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OFFER OF AUTHENTIC FOOD AS A CONDITION FOR GASTRONOMIC TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract:

By perceiving the food as an important part of the tourism offer in terms of biological needs of tourists, the question arises as to how it can be further exploited to contribute to tourism development. In this regard, food prepared using the local ingredients, according to the old methods of processing and serving, and in an authentic way, can be of interest to the tourists of selective forms of tourism, also known as food tourism, gastronomic tourism and gourmet tourism. The research aims to demonstrate the quality of food offer in the hospitality industry of Vojvodina and examine whether it can meet the requirements of foreign tourists who travel for it. The survey was conducted in 147 catering facilities in Vojvodina offering food and beverages, by means of direct and indirect collecting of written offers, and includes the statistical analysis of 10,923 meals. The aim is to indicate the current state of gastronomic offer and all advantages of authentic food and gastronomic tourism.

Key words:

food,
gastronomy,
tourism,
gastronomic tourism.

INTRODUCTION

The regions in which the wave of technology and globalization did not change the way food and beverages are served and prepared, including the consumption culture, have become favorable for development of selective forms of tourism, also known as food and drink tourism, culinary tourism, gastronomic tourism, gustatory tourism and gourmet tourism (Hall & Mitchell, 2002).

These forms represent a special form of tourism whose aim is to attract tourists motivated by food and drinks in different ways, thus making food an important tool of the tourism industry (Hall & Mitchell, 2000), which in order to develop and grow further has to offer something different. The focus of gastronomic tourists are local and national dishes (Kalenjuk *et al.*, 2012a, 2012b; Kalenjuk *et al.*, 2014), which as such are the reflection of a people's culture.

Gastronomic tourism is an experience pursued by visiting and tasting food and beverages at primary or secondary producers', visiting food and beverage festivals and consuming authentic specialties in various restaurants. An increasingly popular form of gastronomic tourism is an activity of tourists who attend different multi-day schools of authentic regional cooking (Hall & Mitchell, 2006).

The authors define it as a journey during which the purchase or consumption of regional food (and drink), or observation and study of food production (from agriculture to culinary school), represents an important motive or activity (Ignatov & Smith, 2006). Culinary tourists visit places that offer unique culinary experiences. They love to get into their host's kitchen, inquire about the typical dishes, and learn where they can purchase ingredients and spices needed for a particular meal (Kalenjuk *et al.*, 2012a).

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The popularity of tourism for food and beverage has been known in the world for several decades (Sanitch, 2004). However, it has recently become a trend in Vojvodina. In the previous development policies and concepts related to tourism development, gastronomy *i.e.* food of locals and tourists, was not given the adequate development role, as opposed to its basic merits (Kalenjuk *et al.*, 2013). However, the development and standards of food for tourists are not always determined by tourism policy, but national, economic, agricultural and food policies (Hjalager & Corigliano, 2000).

Food and tourism are integral parts of agro-tourism, wine tourism, through sale of agricultural, alimentary and gastronomic products.

The research will show the quality of food in the hospitality industry of Vojvodina, and whether it is able to please the interests of foreign tourists traveling for its sake. The aim of the paper is to draw attention to the current state of gastronomy, as the basis for development of gastronomic tourism in the region.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Relationship between food and tourism

Tourism is a branch of economy which has significant social and economic functions, and is an integral factor of socio-cultural development. Tourist activation of certain space contributes to highlighting and better evaluation of other values of the environment in which food is an essential resource (Henderson, 2004; Quan & Wang, 2004).

The authors note the particular importance of food as a physiological need, considering that expenses for food and drink in tourism account for one third of total tourist spending of global tourist traffic (Meler & Cerović, 2003). Therefore, the relationship between food and tourism is one of the most important issues in the region.

Beardsworth and Keil explain that nutritional intake is not the only goal of food consumption, and add that it also includes a gustatory experience and interaction with other people during consumption (Beardsworth & Keil, 1997). Thus, the use of food for special occasions and festivals can represent the cultural and spiritual identity of people. Furthermore, its role is associated with the status and social classes of individuals, which is often closely related to the type of restaurants they visit.

Studies have shown that among all the possible costs during the trip, tourists are least willing to reduce the budget intended for food. This suggests that tourist food consumption makes a significant contribution to local restaurants, steakhouses, bakeries, pastry shops, agriculture and food industries, and thus the economy of the destination (Pyo *et al.*, 1991). This is not only about the consumption of culinary products, which are, as such, in their final form, offered to tourists, but also about the consumption of agricultural and food products in the region (Kalenjuk *et al.*, 2011).

Food can also be the main instigator and primary motive that meets a multitude of needs and desires (Tikkanen, 2007). Food has been recognized on the tourism market as (Hall & Mitchell, 2001):

- ♦ part of the local culture, consumed by tourists;
- ♦ part of the tourism promotion;
- ♦ potential component of the local agricultural and economic development, and
- ♦ regional factor affected by consumption patterns and perceived desires of tourists.

Gastronomic tourism

Hall and Mitchell define gastronomic tourism as visiting primary or secondary food producers, food festivals, catering facilities for production and serving of food and certain destinations for tasting and/or experiencing attributes of regional specialties, where food is the primary motive to travel (Hall & Mitchell, 1996). Gastronomic tourism is defined as the activity of exploration and discovery of the culture and history through food, which affects the formation of unforgettable experiences (Long, 2004). Thus, gastronomy connects and incorporates other forms of tourism (Stojanović & Čerović, 2008).

Various terms are related to different forms of tourist movements motivated by food and beverages, among which are:

- ♦ gastronomic tourism (Hjalanger & Richards, 2002);
- ♦ culinary tourism (Wolf, 2006; Ignatov & Smith, 2006);
- ♦ gustatory tourism (Boniface, 2003) and
- ♦ food tourism (Hall *et al.*, 2003).

By definitions, the “culinary” focuses only on styles of food preparation while “gastronomy” deals with the



consumption of food and beverages in a more general sense and tasting good food and beverages as part of a luxurious lifestyle. The word “culinary” (*culinarius*) tends to emphasize the style of food preparation and consumption, as well as the social context in which food is ordered, prepared and consumed. Therefore, “culinary” can refer to ingredients, prepared food, beverages, food production, motives, activities, institutional structures and food tourism itself (Ignatov & Smith, 2006).

The authors note that gastronomic tourism is different from agro-tourism as it is a subset of cultural tourism (cuisine is part of the culture), and agro-tourism is a subset of rural tourism, but also a subset of gastronomic tourism. Surely, gastronomic tourism and agro-tourism are inextricably linked. Similarly, some authors consider wine and beer tourism as subsets of gastronomic tourism because this type of tourism includes the consumption of beverages, both alcoholic and non-alcoholic (Hall, 2003; Wolf, 2006), such as tea tourism, although wine tourism is studied independently.

Unlike many other forms of tourist movements, gastronomic destinations are usually available year-round at any time of the day and in all weather conditions (Richards, 2002), noting the importance of authentic food offer in restaurants.

Structure of food offer in catering industry

Only authentic offer of dishes can satisfy the curiosity of gastronomic tourists, such as local and regional dishes. The authors classify the dishes included in the offer of catering facilities, on the basis of their origin, as: local, national and international, bearing in mind that the ratio of all three should be equal, as it is the only way in which it is possible to meet the demand of all types of consumers (Tešanović *et al.*, 2010; Kalenjuk *et al.*, 2012b). The kind of dishes that should, by all criteria, be included in catering facilities' offer and attract the attention of tourists motivated by food, are in the first place local dishes, followed by national (Kalenjuk *et al.*, 2012c).

Local dishes are either prepared in households or are the specialties of a restaurant and a city, being made using the authentic, local foodstuffs. The examples would be “stuffed steak by chef Marko”, “Leskovački voz”, Novi Sad steak, Temerin steak, a specialty of Salaš 132 *etc.* These are usually named after a location or the creator of the recipe.

National or regional dishes are those which have taken root in a wide area of a country. There are many dilemmas over the food origin. Various nations have historically won other territories and brought along their own eating habits, culinary recipes, starting to make the dishes with ingredients from the conquered territory, but adding to them their own spices. Locals adopted such dishes as their own and passed them on from generation to generation and the dishes thrived. The dishes that have taken hold of a broader territory of a country, regardless of their country of origin, alongside the dishes that were developed on the country's territory, are considered national dishes. Such dishes include sarma, goulash, stew, roast pork, čevapčići, Karađorđe's steak, cheese pie, burek and many other Serbian dishes. It often happens that a local dish is a national one as well, such as Leskovac grill. Moreover, a dish can be local, national and international at the same time, such as Viennese and Parisian steak (Tešanović *et al.*, 2010).

International dishes are already affirmed dishes of various international cuisines that are worldwide accepted including: Tournedos Rossini, Italian minestrone, pizza, steak “Esterhazy”, Kiev cutlet and countless other recognizable dishes in the global hospitality industry. They are prepared in restaurants for the tourists without an adventurous gastronomic spirit and those who do not like to experiment and prefer to eat local food during their stay in some other country.

Food offer is considered adequate if the facility has at least 30% of local and 30% of national products, while the rest is comprised of those of international origin. In order to ensure the development of gastronomic tourism, it is better to offer more local and national dishes and beverages (Tešanović & Koprivica, 2007).

METHODOLOGY

In order to obtain necessary information on the structure of food offered by catering facilities, direct and indirect collection of written offers (menus) was conducted by means of random sampling, during the period from March 2011 until March 2013.

The analysis and synthesis was performed on a sample of 10,923 meals in 147 catering facilities throughout Vojvodina. Based on the origin, dishes were grouped into local, national and international, after which a statistical observation was performed.

Statistically processed data, *i.e.* absolute frequency, relative frequency, minimum value, maximum



value, means, standard deviation, coefficient of variation along with discussion are presented in the paper in the form of a table and a graph.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of authentic food offer

McKercher *et al.* (2008) emphasize the importance of local, authentic dishes and formation of a unique offer in catering facilities for successful development of gastronomic tourism (McKercher *et al.*, 2008). Table 1 shows the data obtained by analyzing meals per groups in 147 catering facilities, with a minimum and maximum number of dishes, standard deviation, and coefficient of variation for the observed group of dishes, depending on the origin of the recipe.

By analyzing the structure, it was concluded that local dishes do not have a satisfactory share in the offer of any food group and that these dishes are represented in a significant percentage in the offer of cold appetizers with 20.86% (n=199), with restaurants often offering homemade dried meat products and vegetables. International appetizers are most frequent with 44.17% (n=429) and are composed of prosciutto served with melon, salmon carpaccio, caviar, cheese platters. National specialties, primarily „Vojvođanska zakuska“, are represented with a share of 34.17% (n=326), which is quite satisfactory.

In addition to cold appetizers, ready-made meals of various types of meat have a similar share of 19.40% (n=77), while international dishes are represented in a small percentage of 21.41% (n=407). Ready-made meals offer is dominated by dishes of national origin, 59.19% (n=235), which can be considered satisfactory.

National dishes are represented in the offer of fish dishes with significant share of 52.97% (n=472) dominated by different specialties of river fish prepared in different ways, international dishes are represented with 40.74% (n=363), while local dishes account for the minimum of 8.66% (n=56). This is followed by salads with 50.74% (n=888), including „Shopska“ and „Serbian salad“ as the most common ones, although these are not from Vojvodina, but are prepared and offered in addition to chutney, mixed salad and others (international with 45.89% (n=803), local salads are represented by only 3.37% (n=59)).

Significant representation of national dishes in the offer of dishes to order with 48,79% (n=1767) (in-

ternational 41.28% (n=1495), local 9.94% (n=360)), soups and broths 49.21% (n=280) (international 38.66% (n=222), local 12.13% (n=407)) and desserts 45.17% (n=533) (international 51.02% (n=602), local 3.81% (n=45)).

The largest share of international dishes is observed in the offer of side dishes and stews with 65.65% (n=407). It is not in favor of the development of culinary tourism that there is a great share of French fries in almost all restaurants, with a small share of other side dishes and stews based on potato, such as mashed potato. National side dishes and stews offer is twice lower and accounts for 29.68% (n=184), whereas side dishes and stews prepared according to the authentic recipes are represented to a very small extent, with a share of only 4.68% (n=29).

In the offer of hot appetizers, international specialties account for a considerable share of 68.66% (n=644). The restaurants have a satisfactory offer of cheese, au gratin pancakes and various types of pasta prepared according to Italian recipes, Milanese and Bolognese, ravioli. The research included grouped pizzas as well as pasta dishes, which contribute to the increase in the share of international dishes. National hot appetizers are represented by 25.80% (n=242) and local hot appetizers by only 5.54% (n=52).

Based on the number of meals within the catering facilities and coefficient of variation, we have observed considerable differences in the offer of all of the analyzed groups of dishes with a great variation in the offer of local dishes, dominated by the offer of hot appetizers with 294.44%, fish dishes with 282,05% and side dishes and stews with 340.00%, which is not justifiable as Vojvodina is the breadbasket of the country, with rivers full of fish that caterers can use to prepare a lot of authentic, regional specialties.

Based on the obtained data, it was noted that none of the groups of dishes within the entire region has satisfactory offer structure of dishes of 30%. The share of national dishes is satisfactory for certain groups, such as soups and broths, ready-made meals and meals to order, but the share of local specialties is not satisfactory in terms of the gastronomic tourism development (Figure 1).

The analysis of the overall offer of authentic food

By analyzing the overall offer of meals in the surveyed catering facilities in Vojvodina, it was conclud-



CATEGORY	ORIGIN	Absolute frequency	Relative frequency	Min	Max	\bar{x}	σ	V
COLD APPETIZERS	international	429	44,17	0	19	2,98	3,23	108,39
	national	326	34,17	0	10	2,26	1,65	73,01
	local	199	20,86	0	11	1,38	1,43	103,62
Total:		954						
SOUPS AND BROTHS	international	222	38,66	0	6	1,53	1,24	81,05
	national	280	49,21	0	9	1,94	1,7	87,63
	local	69	12,13	0	4	0,48	0,83	172,92
Total:		571						
HOT APPETIZERS	international	644	68,66	0	39	4,47	6,22	139,15
	national	242	25,80	0	6	1,68	1,53	91,07
	local	52	5,54	0	9	0,36	1,06	294,44
Total:		938						
READY - MADE MEALS	international	85	21,41	0	10	0,59	1,31	222,03
	national	235	59,19	0	27	1,63	3,07	188,34
	local	77	19,40	0	7	0,53	1,19	224,53
Total:		397						
MEAT MEALS TO ORDER	international	1495	41,28	0	28	10,38	6,53	62,91
	national	1767	48,79	0	44	12,27	6,76	55,09
	local	360	9,94	0	17	2,50	2,57	102,80
Total :		3622						
FISH MEALS TO ORDER	international	363	40,74	0	16	2,52	2,63	104,37
	national	472	52,97	0	13	3,28	2,67	81,40
	local	56	8,66	0	6	0,39	1,1	282,05
Total:		891						
SIDE DISHES AND STEWS	international	407	65,65	0	11	2,83	2,13	75,27
	national	184	29,68	0	7	1,28	1,67	130,47
	local	29	4,68	0	5	0,20	0,68	340,00
Total:		620						
SALADS	international	803	45,89	0	20	5,58	2,94	52,69
	national	888	50,74	0	20	6,17	3,89	63,05
	local	59	3,37	0	5	0,41	0,73	178,05
Total:		1750						
DESSERTS	international	602	51,02	0	21	4,18	3,01	72,01
	national	533	45,17	0	12	3,70	2,57	69,46
	local	45	3,81	0	4	0,31	0,75	241,94
Total:		1180						

Table 1. The structure of food offer in the hospitality industry of Vojvodina



ed that there is a large share of international dishes, and national dishes, 45.73%, and 43.92%, respectively, which is quite positive. The share of local dishes and creations by catering facilities and population is unsatisfactory and accounts for only 10.35% (Fig. 2).

Wood and Munoz state that tourists who visit the restaurants with national motives, seek authentic, ethnic and cultural experiences (Wood & Munoz, 2007). Therefore, the authenticity of the offers may have a decisive impact on their overall satisfaction. If we take into account the recommendations of the authors, it can be concluded that the overall offer at the regional level is partially satisfactory, because of the satisfactory number of national specialties in the offer of side dishes (pasta dishes), ready-made meals and dishes to order (meat and river fish).

CONCLUSION

By consulting international literature in the field of gastronomic tourism, gastronomy and hospitality industry, and keeping up with the research conducted in the catering facilities in Vojvodina, we may conclude that the offer of dishes in the entire region has a large share of dishes of international and national origin, with nearly 46%, and 44%, respectively, which is quite satisfactory. The share of local dishes and creations by catering facilities is unsatisfactory and accounts for only 10%.

By studying and following trends, places and roles of authentic food of developed tourism destinations worldwide, we may notice that Vojvodina faces with the growing issue of the non-systemic, insufficient

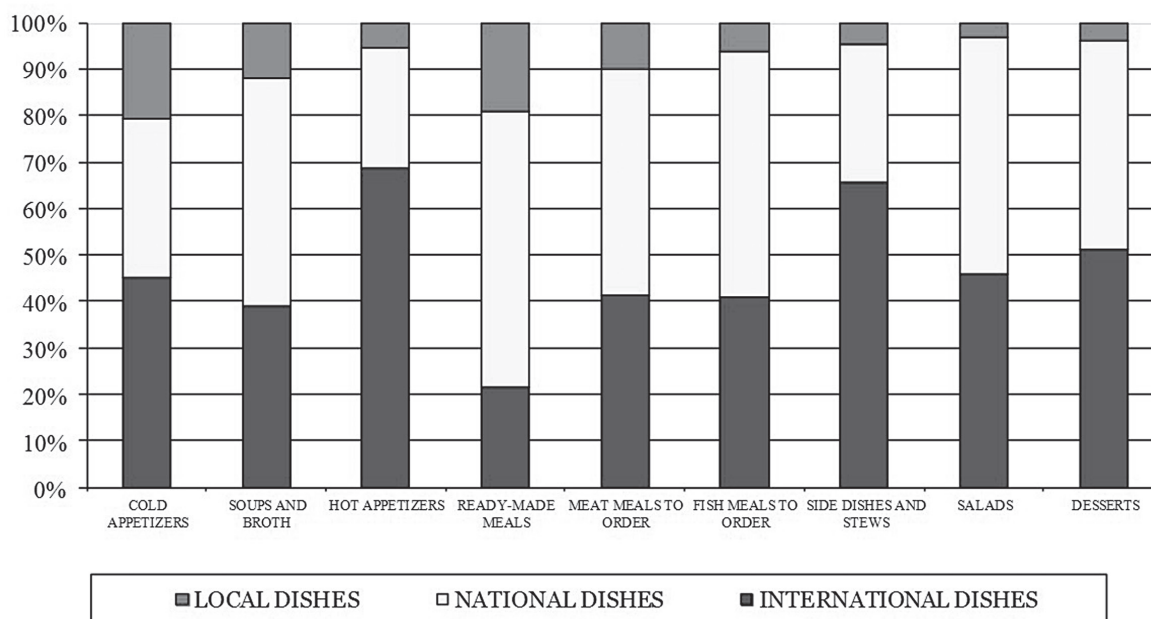


Figure 1. Food structure according to origin of recipe

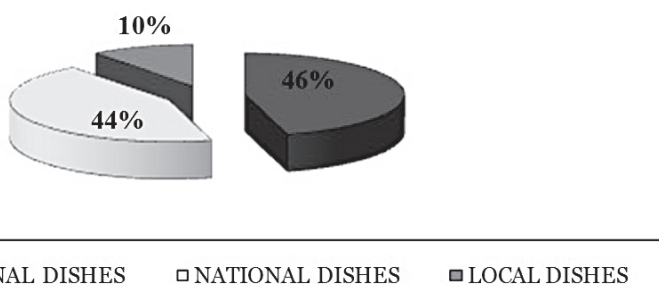


Figure 2. The overall structure of meals in Vojvodina



approach to a more successful placement of food resources in the active function of tourism development. By observing the region as a multicultural destination, a breadbasket of the country with extensive culinary heritage, restaurateurs are expected to introduce authentic dishes made with local ingredients, whose combinations of spices and methods of preparation and serving would intrigue and attract foreign tourists motivated by food. In order to ensure a successful development of gastronomic tourism, catering facilities on the territory of Vojvodina are requested to introduce local, regional, authentic delicacies for the sake of achieving the appropriate share of offer at the minimum level of 30%.

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PONUĐA AUTENTIČNE HRANE KAO PREDUSLOV ZA RAZVOJ GASTRONOMSKOG TURIZMA

Rezime:

Posmatrajući hranu kao značajan deo turističke ponude, sa aspekta bioloških potreba turista, postavlja se pitanje, na koji način ona može biti dodatno iskorišćena, i tako doprineti razvoju turizma. Sa tim u vezi hrana pripremljena od lokalnih namirnica, po starim metodama obrade i njihovo serviranje na autentičan način mogu biti zanimljivi turistima selektivnog oblika turizma, u svetu poznatog kao turizam hrane, gastronomski turizam i gurmanski turizam. Istraživanje ima cilj da prikaže ponudu hrane u ugostiteljstvu Vojvodine i da li ona kao takva može da zadovolji interesovanja stranih turista koji putuju zbog nje. Istraživanje je sprovedeno u 147 ugostiteljskih objekata za pružanje usluga ishrane i pića na teritoriji AP Vojvodine, direktnim i indirektnim sakupljanjem pisanih ponuda, pri čemu je obuhvatilo statističku analizu od 10.923 jela. Cilj rada jeste da se ukaže na trenutno stanje gastronomske ponude i sve prednosti autentične hrane i gastronomskog turizma.

Ključne reči:

hrana,
gastronomija,
turizam,
gastronomski turizam.

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