

Chapter 30

Sustainable Practices in Enogastronomic Tourism: The Case of Feudi di San Gregorio

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ABSTRACT

Balancing economic, social, and environmental performance is a primary challenge for industries worldwide. In light of their significant impact, tourism and enogastronomic industry entrepreneurs have been adapting their operations over the past few decades to minimize their ecological footprint while simultaneously fostering planet preservation and engaging local stakeholders. This chapter focuses on the sustainable practices within enogastronomic industry. After illustrating the evolution of enogastronomic tourism, the main motivations of gastronomic travelers and their connected experiences are analysed. Furthermore, the concept of sustainability - environmental, social and economic - and some of their widespread practices within enogastronomic industry are described. Lastly, the case of Feudi di San Gregorio - a leader sustainable winery based in South Italy - is illustrated.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the travel industry is a vital economic sector, creating a ripple effect financially and benefiting various related industries. Tourism plays a crucial role in societal development, providing income to service providers as travelers spend money to meet their needs while on vacation. In recent years, the demand for high-quality goods and services has risen, leading to increased production, investment, and revenue in communities. As a result, culinary and wine tourism has emerged as its own distinct sector within tourism, rather than just a side aspect of travel. Despite the growing interest in local food, there has been a lack of focus on exploring traditional food and beverage consumption in the hospitality and tourism context. Indeed, vacationers seek out various culinary experiences, whether food plays a central role in their trip or serves as an additional aspect. Assessing local products involves more than just selling them for profit; it involves promoting rural development in a holistic and long-lasting manner.

The primary focus of this chapter is to showcase the significance of food and drink events in enhancing the appeal of a destination by adopting sustainable practices.

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The chapter is divided into four parts. The first part explains the beginnings of modern enogastronomic tourism. Social and cultural changes in the late 20th century sparked new desires in consumers. These desires focus on a slower pace of life, a return to authentic food, and a preference for unique rural environments over typical city settings. These evolving desires help shape enogastronomic tourists, who seek out traditional cuisine as well as other experiences related to local food and drink, such as enjoying the scenery or learning about production methods. The chapter explores the importance of customer experiences in enogastronomy and the opportunities provided by rural surroundings. Finally, it outlines the socio-economic benefits that enogastronomic tourism can bring to a region.

The second section of the text outlines the reasons why an enogastronomic destination is chosen. It discusses the varying levels of significance that food and drinks hold for different types of travelers, and emphasizes the growing importance of experiential elements in enogastronomic tourism. Additionally, it underscores the value of wine tourism within the realm of experiential consumption. In particular, it highlights the types of activities that travelers can engage in and the memorable experiences linked to these activities.

Section 3 explores the theme of sustainability in the setting of enogastronomic tourism. Indeed, sustainability is nowadays a distinctive element for tourism, bringing significant added value, but also responding to a tourist demand that is increasingly attentive to the environmental, economic, and social aspects, behaving in a compatible manner and increasingly requiring consistent goods and services. In this section, practices and behaviours connected to environmental, social and economic sustainability are described.

Section 4 illustrates an example of sustainability within enogastronomic tourism industry. More specifically, section illustrates the case of Feudi di San Gregorio, a winery implementing sustainable practice by focusing on implementation of cultivation methods with ever-lower impact, the adoption of increasingly sustainable packaging components, the exclusive use of energy from renewable sources, and social projects.

1. ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF ENOGASTRONOMIC TOURISM

Enogastronomic tourism has origins that trace back to ancient times. In the 19th century, certain travel guides provided meticulous descriptions of culinary specialties available to tourists, as well as the distinct tastes and flavors found in various Italian cities and towns (Croce and Perri, 2018). These guides were so comprehensive about the regional cuisine that they sometimes caused confusion for travelers regarding their planned routes. Nevertheless, in recent years, the concept of enogastronomic tourism has undergone considerable evolution, influenced by significant social and economic changes.

Several elements have contributed to the formation of the current understanding of enogastronomic tourism. Primarily, the increasing and more widespread affluence in both developed and emerging economies has enabled individuals to pursue new and more nuanced desires. Engaging with local culture and cuisine allows individuals to achieve personal fulfillment, which is the fifth tier of Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Guzel and Apaydin, 2016), thus making food tourism a key factor in destination selection (Tikkanen, 2017). Advancements in communication and transportation have bridged the gap between nations, allowing people to effortlessly explore new locations and the unique foods characteristic of those areas. Additionally, the enogastronomic sector has grown more appealing due to a heightened awareness of the significance of healthful and authentic foods, as well as the enjoyment derived from

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