

# Mastiha as a Key Lever of Gastronomic Development in Chios Island of Greece

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**Abstract:** It is a fact that in recent years gastronomy, as a tourist product, attracts millions of tourists who wish to combine their travel experiences with tasty traditional delights. The interest in traditional cuisine and the food culture of each place is increasing rapidly. Good food, moreover, is a basic criterion for qualifying a destination as a quality. Chios, the island of mastiha, as a tourist destination has not been developed enough, but there are many prospects for growth. It is an island that has stayed away from the **unplanned tourism development**. It has preserved its customs, traditions, particular architecture, and cultural heritage. Mastiha as a seal of the local cultural identity of Chios, constitutes a focal point where tradition meets modern times, offering the visitor a complete and memorable culinary experience. This paper aims to explore the contribution of mastiha to the development of gastronomic tourism in the island of Chios. It is obvious that the development of gastronomic tourism can offer multiple economic benefits to the island and at the same time **strengthen** both the sense of local identity and the intercultural approach of the people. This goal is achieved through both secondary research, bibliography, and journal review, and by conducting primary questionnaire research. The promotion of local dishes with main ingredient mastiha and the acquaintance with culture and local cuisine as part of a plan with strategic targeting can be a driving force for the economic development of the island by enhancing its authenticity.

*Keywords:* Chios Island; mastiha; gastronomic tourism; cultural tourism; development; Greece.

## 1. Introduction

Gastronomic tourism refers to tourists planning their journeys based on the desire to taste local cuisine or to engage in gastronomy activities (Herrera et al., 2012: 7; Santich, 2004:19). Gastronomy is the pursuit of a unique and unforgettable experience of eating and drinking. The natural beauty of the place, the authenticity of the environment and the presentation of food, are key features of gourmet tourism (International Culinary Tourism Association, 2009). By the term “gastronomy” is meant the art of making good and delicious food (SETE, 2009). It is a journey to seek and enjoy food and drink but extends to actions beyond the taste experience (Smith, Costello, 2009:99). There are tourists who have exclusive travel incentives to engage in gastronomic activities. This form of

tourism is defined as gastronomic tourism. "Gastronomists" travel with the purpose of discovering new flavors and enjoying local gastronomy, deepening at the same time in the history and traditions of the destination. For 44% of travelers around the world, food is one of the three criteria for choosing the place to visit (SETE, 2009; Foodservice, 2009:36). Gourmet tourism, which generally refers to the originality of a dish, is directly related to wine tourism and cultural tourism (Green & Dogherty, 2008; Cagli, 2012).

The Greek word "gastronomy" comes from the word *gastron* (=belly) and *law* (meaning knowledge or law). The term means the art of high cooking, the set of rules for selecting the right ingredients and the preparation of dishes for the purpose of tasting (Altinel, 2014; Moira, Mylonopoulos, 2014). It also means, in general, any activity related to cooking and enjoying the food (Mpampiniotis, 2002:401). Unlike the term *culinaria*, reference is made to the local cuisine and food of a country or region, food, and cooking techniques, which also characterize the local cuisine of a region (Kivela & Crotts, 2006:355; Moira, Mylonopoulos, 2014). This Greek word was formalized by the French Academy in 1835, and since then it has been registered in its official dictionary (Moira, Mylonopoulos, 2014). Gastronomy is a new industry in the tourism sector not only for food and drink, but also for other areas of science and art (Sahin, 2015).

Father of gastronomy is considered the Greek Archestrata (4th century BC). His most important work is "*Hidypatheia*", which was completed in 350 BC and is the first cooking book in the world (EOT, 1998:5). Gastronomic tourism is an important indicator of the tourism development of a place (Karim, 2006; Sahin, 2015) and gastronomic tourism activities that can be carried out at a destination provide direct and indirect income and employment income (Sahin, 2015). Food preparation varies from country to country, but even from region to region, reflecting the geophysical and climatic conditions, agricultural production, traditions, and culture of each site (SETE, 2009). The tourist interested in gastronomy is also interested in the peculiarity of the place and is involved in various activities (UNWTO, 2014). Many times, the experience of tourists about local cuisine can affect future visits to destinations (Tse, Crotts, 2005; Ryu, Jang, 2006).

Food and nutrition have been the subject of research by both sociologists and anthropologists over the last 20 years (MacClancy 1992; Beardsworth & Keil 1996; Fine 1996; Lupton 1996; Warde 1996; Bell & Valentine 1997; Warde & Martens 2000). Food is a necessity but also enjoyment (Tiger, 1993). Food is considered a group activity and becomes a symbol of sociality (Kim, Eves, & Scarles, 2009:424; Chang, Kivela, & Mak, 2010). Consumption of food is influenced by both the natural environment (Mennell, Murcott and van Otterloo, 1992) and the culture of the place (Harrington & Herzog, 2007). The tourist choices are determined by the need to eat and the desire to test interesting products in the right environment (Mennell, 1985; Finkelstein, 1989; Pillsbury, 1990; Fürst et al., 1991). The sensations and memories of taking part in the

preparation of food and wine during the holidays are very special as they are translated into very personal experiences (Filkelstein, 1989). Indeed, these experiences can modify eating habits and wine consumption habits (Johns, Clarke, 2001). Tourists who have enjoyed the good food are willing to spend more money tasting more dishes (SETE, 2009).

Gastronomists are professionally renowned, have higher disposable income and educational attainment than average tourists, are adventurous and experienced travelers with an interest in the cultural elements of the destination and spend a significant amount of travel budget on gastronomic activities (SETE, 2009). The gourmet traveler has a key incentive to travel to experience the food and drink experience (Rodriguez, 2014). Gastronomic tourism also includes visiting food producers at gastronomy festivals, restaurants and special areas related to tasting (Hall, Mitchell, 2005). Research has been conducted to study the local culinary value chains (Cambourne, Macionis, 2003; Eastham, 2003; Sharples, 2003; Smith and Hall, 2003; Smith and Xiao, 2008; Green and Dougherty, 2009). Gastronomy enhances the travel experience for all tourists without exception, and at the same time attracts affluent, special-interest tourists and gourmet tourists (SETE, 2009).

The scope of this research is the investigation and interpretation of the views and perceptions of the tourism experts regarding the prospects for the development of the gastronomic tourism in Chios with the contribution of mastiha. The main goal of this research activity is to make possible the exploitation of the findings of the empirical research regarding the development of gastronomic tourism in Chios Island. As is well known, the tourism development of island regions is a matter of intense concern because of the geographic specificity that characterizes them. The aim of this paper is to develop gastronomic tourism in Chios as part of endogenous tourism development, highlighting a particular area with rich historical heritage, considering the problems it faces due to the insularity and geographical isolation. The gastronomic tourism can be a lever of economic growth, as it exploits the cultural capital of the past.

## **2. The Development of Gastronomic Tourism Internationally**

It is a fact that in recent years the number of tourists who are interested in traveling with food and drink is increasing. Many of them seek a dynamic engagement with gastronomy (UNWTO, 2014). In the era of globalization, the emergence of the distinct, unique identity of a space is a major tool for attracting visitors (UNWTO, 2012). Gastronomic tourism grows geometrically every year (Karimi, 2014). National tourism organizations primarily highlight local cuisine, highlighting the richness and diversity of cuisine offered by their various regions (UNWTO, 2011).

The study of gastronomic supply focuses mainly on countries characterized as Europe's premier culinary destinations, such as France, Italy, and Spain (SETE, 2009). Typical is the case of Logis de France, a network of over 3.000

family hotels in the French province. Among the specifications they must satisfy is the offer of local cuisine and products of the area. Every restaurant that is a member of Logis de France must include at least one three-course menu at an affordable price reflecting the local gastronomic tradition. In this way, a unique tour of the local cuisine of renowned culinary destinations such as Burgundy, Alsace<sup>1</sup> and Normandy takes place. Other countries with developed gastronomic tourism are also Germany and Austria (SETE, 2009). As it is known in Europe, the most popular gastronomic destinations today are Tuscany, Lion, Bordeaux, Catalonia, Dalmatia and Northern Italy.<sup>2</sup>

The offer of gastronomic tourism services takes a more organized form to guarantee the quality of the service as well as the more effective diffusion of the positive elements in the local community (SETE, 2009). Typical large restaurant groups are in popular tourist destinations such as Saint Maurice, Sardinia, Bahamas and Hawaii, creating an unprecedented gathering of gourmet restaurants (mainly in Las Vegas) that appeal primarily to tourists (UNWTO, 2015).

Many tourist destinations offer special trails, including catering businesses, visiting food or beverage venues, and cultivated land (UNWTO, 2015). These routes vary in theme, duration, and time of the year (SETE, 2009). San Sebastián is a beautiful city in northern Spain, in the Basque country. It is one of the most beautiful cities in the world and the focus of a gastronomic revolution that is happening in Spain. Also well-known are wine routes in Germany, visitors with gastronomic interests enjoy many acres of vineyards with one-day or two-day excursions (SETE, 2009).

Interesting is the approach of the Alsace Regional Tourism Organization in France, as it has designed and promoted gastronomic proposals with successful gastronomic choices in hotels and wellness centers (SETE, 2009). Also special are the gastronomic activities in Ireland including visits to food markets and organic farms, sightseeing tours, culinary seminars, etc. (UNWTO, 2011).<sup>3</sup> The Catalan calendar of gastronomic events published by Catalonia's regional tourism organization in Spain is impressive. It includes many events, celebrations and exhibitions that have direct relevance to local and quality dishes (SETE, 2009). Also featured is the Ludlow Marches Food and Drink Festival, this is one of the longest gastronomy festivals that has appeared in recent years in the United Kingdom. This festival is organized in mid-September and lasts for three days. It is in the small, picturesque town of Ludlow and attracts 25.000 visitors each year.

As it is known, many great gastronomic destinations have strengthened their identity with the emergence of their local products. They attach great importance to the relationship between tradition and cultural heritage (UNWTO, 2011). In

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<sup>1</sup> [www.logis-de-france.fr/fr/index.html](http://www.logis-de-france.fr/fr/index.html)

<sup>2</sup> [www.tastedalmatia.com](http://www.tastedalmatia.com)

<sup>3</sup> [www.countryhousetours.com/asp/enquiries.asp?ObjectID=310&Mode=0&RecordID=17](http://www.countryhousetours.com/asp/enquiries.asp?ObjectID=310&Mode=0&RecordID=17)

the USA. those involved in tourism have realized the important contribution of food companies to boosting tourism development. The main objective of the relevant large-scale events is to attract many visitors as well as viewers from the media (Smith, Costello, 2009:107). In Singapore, seminars are organized, and gourmet courses are delivered with special recipes from Asian countries, France, and Italy. Indeed, the existence of a gastronomic brand in a country or a tourist destination is considered to ensure publicity and at the same time integrates the region into the international gastronomic map (SETE, 2009:17).

Worth mentioning is the case of Turin that links tourism to the productive base. Under the "Paniere dei Prodotti Tipici della Provincia di Torino" program (Turin Trademark), a trademark was introduced for selected agricultural products and foodstuffs (UNWTO, 2014).

Spain is a particularly important example of a European country that has used its gourmet culture to promote its tourist product. The country on the Iberian Peninsula has achieved something particularly important, as it has managed to showcase its gastronomy (UNWTO, 2014).

The Norwegian stakeholders have decided to enrich the existing tourist routes in the Nordic country. This initiative concerned the "Taste of National Tourism Routes" and was about adding the gastronomic element to tourism development (UNWTO, 2014).

The history and tradition of each place is directly related to gastronomy and local cuisine (UNWTO, 2014). There are many interesting museums of gastronomic interest in the international arena. Gastronomy museums and theme museums (dedicated to a product) are scattered across Europe and the rest of the world. Characteristic museums are found in Alsace, such as: Les Secrets du Chocolat, Cave de Ribeauvillé, Musée des eaux de vie, Musée du Vignoble et des Vins d' Alsace, Musée du Pain d' Epices et du Douceurs d' Autrefois. In these places visitors really know the rich local tradition and the cultural heritage of the country.<sup>4</sup>

Good food, therefore, stimulates higher tourist expense. A tourist destination known for its good cuisine attracts tourists with a keen interest in gastronomy. Gastronomy enhances travel experience; good regional cuisine is the backbone of gastronomic offer, and "gastronomic patriotism" is rewarded economically. There is an increasing number of consumers who want to learn more about local gastronomy, without necessarily being their main travel incentive. Many tourists are interested in eating famous international food and others want to discover local dishes in hotels. Good food is also a criterion for qualifying a destination as a quality. Quality is rewarded and food stimulates higher tourist spending (SETE, 2009).

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<sup>4</sup> <http://gastronomie.vins.tourisme-alsace.com/fr/musees/>

### **3. The Development of Gastronomic Tourism in Greece**

Good food is a very profitable tourism product for Greece due to the wide variety of traditional recipes. Greece has remarkable gastronomic resources, and no major investment is needed in its facilities (SETE, 2009). In Greece there are many traditional restaurants and taverns, where the visitor can find representative Greek traditional dishes (UNWTO, 2011).

Crete<sup>5</sup>, Santorini and Thessaloniki have many restaurants of quality local cuisine combined with gastronomic trails providing information to every visitor with the help of tourist guides and maps (SETE, 2009). So, the local cuisine is accessible to the tourist.

The incorporation of local cuisine into a hotel buffet in a well-known hotel group is typical, which established the "Cretan Corner" at its units in Crete. The "Cretan Corner" is a part of the buffet that is offered in the morning, afternoon and evening and includes local features (SETE, 2009).

Many areas in Greece offer special local products such as: Attica, Peloponnese, Roumeli, Thessaly, Epirus, Macedonia, Thrace, Crete, Aegean Islands, Ionian Islands, Kythira. There are Greek tour operators that organize gastronomic programs for incoming tourism. Crete's Culinary Sanctuaries specializes in gastronomic tours in Crete. The case of Chios based on ecotourism, named "Masticulture" is very interesting, which offers a variety of gastronomic activities (SETE, 2009).

It is worth noting that the UNESCO Mediterranean diet is an intangible cultural heritage of humanity<sup>6</sup> (UNESCO, 2014). Many growing food and drink establishments give visitors the opportunity to learn about the process of producing a product, to test the product, handle a tool, and eventually buy a product directly from its place of production (Maira, Mylonopoulos, 2014). Wine culinary trails, known as "Wine Roads", which focus only on a gourmet product or pattern (UNWTO, 2014) are well known. The streets of Northern Greece's wine are characteristic. This is an important project where the 37 members of the association propose 41 visiting wineries on 8 routes that cross all northern Greece, stopping at the important vineyards of Thessaly (Rapsani and Krania), Epirus, Macedonia and Thrace. At the same time, it is possible to visit remarkable restaurants, taverns, hostels and hotels, traditional products shops and places for alternative activities (Maira, Mylonopoulos, 2014).

In recent years, the Greek National Tourism Organization has been implementing various actions through the network of its offices in abroad, such as the organization of events focusing on Greek gastronomic offer in major tourist markets abroad.<sup>7</sup> "Greekgastronomyguide" is a platform created to

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.cretalive.gr/crete/view/gastronomikes-diadromes-me-shmeio-anaforas-thn-krhth/147617>

<sup>6</sup> This entry concerns to Greece, Cyprus, Spain, Croatia, Italy, Morocco and Portugal.

<sup>7</sup> [www.gnto.gov.gr](http://www.gnto.gov.gr)

highlight the whole of Greek gastronomy. The stakeholders of this initiative believe that gastronomy in cooperation with other elements such as tourism, culture, the environment and the rural economy can make a major contribution to the country's development.<sup>8</sup> The "Greek Breakfast" program was launched in 2010 at the initiative of the Greek Chamber of Commerce in order to promote the unique culinary tradition of each place through the cooperation of hoteliers and local producers.<sup>9</sup>

The program founded by Axis 4-LEADER Approach of the Rural Development 2007-2014 entitled "Gastronomic Walking and Cultivation of Flavors", is characteristic and interesting (Moira, Mylonopoulos, 2014:94).

Also, the Aegean Cuisine network is worth to be mentioned, which is a joint action of the South Aegean Center for Entrepreneurship and Technological Development with the Cyclades and Dodecanese Chambers. Local cuisine is associated with restaurants, hotels, agricultural producers, wineries, breweries, grocery stores and food crafts (SETE, 2009).

In Greece there are many festivals about local products such as the tomato festival in the village of Kandila in Arcadia, the feast of the Epirus mushroom and the mushroom in Grevena, the celebration of the sardines in Preveza and Lesvos, the mastiha festival in Chios. These cultural events aim to promote and preserve the Greek cultural heritage. Also, it is worth mentioning the "Mount Athos Cuisine", which takes place in various areas of Athos with competitions and traditional cooking lessons and trials that highlight local products.

Conferences and lectures on gastronomy take place in many parts of Greece. National and international gastronomy exhibitions have similar content, where national and local delicacies of a region or country are displayed, and are accompanied by tasting trials (SETE, 2009).

In Greece there are many interesting museums, which are part of a network of thematic museums that have been built and operated by the Cultural Foundation of Piraeus Bank and are dedicated to a traditional product such as the olive and oil museum in Sparta, the museum of industrial olive oil in Lesvos, the vineyard and wine museum in Imathia, the museum of ouzo Barbayianni in Plomari of Lesvos, the mastiha museum in Chios, etc.

Greece has some high-quality and creative cuisine restaurants. In recent years, the presence of high gastronomy restaurants has increased in many cities in the country. Undoubtedly, Greece has a good number of international class hotels now (UNWTO, 2014) for both urban and holiday destinations.

Also, the presence of Greece in the programs of tour operators specializing in gastronomy is worthwhile.

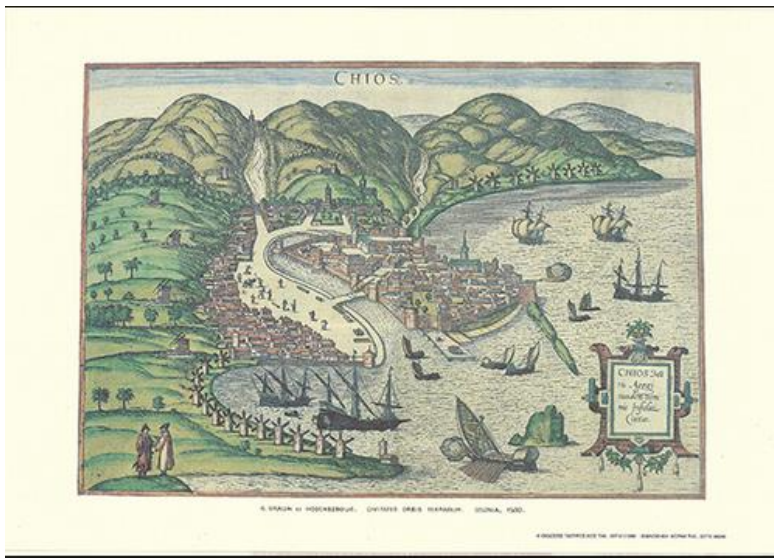
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<sup>8</sup> [www.greekgastronomyguide.gr](http://www.greekgastronomyguide.gr)

<sup>9</sup> [www.greekbreakfast.gr](http://www.greekbreakfast.gr)

#### **4. The Contribution of Mastiha to The Development of Gastronomic Tourism in Chios**

Chios, which belongs to the northeastern Aegean islands, is the island of Homer, mastiha, history and culture. The northern part of the island conflicts with the south. North Chios is mostly mountainous, while in the south of Chios the mastiha trees dominate a unique natural landscape, with wildflowers (tulips, anemones, etc.). It is considered by many to be the island of Homer and is known for its unique product, mastiha, which is produced only in this part of the world (Poulaki, 2016).



**Chios**

**Source: Library of Chios “Korais”, 2017**

Travelers arriving in Chios know and taste the mastiha. The memories of all those who visited the island have been flavored with mastiha. The mastiha's power fascinates every visitor. Mastiha is a marvelous product of Greek land. Chians cultivate this wonderful product with patience, love and effort (Poulaki, 2016).





**Mastiha tree - Copper engraving**

**Olfert Dapper, Description exacte des iles de l' Archipel ...Amsterdam, 1703**

Source: Library of Chios "Korais", 2017

The mastiha of Chios (*Pistacia lentiscus*) is found in various languages, such as: Greek: η μαστίχα, το μαστίχι, η μαστίχη, German: mastix, English: mastic, French: mastic, Italian: lentischio, lentisco, mastice, aza, mestika, Spanish: lentisco, mastic, Albanian: mastic, slavic: mastic, mastyks, Hungarian: matiks, Turkish: sakiz, Kurdish: mstekki, Chinese: 乳香.



**Harvest of mastiha**

Source: Library of Chios "Korais"

The mastiha tree grows in other regions of Greece and the Mediterranean, but only in Chios "tears". Mastiha production depends on the climate of the region, the rainfall and the composition of the volcanic soil. According to the tradition, the "skins" began to "cry" when Saint Isidore was martyred by the Romans in 250 AD. Leo Allatius reports that mastiha existed before the martyrdom of Saint Isidore.

Mastiha is produced in 24 unique villages, called "Mastihochoria", in the southern coastal area of Chios. The history of the villages of mastiha began in the Middle Ages when the island was conquered by the Genoese (1346-1566), when the villages of southern Chios, where the mastiha was produced, were organized as fortress settlements for the defense against the invaders that plagued the Aegean Sea. The villages of mastiha are 24: Mesta, Lithi, Vessa, Elatia, Olympoi, Pyrgi, Kalamoti, Armolia, Patrika, Flatsia, Nenita, Vouno, Pagida, Katarraktis, Kallimasia, Myrmigi, Koini. The medieval settlements Pyrgi, Mesta and Olympoi are preserved in a very good condition after the earthquake of 1881 (Poulaki, 2016).

The multiple uses and benefits of mastiha for humans have been well known since antiquity. Since ancient times, mastiha has been known for its special aroma and its medicinal properties. The world's first natural gum, mastiha, was used to clean the teeth, face and body, rejuvenate breathing and teeth whitening, and as a component in many medicines. In many medical texts of antiquity there is a wealth of recipes, whose main ingredient was mastiha.<sup>10</sup> Mastiha now has many properties and uses in medicine, pharmaceuticals, dentistry and cosmetology.

According to sources of the 3rd century B.C. the ancients perfumed wine with mastiha. They also used mastiha as a spice in the imperial kitchens of Ottoman Constantinople, at a time when mastiha was worth as much as silver. Mastiha has been used since ancient Greek times to date in Greek cuisine. It is a special and mysterious addition of aroma to breads, sweets, desserts, pudding, and ice creams. The mastiha of Chios is used to produce liqueurs, ouzo, brandy etc.<sup>11</sup>

At the Patriarchate of Constantinople, a "white sweet", called "submarine", flavored with mastiha, is offered today as an official treat. Lebanese and Syrian residents also make a traditional cheese with aroma of mastiha.

Chios Mastiha Growers Association has founded "Mediterra S.A." with a view to create a network of retail stores for mastiha and its products, bearing the trademark Mastihashop. Today, the network numbers 12 stores in Greece, that is: in Chios, in Athens, in Piraeus, in Kifissia, in Thessaloniki and Pylea, in Volos, in Heraklio-Crete, in Mykonos, in Lefkada, in Nafplio and in the Athens International Airport «El. Venizelos». In October 2006, the first Mastihashop outside the country was opened in Lefkosia (Nikosia) of Cyprus, and by now

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.gummastic.gr>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.gummastic.gr>

there are four more stores abroad, one in New York, two in Jeddah of Saudi Arabia and one in Paris. Dozens of various mastiha products can be found in those stores, arranged into 6 different categories: natural mastiha, foodstuffs, organic, traditional products, beverages, pharmaceutical, cosmetic and folk items.<sup>12</sup> The most common mastiha products are chewing gum, mastiha oil, liqueur, ouzo, mastiha vanilla, candies, sweets, ice cream, cosmetics, toothpaste, mouthwash, nail dyeing, drugs, halva, jam, rosin, etc.

But lastly, the mastiha also conquers the kitchens of famous foreign restaurants, such as the Mugaritz restaurant in San Sebastian and the Carlo Cracco restaurant in Milan. Mastiha is a matter of high gastronomy for distinguished chefs de cuisine (Poulaki, 2016).

Mastiha of Chios is protected by the European Union as a Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) product. This distinction recognizes the name of a specific region or country where a specific agricultural product originates exclusively due to the geographical environment. This includes the natural and human factors and production, alteration and processes which take place in the delineated geographical area.<sup>13</sup>

The Museum of Mastiha in Chios has particular interest. According to the Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation, the purpose of the Mastiha Museum<sup>14</sup> in Chios is to highlight the productive history of the cultivation and the treatment of mastiha, integrating it alongside the cultural landscape of Chios. From the point of view of the inclusion of traditional mastiha cultivation by UNESCO in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humankind in 2014, emphasis is placed on the persistence and sustainability of this Chian product (Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation, 2018). The intangible cultural heritage is met with the landscape and the natural heritage it carries. The use of mastiha trees over time has been done with respect to the resilience of nature and the landscape, while the landscape itself has influenced the island's culture by laying the foundations for a development that was viable well before this term became part of the international Treaties on the environment and development (Ypaitiros, 2016).

In the framework of the long-term cooperation of the Piraeus Group Cultural Foundation with the Chios Mastiha Producers Association, culminating with the implementation and operation of the Museum of Mastiha Chios, the next common step on the promotion of the heritage of mastiha was ratified on 30 May 2017. Then was signed the assignment of the historical archive of Chios Mastiha Producers Association to Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation for 29 years according to archival practice, with the aim of making it accessible to the

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.gummastic.gr>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.gummastic.gr>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.piop.gr/el/diktuo-mouseiwn/Mouseio-Mastixas/to-mouseio.aspx>

research and public at the Museum of Mastiha in Chios, under the scientific guidance of the Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation.<sup>15</sup>

There are many events that take place in Chios and are dedicated to mastiha, mastiha villages and their people. It is obvious that the local authorities of Chios begun to promote more extensive local products with emphasis on mastiha through festivals and events. The "Agrotourism Festival" was the first festival in the history of the island in the municipal garden of the city of Chios. It was supported by local producers, associations, tourism professionals and cultural associations in Chios. The 1st official "Mastiha Festival" was the new official event of the North Aegean Region since 2014 and started as an evolution of the Agrotourism Festival. The Mastiha Festival for the second year (2015) successfully demonstrated the culture of Chios with a rich program in July and August. Many cultural events, theatrical performances, photo exhibitions, concerts, film screenings, presentations of local products both in the city of Chios and in the villages of mastiha underline the cultural character of Chios. The "Mastiha Festival" is being organized today in the villages of mastiha in collaboration with the cultural associations of many villages in the region, such as Mesta, Pyrgi, Olympoi, Armolia, Kalamoti, Elata and Lithi. The festival presents a local clothing exhibition, gastronomic tourism activities, traditional music, dances, movies, theater, painting competitions and books on mastiha.

## **5. Methodological Framework of The Survey - Statistical Sample - Results of The Survey**

Sample research was conducted to present and analyze the profile of existing gastronomic tourism demand on the island of Chios and to highlight the prospects for the development of gastronomic tourism with the contribution of mastiha. This is quantitative research using questionnaires and the data was processed using the SPSS.

This research aims to capture the current state of gastronomic tourism in Chios, to identify possible problems that hinder its development and to highlight its prospects and potential for development. The respondents selected to participate in this survey are categorized as follows: Public Sector and Tourism Companies, in particular: Chios Regional Unit, Municipality of Chios, Chios Mastiha Producers Association, Chamber of Chios, Mastiha Museum of Chios and Tourism Companies. 210 questionnaires were distributed and 198 of them were correctly and fully completed. The number of responses is considered satisfactory to ensure both the effectiveness of statistical processing and the extraction of reliable scientific conclusions.

The characteristics of the statistical sample of the survey by category are the following:

In the case of the group of respondents: the percentage of Public Sector is 62% and refers to services directly related to tourism and the percentage of

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<sup>15</sup> Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation

Tourism Companies is 38%. In terms of sex, 51% are men and 49% are women. There are four age groups, namely: First age group: 18-35, with 21.15%, second age group: 36-50, with 54.44%, third age group: 51-65, 19.4% and fourth age group: 65+, with 5.01%. Regarding the educational level, the majority (50.2%) of the sample individuals are graduates of secondary education, a significant percentage (38.3%) are graduates of tertiary education, a smaller percentage (8.4%) hold postgraduate degrees, the percentage of compulsory education is small (3.1%).

This research was conducted to present the current framework for the development of gastronomic tourism in the island of Chios and to explore both, its growth prospects with the contribution of mastiha as well as the policy measures to be implemented.

A. The main results of the existing framework about the development of gastronomic tourism in Chios are presented in the following tables:

**Table 5.1 Development of Gastronomic Tourism in Chios**

	Not at all	Little	Enough	Very
<b>Public Sector</b>	45.5%	31.2%	17%	6.3%
<b>Tourism Companies</b>	26.5%	35%	28%	10.5%

Table 5.1 shows the rates of respondents' answers on whether gastronomic/cultural tourism is developed in Chios. We point out that 45.5% of the Public-Sector claims that gastronomic tourism is not developed, as opposed to Tourism Companies that believe it is poorly developed by 35%.

**Table 5.2 Sufficient Information About Gastronomic Tourism in Chios**

	Not at all	Little	Enough	Very
<b>Public Sector</b>	13.6 %	28.4 %	38.8 %	19.2 %
<b>Tourism Companies</b>	12.8 %	20.3 %	35.2 %	31.7 %

The Table 5.2 summarizes the answers about the sufficient information on gastronomic tourism in Chios. It is noted that both groups agree on "enough" satisfactory information regarding gastronomic tourism, (38.8%, 35.2%).

B. The main results on the factors-obstacles to the development of gastronomic tourism in Chios are presented in the following tables:

**Table 5.3 Factors - Obstacles to The Development of Gastronomic Tourism in Chios**

<b>Insufficient tourist promotion of the gastronomic wealth of Chios</b>	<b>65.2 %</b>
<b>Deficiency of quality and locality in restaurants and accommodation</b>	<b>62.4%</b>
Absence of a strategic tourism development plan in Chios	60.5%
Seasonal availability of some local products	55.4%
Insufficient visibility of mastiha	54.5%
Inability to connect mastiha with gastronomy	53.5%
Lack of coordination of production and demand	52.5%

It is worth mentioning the obstacles to the development of gastronomic tourism in Chios, as presented in Table 5.3. The insufficient tourism visibility of Chios's gastronomic richness accounts for 65.2%, the lack of quality and locality in restaurants and accommodation is 62.4%, the absence of a strategic tourism development plan is 60.5%, the seasonal availability of some local products is 55.4%, inadequate visibility of mastiha is 54.5%, the failure to connect mastiha with gastronomy is 53.5% and the lack of coordination of production and demand is 52.5%.

**Table 5.4 Sufficient Tourist Promotion of The Gastronomic Wealth of Greece and Chios**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Public Sector</b>	30.5%	69.5%
<b>Tourism Companies</b>	35.5%	64.5%

The table 5.4 summarizes the respondents' rates on the extent to which the tourism gastronomy of Chios is adequate. It is noted that most of them agree that Chios is not adequately promoted, and this is proved by the gathered percentages, particularly 69.5% by the Public Sector and 64.5% by the Tourism Companies.

**Table 5.5 Cooperation of Stakeholders About Gastronomic Tourism**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Public Sector</b>	14.5 %	85.5 %
<b>Tourism Companies</b>	20 %	80 %

The Table 5.5 summarizes the respondents' answers to the co-ordination of tourism stakeholders. It is worth noting that the percentages mentioned in the "no" answer are the follows: 85.5% for the Public Sector and 80% for the Tourism Companies. It is remarkable that the rates exceed 80%, which confirms the great lack of coordination among the participants in the survey.

C. The main results of the prospects and policy measures for the development of gastronomic tourism in Chios are presented in the following tables:

**Table 5.6 Prospects for The Development of Gastronomic Tourism in Chios with Mastiha's Contribution**

	Not at all	Little	Enough	Very
<b>Public Sector</b>	1.5%	9.5%	40%	49%
<b>Tourism Companies</b>	0%	17.5%	34.5%	48%

The table 5.6 shows the percentages of respondents' answers to the prospects for the development of gastronomic tourism in Chios with the contribution of mastiha. It is worth mentioning that both, the Public Sector, and the Tourist Companies, support the view that there are many prospects for the development of gastronomic tourism on the island with 49% and 48% respectively.

**Table 5.7 Policy measures for the development of gastronomic tourism in Chios**

<b>Formation and upgrading of Greek gastronomy</b>	<b>88.5%</b>
<b>Strengthening of the identity of Chios with emphasis on mastiha</b>	87.6%
Activity of a collective, public or cooperative organization	81.5%
Emphasis and promotion of the richness and diversity of the local cuisine	77.1%
Presentation of the kitchen as an integral part of the local culture	75.5%
Development and implement of a strategic marketing plan	68.2%
Integration of Chios into the gastronomic map	62.6%
Organizing various events focusing on Greek gastronomic production	61.5%
Cooperation of stakeholders and tourism companies	60.3%
Strong online presence of mastiha	58.2%
Creation of gastronomic routes with emphasis on mastiha	55.5%

The table 5.7 presents the respondents' answers to the prospects for the development of gastronomic tourism in Chios, focusing on the following measures: The formation and upgrading of Greek gastronomy (88.5%), the strengthening of the identity of Chios with emphasis on mastiha, (87.6%), the activity of a collective, public or cooperative organization, (81.5%), the emphasis and promotion of the richness and diversity of the local cuisine, (77.1%), the presentation of the cuisine as an integral part of the local culture, (75.5%), the development and implement of a strategic marketing plan, (68.2%), the integration of Chios in the gastronomic map, (62.6%), the organizing various events focusing on Greek gastronomic offer, (61.5%), the cooperation of all stakeholders and tourism companies (60.3%), the strong online presence of mastiha and Chios island, (58.2%), and the creation of gastronomic routes with emphasis on mastiha, (55.5%).

## **6. Conclusions and Policy Measures for The Development of Gastronomic Tourism in Chios with The Contribution of The Mastiha**

As it is known, gastronomic/cultural tourism has grown particularly in recent years worldwide, and its economic dimension and development potential have been addressed by most countries. Undoubtedly, Greece is also an attractive tourist destination because it has ideal climatic conditions combined with its cultural wealth. Gastronomic tourism is an integral part of Greek tourism and is indissolubly linked with the protection and visibility of local tradition.

In the case study of this research, it is concluded that gastronomic/cultural tourism has developed little compared to the ideal development that this form of tourism could have on the island of Chios. The island has many comparative advantages and highlighting it will be able to become a distinct culinary destination. The rich cultural tradition coupled with mastiha gathers most tourists. The development of gastronomic tourism in Chios can be combined with other forms of tourism, especially with cultural tourism. Everything that has historical, cultural, and anthropological value can be displayed and exploited alongside gastronomic tourism.

As regards the factors-obstacles for the development of gastronomic tourism in Chios, one can see the crucial role played by the inadequate promotion of the gastronomic wealth of Greece and Chios and the efforts to be made in this area. The lack of quality and locality in restaurants and accommodation, as well as the seasonal availability of some local products, and the lack of coordination of production and demand, play a decisive role. The main obstacle is the inadequate visibility of mastiha and the inability to connect it to gastronomy.

Regarding the prospects and policy measures for the development of gastronomic tourism in Chios, it is necessary to develop a clear common direction for all with planned and co-ordinated actions by all stakeholders. It is noted that there are many prospects for the development of gastronomic tourism on the island. The cultural and gastronomic richness of Chios is so great that it deserves proper use after proper and targeted promotion both inside and outside. As far as the development of gastronomy in Chios is concerned, public and private stakeholders should deal more seriously and responsibly with this issue and attract gourmets to the island. At the same time, the traditional cultural elements of the island must be highlighted, with emphasis on mastiha.

The respondents' answers focus on shaping and upgrading Greek gastronomy by strengthening the identity of Chios with emphasis on mastiha. It is emphasized both the activation of a collective, public, or collaborative institution, the promotion of the richness and diversity of local cuisine, as well as the presentation of the cuisine as an integral part of the local culture. The development of gastronomic tourism in Chios is directly related to the implementation of a strategic marketing plan and the dynamic integration of Chios into the gastronomic map. Finally, the organization of various events focusing on the Greek gastronomic offer, the cooperation of all stakeholders and



tourism companies, the strong online presence of mastiha and the creation of gastronomic routes with emphasis on mastiha can be powerful levers of economic development of Chios based on the local cuisine.

Clearly, there is no tourism plan and strategic directions for tourism development at local, regional, or national level. Gastronomic tourism can offer many benefits to the host area of Chios, and provide important incentives and means for local, public, and private stakeholders to care for and preserve the heritage and traditions of the island. It has the potential to exploit the cultural-gastronomic heritage and to create financial resources, since it offers the appropriate education and training to those involved with tourism development. It is obvious that gastronomic tourism can become an important growth factor when its management is effective. It is necessary to create a diversified and high-quality gastronomic tourism product, and to shape the conditions that will make Chios a distinct culinary tourist destination. It is necessary to formulate a tourism policy framework at the local and national level, which will include several selected actions for the design and management of gastronomic tourism combined with the cultivation and production of mastiha.

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