is to analyse the amount of information they have regarding typical gastronomic products of the destination. And the last one, to determine which traditional Catalan dishes they know.

In 2000, Handszuh, carried out a survey that revealed the link between local food products and the impact of tourism on the economy and society, especially in tourist destinations. The general conclusion was that there is an increased interest in culinary traditions, including local products and trends such as the search for cultural authenticity, the search for quality products, concern for food safety, the protection of original products, and increased awareness of the value of the local product for general development and tourism.

Following a similar line of research and in order to determine whether a similar phenomenon is occurring on the Costa Brava, a study was conducted on different tourist

populations of this region during the summer of 2015. The aim of the study was to analyse the knowledge of tourists visiting the region with regard to traditional Catalan gastronomy. 553 surveys were administered to international tourists, that is, any tourist of a nationality other than Spanish, in the form of an open question and without any prior information, asking what they considered to be the main dishes of Catalan cuisine. They were then asked whether they could recognize the main typical dishes of the region from photographs according to a previously documented list.

When talking about Spanish gastronomy, as it also happens with French and Italian cuisine, we are not referring to a unique type of cuisine for the whole territory, but to different regional gastronomies, with certain similarities, but each one with its specific influences (landscapes, climatology and different cultures). As Feo Parrondo (2005) states, Spain presents a great culinary plurality due to agricultural, livestock, fishing, historic and sociocultural reasons (among others), which are emphasized by foreigner tourists and immigrants. While it is true that within Spain there are dishes which have influenced the international conception of the Spanish gastronomy, like paella, every region is characterized by specific dishes, like *gazpacho* in Andalucía, *fabada* in Asturias, *ensaimada* in Mallorca, *mojo picón* in Canarias or seafood in Galicia. Likewise, the origin of some dishes goes beyond the administrative borders, like paella, which is known for its Valencian origin but still has variants in the south of Catalonia, in the localities near the Valencian Community.

Hence, like in the rest of Spanish autonomous communities, we find in Catalonia a characteristic gastronomy, which includes tomato bread, *canalons* and *crema catalana* (custard cream). The region “has a differentiated identity forged over more than a thousand years and shaped within its own language, culture, social evolution, and gastronomy” (Aulet, Vidal-Casellas, & Majó, 2019). As Fàbrega (1995) points out, Catalonia has a long tradition of cookery books. Since the Middle Ages, some of the first and most important European

books on this subject have been written, including *El Libre de Sent Soví*, from the 14th century. However, several authors have also referred to Catalan cuisine in modern times, such as Josep Pla, Manuel Vázquez Montalbán and Néstor Luján, among many others.

Regarding the importance of the destination, within Spain, Catalonia is the second autonomous community, after Andalucía, to receive Spanish tourists in their hotel establishments in the last years, and the first for foreign tourists. In total it's the autonomous community that receives more tourists (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2019). Girona is the second Catalan region to receive more tourists in hotel establishments, Spanish, international or both, after the region of Barcelona (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2019). Costa Brava is one of the two touristic brands in the region of Girona, located in the north-east of the autonomous community of Catalonia, which corresponds to the Mediterranean coast. The fact that this tourist brand is located in the coast has turned it in the second most important touristic destination in Catalonia, after Barcelona.

The aim of this study is to determine what percentage of tourists travel to the Costa Brava for gastronomic reasons, the importance they award to popular cuisine once they are in Catalonia, how informed they are about the gastronomic products that the territory offers and which of the typical dishes they know they have tried at the destination.

## **Methodology**

The research carried out during this study was exploratory and quantitative. A survey was conducted to analyse the demand of international tourists who stayed overnight in one of the five Costa Brava tourist towns holding the Family Tourism Destination certification, namely: Calonge - Sant Antoni, Torroella de Montgrí - L'Estartit, Lloret de Mar, Castell - Platja d'Aro and Roses. They received the certificate of Family Tourism Destination because, within the brand of the Catalan Tourist Board, the main body of touristic promotion in Catalonia, it was the most neutral regarding the tourist profile, meaning the most standardized type of tourist.

The tourist profile from other certificates, like the Sport Tourism Destination one, may look for a diet adapted to a particular physical activity, besides the fact of visiting a destination with a clear motivation far from the gastronomic one.

The survey for this study was commissioned by the Calonge-Sant Antoni Chair of Gastronomy, Culture and Tourism at the University of Girona (Spain).

The survey was conducted by two interviewers on weekdays during the months of July and August 2015. They collected a total sample of 553 records. The margin of error obtained with this sample was 4.16%. Collection points varied, including the promenade, the tourist office and the beach of the selected destinations; each day the interviewers moved to a different destination, alternating between days of the week and tourist destination. The survey was conducted in Spanish, English and French. The respondents were chosen at random, but with an eliminatory question at the beginning of the questionnaire, since only those people who spent at least one night in the destination and did not have a fixed or temporary residence there were of interest.

The structure of the questionnaire was designed taking into account the aims of the study. It included eliminatory questions (Are you staying in the Costa Brava overnight? If so, is it your first or second home?) and 25 questions grouped into two blocks: the first on the main characteristics of tourist demand and the second on gastronomic motivation and knowledge of regional cuisine.

The aim of the first block was to determine the profile of the international visitor to the Costa Brava destinations under study, that is, their sociodemographic characteristics and the characteristics of their stay. The second block was designed to determine the main reason for the trip and the weight of gastronomic motivation, as well as to analyse these tourists' knowledge of traditional Catalan cuisine and its dishes. In this last section of the second block, one open question was asked about which dishes they thought were typical of the



region and then a closed one showing photographs and the name of the dishes. The open question revealed tourists' opinions without being conditioned by a list with the dishes already specified, thus bringing us closer to the real knowledge tourists have of the region's dishes. The closed question consisted of ten photographs, with tourists having to say whether they knew the dishes depicted in them or not. For this list, the ten most popular typical dishes were chosen from the book 'Catalunya en 70 gràfics' (Catalonia in 70 figures) by Javierre Kohan, Uilla, and Wandscher (2014), the authors having based it on the result of a survey by the newspaper *ara.cat* in 2012.

To analyse the results, it was used the statistical techniques of frequency analysis, the correlations between variables and contingency tables, with the help of SPSS. When compiling Tables 1 and 2, only significant results were chosen for each of the variables with a binary response (yes - no) in relation to each of the dishes chosen as typical.

## **Results**

The results of the survey will be presented in three sections. The first refers to the first block of the survey, which takes into account the main sociodemographic statistics. This will serve to contextualize the rest of the results discussed later in sections two and three, since the results of this article focus on the contributions extracted from the second block of the questionnaire, given that the main objective is to analyse knowledge tourists have regarding Catalan gastronomy and the value they award it. Therefore, the second section shows how many of the tourists declare a knowledge of Catalan gastronomy and their reasons for the trip, including the main reason for travel and any gastronomic motivation. And, finally, the third section shows which dishes tourists think are most typical and, of the ten chosen as typical, the profile of international tourists that know them.

### ***Sociodemographic profile of Costa Brava tourists***

Based on the survey carried out, the demographic profile of visitors to the Costa Brava during the months of July and August of 2015 was – slightly – predominantly male (58%), within an age range of 16 to 80 years old, 37 being the average. The majority had or were in higher education (61% university students) and were employees (40%) or students (34%). As can be seen in Figure 1, most of the visitors were from European countries such as France (32.55%), Belgium (20.43%), the Netherlands (14.65%) and Germany (13.56%), followed by other European countries, although there were also visitors from other regions of the world such as Russia (3.62%), Argentina and Turkey.

[Figure 1 around here]

### ***Gastronomic information and reason for travel***

From the analysis of the results for the second block of questions it is worth highlighting that practically half of the respondents claimed to be familiar with Catalan gastronomy (48.46%), mainly men. A relevant relationship is observed between knowing the gastronomy and making a return visit, with a Cramer's V of 0.481 and significant at the population level, and a p\_value of least than 0.001. Thus, of those respondents were returning to the destination, 62.68% were familiar with the gastronomy, and of those that were visiting the destination for the first time, only 7.69% were.

When asked about the main reason for visiting the destination (Figure 2), most respondents answered it was for sun and beach, followed by leisure and family activities. None of the respondents answered that their main reason was gastronomy.

[Figure 2 around here]

When asked to give a score to their degree of motivation (Figure 3) for each of the activities mentioned above, the first reason for tourists to visit the destination was still sun and beach

(4.66 out of 5). It should be noted that gastronomy was given as the second reason (3.30 out of 5), mainly among those who had visited the destination before.

[Figure 3 around here]

### ***Knowledge of local cuisine***

This last section analysed one of the main objectives of the study: to determine which Catalan dishes tourists know best and the profile of these tourists according to each dish. In order to understand these data in some depth, it has been analysed the open question: ‘What dishes do you think are typical of Catalan cuisine?’ and the closed question ‘Mark the dishes you know from the following list’, with which photographs of the ten main dishes were shown: *butifarra*<sup>1</sup> with beans, ‘*calçots*’<sup>2</sup>, cannelloni<sup>3</sup>, snails, *coca de recapte*<sup>4</sup>, *escalibada*<sup>5</sup>, *escudella i carn d’olla*<sup>6</sup>, *fricandó*<sup>7</sup>, Catalan-style broad beans and bread with tomato.

### ***Open-ended question***

With the open-ended question, it has been obtained as many as 66 results for products and dishes that international tourists believed were typical of Catalonia.

The most mentioned dish was paella, followed by some margin by ham and fish. In fourth place was bread with tomato, one of the ten considered typical for the purposes of this study. Then, with few more than 100 responses, came tapas.

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<sup>1</sup> Lean pork meat sausage.

<sup>2</sup> Variety of onion that is cooked over a high heat and eaten with romesco sauce and grilled meat.

<sup>3</sup> Although Italian in origin, in Catalonia it is typical to eat these during the Christmas holidays.

<sup>4</sup> Savoury pastry, usually with *escalibada* (see 5) and herring or *butifarra* (see 1).

<sup>5</sup> Roasted onion, pepper and aubergine.

<sup>6</sup> Typical Christmas day soup, based on meat, pulses and vegetables.

<sup>7</sup> Dish based on veal fillet and mushrooms, sautéed with chopped herbs and nuts.

Figure 4 shows that bread with tomato was named more by those who know Catalan cuisine (the darker colour) than by those who do not know it (the lighter colour). Contrarily, more tourists who say they are not familiar with the region's cuisine said that paella is a typical dish, along with tapas, pizza, *fideua* and sangria.

Dishes such as fish, prawns and "catalan cream", although not the ten most typical dishes chosen for this study, can be considered products and dishes typical of the region. In the case of "cream", respondents did not specify, so it can include both cream of vegetable soup and the dessert *crema catalana* under this term.

[Figure 4 around here]

In the open-ended question, only six of the ten dishes considered most typical were proposed by international tourists: bread with tomato, *butifarra* with beans, snails, cannelloni, *escalibada* and *calçots*.

Table 1 shows the relationship between the dishes and the sociodemographic profile of the tourists who suggested them most. The dishes are arranged in descending order according to the number of respondents who named them. Country of origin and level of education are listed in the order in which most individuals of that group named the dish.

[Table 1 around here]<sup>8</sup>

As it can be seen, most dishes were suggested significantly more by men than by women, respondents over 26 years of age and mostly over 56 years of age, mostly from France, the United Kingdom and Belgium, and with university education or vocational training. As far as professional activity is concerned, whereas students did not name any of the dishes, the rest of the professional profiles did, although without any important relationship between this and the dishes.

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<sup>8</sup> VT: Vocational Training

### *Closed question*

Table 2 shows the relationship between the ten typical dishes suggested in the closed question by means of photographs of the dishes. The same sociodemographic variables are analysed as in the previous table in order to determine whether there is a significant difference between one and the other.

In this case, the table is also in descending order according to the number of tourists who recognized the dishes in the photographs. The dishes occupy different positions in Tables 1 and 2 because when viewing the photographs respondents recognized and remembered the dishes they already knew more easily or from their stay in the destination.

[Table 2 around here]

The results of the closed question show how most dishes were also suggested significantly more by men than by women. Here the age range varies, since cannelloni is a dish that young people identify easily, so it is widely suggested from 16 years of age upwards, although the profile that responded most in general were those aged over 46. The number of countries of origin also increases, but they still mainly comprise France, the United Kingdom and Belgium.

The level of education varies, from basic level to no education, although the profile of university education and professional training mostly continues to prevail, in that order.

With regard to professional profiles, no important relationship is found between professional activity and dishes. Only students were not able to identify any of the images, with the exception of the cannelloni, the only dish identified by the lowest age range and also mentioned by the widest range.

### *Recommendation and comments*

The last questions on the survey were reserved for determining whether tourists would

recommend the Costa Brava as a gastronomic destination, even though it does not yet receive this recognition, as well as to listen to comments and suggestions by the tourists in relation to the gastronomy of the region.

With regard to recommending the destination due to its cuisine, as Figure 5 shows, 87% of tourists said they would recommend the destination to friends and family, while 12% had doubts and less than 1% would not recommend it. In this last case, it was a single person who answered "I would not recommend it at all" (with a 1), clarifying that the score was due to the fact that they did not know anything about Catalan cuisine, not because they did not want to recommend it; also, those who would only recommend it a little (with a 2) generally said it was because they had not yet tried it.

[Figure 5 around here]

Finally, there were taken into account to the comments and suggestions of those respondents who wanted to give their opinion. The comments were divided into three large groups, since they revolved around three main axes. Thus, the most common responses by tourists were:

- Of the dishes they had eaten at the destination, they did not know which were local and which were typical.
- They prefer to eat in fast food establishments and do not care about local cuisine when travelling because it is more expensive.
- Restaurants on the coast mainly offer international dishes, fast food or paellas and tapas. The few that have traditional Catalan food are difficult to find.

These comments have allowed us to draw a series of conclusions that, although based on intuition, are also mentioned by gastronomy consumers at the destination.

## Conclusion

A first conclusion taking into account tourists' gastronomic motivation is that according to the results of the survey no tourists had a gastronomic experience as their main motivation when visiting the destination. This is due to the Costa Brava being known mainly as a sun and beach destination. The fact that none of the respondents had gastronomic motivation as a first option would appear to show that this does not yet comprise part of tourists' imaginary when planning the trip, since it is not consolidated as a gastronomic destination and tourists therefore do not know the cuisine of the destination prior to making the trip, or it does not interest them. However, the fact that it is placed second as a motivation indicates that local gastronomy is a reason for travel that is beginning to interest more tourists and that the destination does invest effort to make itself known in this respect.

At the same time, there is a correlation between tourists who have previously visited the destination and their knowledge about the gastronomy of the place, as they award greater importance to popular Catalan cuisine, as well as showing a degree of interest in it, making it the second motivation after sun and beach. In addition, it is stated that the cuisine has a relevant weight when deciding to return to the Costa Brava.

Regarding the amount of information that international tourists have regarding Catalan gastronomy, this does not depend directly on socio-demographic factors such as age, gender, education or profession. As previously mentioned, one factor that makes them more informed is the fact of returning to the destination, whether the Costa Brava itself or other parts of Catalonia.

With regard to knowledge of the most characteristic Catalan dishes, the one that most tourists believe to be typical of Catalan cuisine is paella. Among those mentioned most are *fideua*, pizza, sangria and tapas. These dishes, although now widely found in Catalan restaurants and homes, are not historically typical of the region, but belong to other

autonomous regions of Spain or other Mediterranean countries. This reveals the confusion with gastronomic products from the rest of Spain and the rest of the Mediterranean. The only dish mentioned most in the open-ended question and also among the ten chosen as the most typical was bread with tomato.

With regard to the open-ended question, it is settled that initially the predominant profile is a man over 50 years old, from European countries bordering Spain or that have a historical link through tourism (northern European countries) and with a university education. The profile varies little for the closed question, with the age decreasing and number of countries increasing.

Overall, it can be concluded that traditional Catalan cuisine still has a long way to go to establish a strong image that situates it as a primary tourist attraction. It is worth clarifying that this refers to traditional and historical cuisine, since the cuisine in Michelin-starred restaurants in Catalonia, which is in some cases based on traditional cuisine but with innovative touches, has attained a position in the international imaginary.

This may be because the promotion of popular regional food, whereby each autonomous region promotes its own food rather than presenting a unified image of Spanish products, began only relatively recently. When regional cuisine has been promoted, it has mostly been to highlight haute cuisine and innovation rather than traditional cuisine. Unifying the gastronomic image may be a phenomenon that occurs in many destinations, where a standardized and international supply is offered that satisfies tourists who prefer to stick to a certain style of cuisine closer to that of their place of origin.

In recent times some actions have been implemented to promote traditional dishes by regional organizations such as the 'Fundació Institut Català de la Cuina i de la Cultura Gastronòmica' (Catalan Institute of Cuisine and Gastronomic Culture, 2017), which produced the 'Corpus de la Cuina Catalana' (Catalan Cuisine Corpus) and works with the 'Marca Cuina



Catalana' (Catalan Cuisine brand) project, among others. In addition, the Catalan Tourist Board (Agència Catalana de Turisme, 2016) declared 2016 the Year of Gastronomy and Wine Tourism, with a large marketing campaign and actions for all target markets.

Despite such promotional actions, another factor that confuses tourists is the fact that most restaurants, mainly those located in the coastal region, offer this type of cuisine. There is a perception that if this study were carried out for inland Catalonia it would produce different results, both in quantitative terms and regarding tourist profile.

This result revealing an ignorance of traditional cuisine indicates that there is a certain need for knowledge transfer to the sector, showing it that gastronomy is currently one of the key elements for the development and enhancement of a tourist destination, and both the different public administrations and private companies should therefore consider it a key element in the promotion and marketing of said geographical area (López-Guzmán and Sánchez Cañizares, 2012). As Cohen and Avieli (2004) point out, 'for a local cuisine to become a popular attraction in its own right, it has to be filtered through tourism-oriented culinary establishments' (p. 767).

Finally, as a conclusion, as highlighted by Tresserras et al., (2007) on the basis of a 2001 Turespaña study, European tourists have little appreciation of the varied Spanish gastronomy compared to that of other countries such as France and Italy.

Thus, there is a need for work on all levels to promote both regional products and the gastronomic products offered by establishments and for cooperation between all tourism agents involved in promoting local gastronomic identity and traditions with the aim of creating and maintaining the tourist image of the culinary regions in Spain.

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Figure 1. International tourists by country of origin

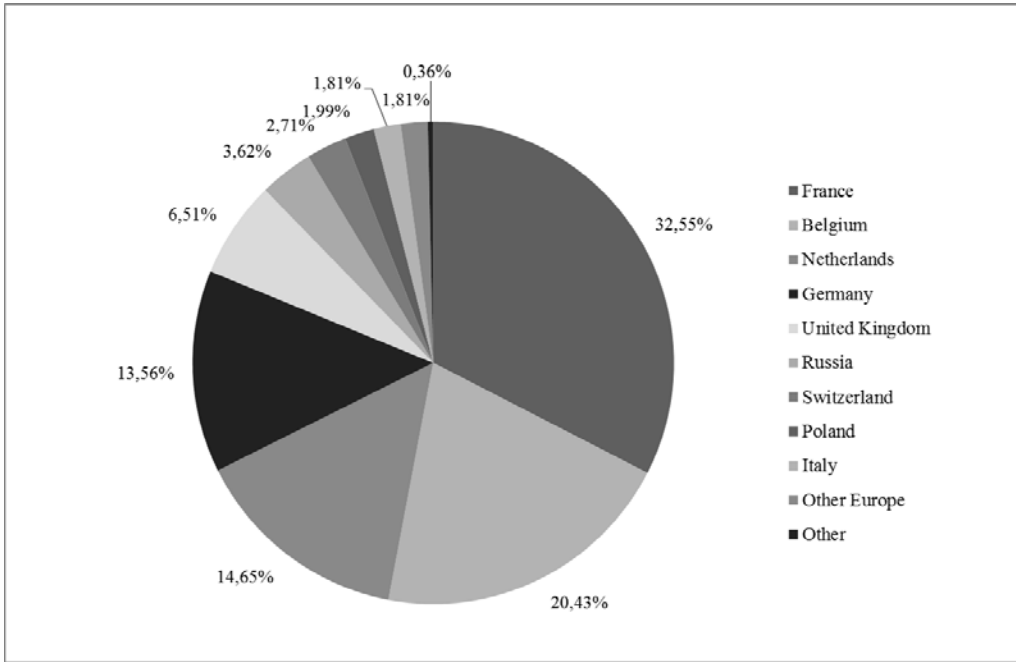


Figure 2. Main motivation of international tourists

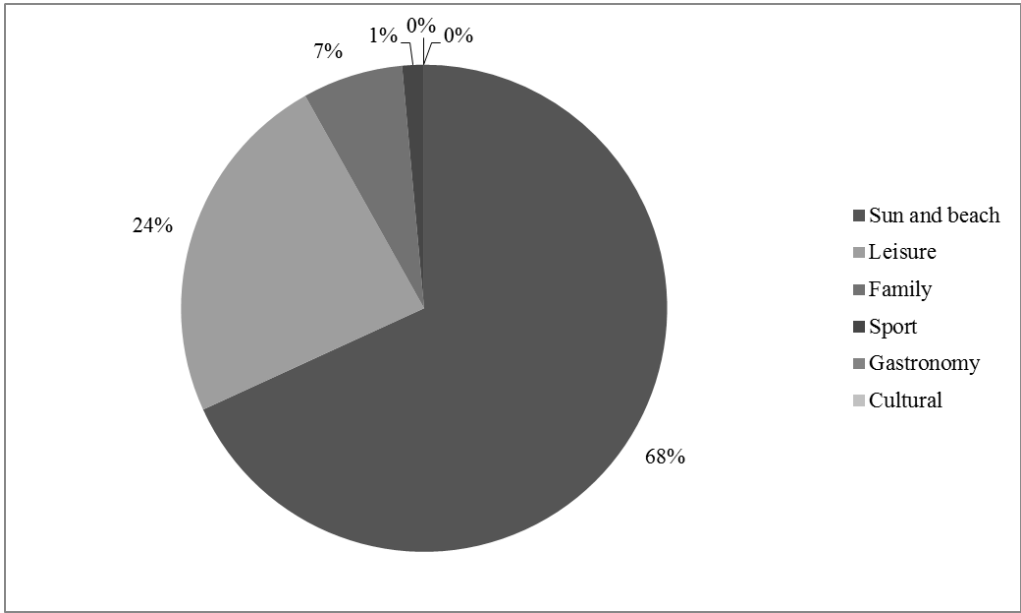


Figure 3. Degree of gastronomic motivation

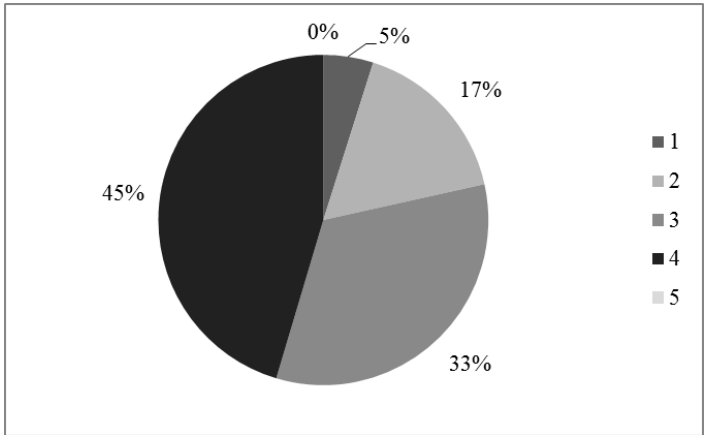


Figure 4. Most mentioned dishes in open-ended question

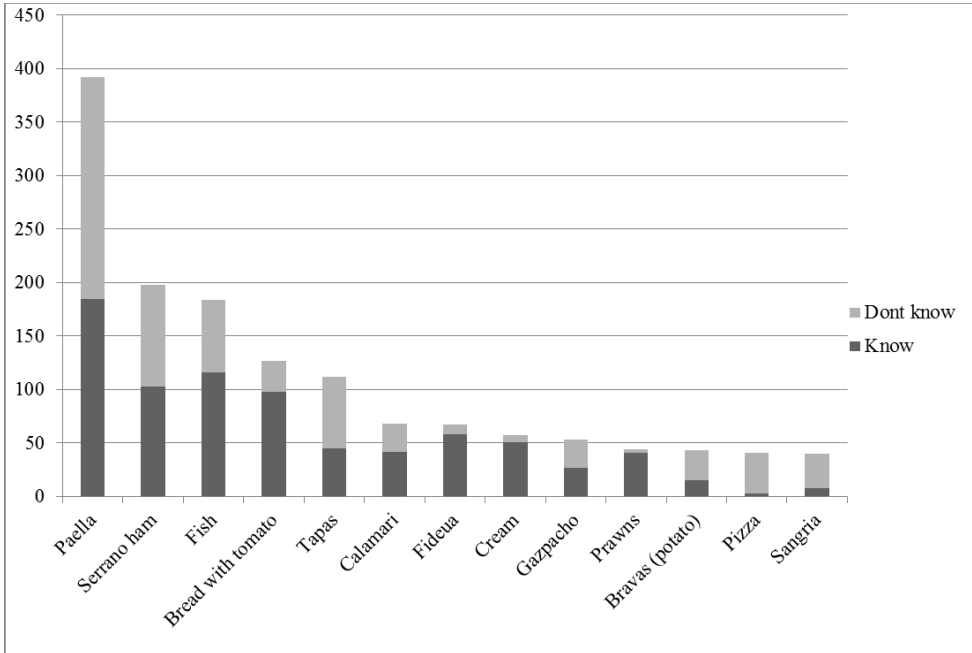




Table 1. Correlation between dishes and variables: open-ended question

Dish	Times mentioned	Gender	Age	Country of origin	Level of education
Bread with tomato	127	Man	Over 46	France, Portugal and UK	University
<i>Butifarra</i> with beans	13	Man	Between 26 and 45 and over 56	France, Belgium and UK	University and VT <sup>9</sup>
Snails	19	Man	Between 26 and 45 and over 56	France, Belgium and UK	Basic and VT
Cannelloni	8	Woman	Over 56	UK and Belgium	University
<i>Escalibada</i>	5	Woman	Between 46 and 55 and over 65	France, Ireland and UK	University and basic
<i>Calçots</i>	3	Man	Over 46	France	Basic and VT

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<sup>9</sup> VT: Vocational Training

Table 2 Correlation between dishes and variables: closed question

Dish	Times mentioned	Gender	Age	Country of origin	Level of education
Cannelloni	405	Woman	Between 16 and 35 and over 46	Germany, the Netherlands, UK, Italy, Ireland, Hungary, Argentina, Portugal, Turkey, Ukraine	University
Bread with tomato	369	Woman	Over 36	France, Belgium, UK, Switzerland, Sweden and Portugal	University, VT and none
Snails	368	Man	Over 36	France, Belgium, Denmark, Ireland, Argentina, Estonia, Hungary, Portugal and Ukraine	University, VT and none
<i>Butifarra</i> with beans	255	Man	Between 36 and 45 and over 56	France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Sweden, Ukraine, Portugal, Hungary, Estonia and Argentina	University and VT
<i>Coca de recapte</i>	211	Man	Between 36 and 45 and over 56	France, Belgium, Turkey and Sweden	University and VT
Catalan-style beans	79	Man	Over 26	France, Belgium, Argentina, Ukraine, Portugal and Ireland	University, VT and none
<i>Fricandó</i>	54	Man	Over 36	The Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland and Ukraine	University and VT
<i>Escalibada</i>	35	Man	Between 36 and 55 and over 65	France, UK and Italy	University, VT and none
<i>Calçots</i>	34	Woman	Over 56	France, Belgium, UK, Ireland and Portugal	University
<i>Escudella i carn d'olla</i>	25	Man	Between 26 and 35 and over 46	Belgium, UK, Switzerland and Russia	University

Figure 5. Recommendation of the Costa Brava as a gastronomic destination

