

Article

The Tourist Gastronomic Experience: Ties Between Young Foodies' Motivation and Destination Development in Portugal

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Abstract: Gastronomic tourism has become a dynamic segment within the tourism sector, serving as a vital tool for the economic, cultural, and environmental growth of regions that emphasize culinary experiences. This study examines the motivations of young food-motivated tourists (“foodies”) and their impact on travel choices and destination development. Using a quantitative methodology, data were collected from 170 respondents (131 valid answers) in Portugal. The data were collected through the PTFoodies survey, a tool specifically designed by the authors to analyze tourist motivations and their connections to destination attributes. Principal Component Analysis (PCA) identified five key factors—endogenous products, local gastronomy, quality and innovation, authenticity and tradition, and diversity—revealing a balance between sustainability, local authenticity, and openness to innovation in tourist preferences. Additionally, correlation analysis highlighted significant relationships between motivations, such as the strong association between an interest in culinary routes and event participation and between local product appreciation and the preference for organic food. These findings contribute to both theory and practice by refining motivational theories specific to gastronomic tourism, offering insights into destination development strategies and emphasizing sustainable practices that resonate with tourists’ preferences. The study provides destination managers with actionable strategies to attract food-motivated tourists and foster sustainable community growth through gastronomic tourism.



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1. Introduction

This study explores the motivations and preferences of gastronomic tourists (“foodies”) and how these preferences shape their travel decisions and experiences. Recognizing the dynamic and growing nature of gastronomic tourism, this research focuses on Portugal as its primary context. Portugal, with its rich culinary heritage, diverse regional cuisines, and emphasis on authenticity and sustainability, serves as an ideal case study to uncover nuanced patterns in food tourism. By situating the research in this specific national context, the study bridges a critical gap in the literature and provides region-specific insights that contribute to a broader understanding of gastronomic tourism.

As for the originality of this study, the research goes beyond generic motivations, employing Principal Component Analysis (PCA) to identify five distinct motivational

factors: endogenous products, local gastronomy, quality and innovation, authenticity and tradition, and diversity. These findings not only confirm established theories but also reveal emerging trends, such as a growing preference for blending tradition with modernity in culinary experiences. Gastronomic tourism has become one of the most dynamic segments within the broader tourism industry, exerting significant influence on the economic, cultural, and environmental development of regions that prioritize culinary experiences (Onat & Güneren, 2024; Prat & Valiente, 2014). The growing interest in food-related travel reflects a broader trend towards experiential tourism where gastronomy serves as a key motivator for travel decisions (Berbel-Pineda et al., 2019). Prior research underscores the positive impacts of gastronomic offerings in enhancing the quality of tourists' experiences, increasing satisfaction levels, and shaping purchase intentions (Samaddar & Mondal, 2024; Stone et al., 2018). Additionally, the unique appeal of local culinary traditions not only influences tourists' consumption behaviors but also fosters the sustainable development of host communities, creating synergies that benefit both visitors and destinations (Campón-Cerro et al., 2023; Ferreira & Sánchez-Martín, 2022). Beyond economic benefits, gastronomic tourism has sociocultural significance as it promotes culinary heritage, sustainable practices, and regional identities (Bardolet-Puigdollers & Fusté-Forné, 2023; de Jong & Varley, 2018; Pınar & Çelebi, 2021).

Despite these recognized benefits, there remains a critical research gap in understanding gastronomic tourists' specific motivations and their implications for destination selection and development strategies. Existing studies often address gastronomy as a complementary rather than a primary motivator, leaving the nuanced ways in which food-oriented tourists, or "foodies", prioritize culinary experiences in their travel decisions unexplored. Furthermore, little is known about the strategies destinations can implement to leverage gastronomic tourism as a tool for sustainable development.

To address these gaps, this study investigates the central question: "Do the motivations of gastronomic tourists influence the choice of certain tourist destinations over others?" The objectives are threefold: (i) to analyze the specific motivations and preferences of food-oriented tourists; (ii) to evaluate how these preferences shape their travel choices and overall experiences; and (iii) to identify effective strategies that destinations can employ to attract these visitors while using gastronomic tourism to support sustainable regional development.

This research adopts a quantitative approach using the PTFoodies survey, a specialized instrument designed to evaluate tourists' motivations in relation to gastronomic destination attributes. A sample of 170 respondents (131 valid answers) was collected, applying descriptive analysis to assess sample characteristics and exploratory factor analysis (PCA) to identify core motivational dimensions. A correlation matrix was subsequently constructed to explore the relationships between tourists' motivations and specific destination features.

The contributions of this study are both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, it advances motivational theories by identifying specific travel drivers for young food-oriented tourists, integrating gastronomic tourism within destination development frameworks and conceptualizing the "foodie experience" as a distinct tourism phenomenon. Practically, it provides actionable recommendations for destination marketing organizations (DMOs) to attract and retain young gastronomic tourists, fosters sustainable community development through culinary tourism, and outlines strategic frameworks for leveraging local culture and food economies. However, given the focus on Portugal and a limited sample of 170 respondents, these findings should be viewed as preliminary and may require further research to generalize their implications on a broader scale. Overall, this study enhances understanding of gastronomic tourism and its potential for sustainable development, with a focus on specific regional contexts.

2. Literature Review

The relationship between gastronomic products and tourist motivation is an area of growing interest in tourism research. Several studies indicate that gastronomy is often a determining factor in the choice of a tourist destination and is often the main stimulus for traveling (Kivela & Crotts, 2006; Ramos & Pinto, 2024). Gastronomic tourists, or foodies, look for destinations where they can have authentic experiences through food, as this is a way of immersing themselves in the local culture (Ellis et al., 2018; Rachão et al., 2019). These tourists value authenticity, the use of endogenous ingredients, and the preservation of culinary traditions (Garofalo et al., 2024; Sims, 2009). Gastronomy is one of the channels of cultural immersion through which tourists experience and interact with local identity.

Tourism motives related to gastronomy can be divided into different categories. For some authors, food is a primary motive and the main factor in choosing a destination, while for others, gastronomy is a secondary motive and complements other cultural, historical, or recreational activities (Kim & Eves, 2012; Mensah et al., 2023). In addition to these reasons, the image of gastronomic destinations, reinforced by their online reputation, has a positive impact on their attractiveness and competitiveness (Ramos & Pinto, 2024).

Tourists' motivations can vary, ranging from those who: (i) anticipate a gastronomic experience, recognizing the authenticity of the gastronomic product in representing local identity; (ii) or have a more detached relationship with food, for whom the gastronomic product is more of a characteristic element of the destinations visited and only makes sense when part of a composite tourism product (Garofalo et al., 2024; Santa-Cruz et al., 2020; Ullah et al., 2022). In any case, gastronomy plays a differentiating role in creating a memorable travel experience. In addition, gastronomic experiences can be used as a marketing tool for tourist destinations as the rich culinary tradition of some regions is a differentiating strategy with an impact on their attractiveness and on boosting the local economy (Baysal & Bilici, 2024; Lees & Greenhalgh, 2024; Machado-Oliveira et al., 2020; Okumus, 2021; Roy & Roy, 2024). This relationship between gastronomy and tourism also drives innovation and the co-creation of unique memorable experiences that attract tourists.

The gastronomic product can be defined as the materialization of a food offer that integrates cultural, historical, geographical, and sensory elements of a particular region or community (Koerich & Sousa, 2021). This concept encompasses not only the food itself but also the production process, the ingredients used, the preparation methods, and the context in which it is consumed (Mak et al., 2012). Thus, the gastronomic product goes beyond the mere act of eating and becomes a sensory experience that is culturally imbued with local values and traditions, reflecting a territories' identity (Hjalager, 2010). If we consider the tangible (food and drink) and intangible (history, tradition, and hospitality) elements that make up the gastronomic product, we can see its importance in constructing the meaning of the tourist experience and in developing destinations.

Three perspectives emphasize different dimensions of gastronomic tourism and its impact on tourist motivations: one focuses on the gastronomic product, another values local gastronomy and endogenous products, and a third defends tourist motivations as the main factor determining the choice of certain destinations (Nesterchuk et al., 2022).

The 'gastronomic product' perspective emphasizes the quality of the experience, image, and economic impact (Roy & Roy, 2024): Quality affects tourist satisfaction and motivation (Berbel-Pineda et al., 2019; Jonson & Masa, 2023; Prat & Valiente, 2014); image has a direct impact on purchase intention (Berbel-Pineda et al., 2019; Jara-Amézaga, 2023; Kovalenko et al., 2023; Onat & Güneren, 2024; Ros-Ruiz & Guzman-Parra, 2023); and gastronomic tourism contributes to the economic development of local communities (Bellini et al., 2020; Campón-Cerro et al., 2023; Mora et al., 2021).

The current focus on ‘local gastronomy and endogenous products’ emphasizes cultural integration and regional cuisine as the main factors influencing tourist motivations (Duque et al., 2023; Ferreira & Sánchez-Martín, 2022; Pirnar & Çelebi, 2021): (1) Regional cuisine contributes to bettering a destinations’ reputation and credibility when endogenous products have certificates or quality recognition, such as the Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) or Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) (Duque et al., 2023; Perez-Galvez et al., 2020; Rinaldi, 2017; Sengel et al., 2015); (2) Cultural integration, which translates into linking local food production systems with the tourist experience, helps to create a unique and attractive destination by deepening the connection between tourists and local culture (Ferreira & Sánchez-Martín, 2022; Pirnar & Çelebi, 2021).

Theories based on the ‘gastronomic tourist motivation’ suggest that the motivational factors intrinsic to individuals and the level of satisfaction they experience when traveling trigger feelings of loyalty and attachment to destinations (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2019; Goolaup & Mossberg, 2016): Motivational factors are mainly observed in the desire and willingness to experience local gastronomy, which includes tasting local dishes, learning about culinary traditions, and participating in various food-related activities (Jonson & Masa, 2023; Öğretmenoğlu et al., 2023; Pérez-Priego et al., 2023; Santa-Cruz et al., 2020); and high levels of satisfaction with gastronomic experiences can lead to increased tourist loyalty and, consequently, loyalty to the product. This satisfaction is often motivated by the quality and uniqueness of gastronomic offerings (Jonson & Masa, 2023; Onat & Güneren, 2024; Pai et al., 2024; Prat & Valiente, 2014; Ullah et al., 2022).

This study takes a holistic view of the issue, considering that the different dimensions of the gastronomic product and tourists’ motivations are self-reinforcing and that both have an impact on the development of gastronomic destinations (Tables 1 and 2). Three key dimensions of gastronomic tourism influencing tourists’ motivations are highlighted in Table 1:

1. **Quality and innovation of gastronomic products:** The quality and innovation of gastronomic products have a direct impact on tourist satisfaction and motivation to visit specific destinations. This suggests that destinations with unique and innovative gastronomic offers can attract more tourists and offer better experiences, thus strengthening local tourism.
2. **Economic development:** Gastronomic tourism stimulates local economic growth by generating income and encouraging the development of businesses related to food, hospitality, and tourism. It reinforces the importance of investing in this segment to stimulate a region’s economy.
3. **Endogenous products:** Local and traditional products promote authenticity and allow for a deeper cultural integration between tourists and the local culture. The use of local ingredients and recipes creates a genuine link between the visitor and the destination, reinforcing cultural identity and sustainability.

Table 1. Dimensions and impacts of gastronomic destinations on tourist motivations.

Dimensions	Impacts
Quality and innovation of Gastronomic Products	Enhances tourist satisfaction and motivation (Berbel-Pineda et al., 2019; Jonson & Masa, 2023; Onat & Güneren, 2024)
Economic Development	Drives local economic growth through tourism (Bellini et al., 2020; Campón-Cerro et al., 2023)
Endogenous Products	Promote authenticity and cultural integration (Duque et al., 2023; Ferreira & Sánchez-Martín, 2022; Pirnar & Çelebi, 2021)

Source: Authors’ preparation.

Table 2. Dimensions and impacts of tourist motivations on gastronomic destinations.

Dimensions	Impacts
Behavioral Intentions	Positive experiences influence future travel intentions (Berbel-Pineda et al., 2019; Onat & Güneren, 2024)
Tourist Motivation	Driven by unique culinary experiences and local food traditions (Garofalo et al., 2024; Jonson & Masa, 2023)
Satisfaction and Loyalty	Leads to repeat visits and increased loyalty (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2019; Jonson & Masa, 2023; Onat & Güneren, 2024; Pai et al., 2024)

Source: Authors' preparation.

The relationship between these dimensions and their impact thus shows how gastronomy not only attracts tourists but also contributes to territories' economic development and cultural preservation (see Table 1).

Table 2 examines three dimensions of tourist behavior that influence the practice of gastronomic tourism:

- Behavioral intentions: positive experiences during a trip influence tourists' future intention, such as the desire to return to the destination or to recommend the trip to others. This highlights the importance of providing good food experiences, which can directly influence visitors' future behavior.
- Tourist motivation: Motivation to travel is driven by unique culinary experiences and local food traditions. In other words, tourists look for destinations that offer authentic and distinctive gastronomy, which is an important pull factor in their travel decisions.
- Satisfaction and loyalty: Tourist satisfaction with a destination's cuisine and experiences can lead to repeat visits and increased loyalty to the destination.

These data show how gastronomic experiences can influence tourists' behavior in terms of their loyalty to a particular destination, which is a crucial factor in attracting visitors and maintaining the flow of tourism in territories (see Table 2).

In summary, the interconnectedness of gastronomy, culture, and tourism in fostering sustainable development and enriching tourist experiences is supported by the following factors:

- (a) Gastronomic tourism refers to travel experiences centered on the exploration of a destination's culinary heritage, food production practices, and local gastronomy. This form of tourism is a key driver promoting cultural identity, economic development, and sustainability. It involves not only the consumption of local foods but also participation in food-related activities such as cooking classes, food festivals, and visits to markets or producers, contributing to an immersive cultural experience (Ademoğlu & Şahan, 2023; Rivza et al., 2022).
- (b) Endogenous products originate within a specific geographic region and are closely tied to its natural resources, traditions, and cultural practices. In the context of gastronomy, these products often include local ingredients, artisanal foods, and beverages that reflect the region's distinctive identity. They play a critical role in enhancing the authenticity of gastronomic tourism and supporting the local economy (Rivza et al., 2022; Privitera et al., 2020).
- (c) Local gastronomy encompasses the culinary practices, dishes, and ingredients unique to a specific region. It highlights the relationship between food and the cultural, historical, and environmental aspects of a place. By emphasizing locally sourced ingredients and traditional preparation methods, local gastronomy serves as both a

tourist attraction and a medium for preserving cultural heritage (Ademoğlu & Şahan, 2023; Alfiero et al., 2019).

- (d) Quality and innovation in gastronomy pertain to maintaining high standards in food production, presentation, and service, while simultaneously embracing creative approaches to enhance culinary experiences. These concepts are critical in meeting evolving consumer expectations, promoting sustainability, and ensuring competitiveness in the tourism sector. For example, street food can combine quality with innovative methods to attract tourists while preserving tradition (Alfiero et al., 2019; Sadilek, 2019).
- (e) Authenticity and tradition in gastronomy emphasize the preservation and promotion of culinary practices reflecting the genuine cultural and historical essence of a region.

These elements resonate strongly with tourists seeking meaningful, immersive experiences. Authentic gastronomy reinforces cultural identity while supporting sustainable tourism practices by safeguarding culinary heritage against homogenization (Privitera et al., 2020; Richards, 2021).

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Sampling Procedures

Respondents were selected using a voluntary sampling method, which can be characterized as purposeful. This approach specifically targeted individuals with an interest in gastronomic tourism, ensuring alignment with the study's objectives. The research was conducted via an online survey distributed between March and August 2024. The survey questionnaire was disseminated through social media platforms and email lists associated with tourism and gastronomy-focused groups, facilitating access to a population engaged in these areas of interest in Portugal.

3.2. Sample

This study involved 170 people who voluntarily responded to a survey and considered themselves to be food tourists, although the results focused on 131 valid responses (N = 131) (see Table 3).

Table 3. Characterization of participants (N = 131).

Sample	<i>n</i>	%
Gender:		
Male	57	43.5
Female	71	54.2
Other	3	2.3
Age:		
Up to 26 years	86	65.6
Between 27 and 36 years	15	11.5
Between 37 and 46 years	14	10.7
Between 47 and 56 years	9	6.9
Between 57 and 66 years	6	4.6
Over 67 years	1	0.8
Employment:		
Student	78	59.5
Self-employed	7	5.3
Employee	43	32.8
Unemployed	1	0.8
Retired	1	0.8
Other	1	0.8

Table 3. *Cont.*

Sample	<i>n</i>	%
Education:		
Without studies	2	1.5
Basic education (9th year)	4	3.1
Secondary Education (12th year)	65	49.6
Degree	47	35.9
Master's	9	6.9
PhD	4	3.1

Source: Authors' preparation.

The sample is mainly composed of participants with secondary education ($n = 65$; 49.6%) and higher education ($n = 47$; 35.9%), who are currently studying ($n = 78$; 59.5%) or already employed ($n = 43$; 32.8%), A and female ($n = 71$; 54.2%). The participation of young people under 36 is noteworthy, indicating this population's interest in the gastronomic product ($n = 101$; 77.1%) (see Table 3). Regarding age distribution, we acknowledge that approximately two-thirds of the respondents are 26 years old or younger, a demographic that may not align with the profile of a traditional gastronomic tourist as identified in larger studies (Berbel-Pineda et al., 2019; Onat & Güneren, 2024; Prat & Valiente, 2014; Samaddar & Mondal, 2024). However, we contend that this age group provides valuable insights, especially in understanding emerging trends in gastronomic tourism. The increasing interest in gastronomic experiences among younger generations, particularly Generation Z, warrants attention. In this context, the implications of the age skew in the sample are important, as it offers a unique perspective on how Generation Z is influencing travel and tourism trends.

3.3. Materials

The PTFoodies survey was created due to the lack of tools to assess the characteristics of gastronomic destinations and their relationship with tourist motivations. This study presents the results of questions related to assessment of tourists' preferences and what they value most when choosing a gastronomic destination. The literature review highlights the most relevant dimensions of the subject under study, namely the characteristics of the gastronomic product, the tourists' motivation and satisfaction, and the local gastronomy. These topics have been divided into two groups of questions in order to make the survey easier to read and answer. Table 4 shows the items reflecting these constructs and a total of 20 items rated on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) (see Table 4).

Table 4. Items for evaluating interest in gastronomy in Portugal and its endogenous products.

Authors	Items
(Berbel-Pineda et al., 2019; Jonson & Masa, 2023; Prat & Valiente, 2014)	Q3.1. Eating is a moment of pleasure
(Duque et al., 2023)	Q3.2. Interest in gastronomic routes
(de Jong & Varley, 2018)	Q3.3. Participation in gastronomic events
(Duque et al., 2023; Ferreira & Sánchez-Martín, 2022; Pınar & Çelebi, 2021)	Q3.4. Preference for traditional regional cuisine
(Öğretmenoğlu et al., 2023)	Q3.5. Interest in renowned/well-known restaurants

Table 4. Cont.

Authors	Items
(Jonson & Masa, 2023; Öğretmenoğlu et al., 2023; Pérez-Priego et al., 2023; Santa-Cruz et al., 2020)	Q3.6. Enjoy trying traditional dishes from each region
(Jonson & Masa, 2023; Öğretmenoğlu et al., 2023; Pérez-Priego et al., 2023; Santa-Cruz et al., 2020)	Q3.7. Preference for international cuisine (from other countries)
(Campón-Cerro et al., 2023; Ferreira & Sánchez-Martín, 2022; Onat & Güneren, 2024)	Q3.8. Interest in new gastronomic experiences, through modern recreations of traditional Portuguese cuisine
(Bellini et al., 2020)	Q3.9. Value the friendliness of restaurant service providers
(Berbel-Pineda et al., 2019; Jonson & Masa, 2023; Prat & Valiente, 2014)	Q3.10. Importance of innovation in dishes, namely through gourmet modifications
(Garofalo et al., 2024; Jonson & Masa, 2023)	Q4.1. Importance of using regionally grown/produced products
(Berbel-Pineda et al., 2019; Jonson & Masa, 2023; Prat & Valiente, 2014)	Q4.2. Valuing locally sourced organic products
(Öğretmenoğlu et al., 2023)	Q4.3. Dishes prepared individually and at the moment of tasting
(Samaddar & Mondal, 2024; Stone et al., 2018)	Q4.4. The use of seasonal products in dish preparation influences the purchase decision
(Goolaup & Mossberg, 2016; Nesterchuk et al., 2022)	Q4.5. Importance of customs and traditions during the preparation and tasting process
(Garofalo et al., 2024; Jonson & Masa, 2023)	Q4.6. The use of local products influences the choice
(Koerich & Sousa, 2021)	Q4.7. Valuing historical knowledge as a guarantee of authentic preparation
(Onat & Güneren, 2024; Roy & Roy, 2024)	Q4.8. Valuing the traditional appearance of dining establishments
(Mak et al., 2012)	Q4.9. The use of processed food products is not important, as long as the taste is maintained
(Bellini et al., 2020; Campón-Cerro et al., 2023; Mora et al., 2021)	Q4.10. Considering the well-being of local producers and communities in the purchase decision

Source: Authors' preparation.

3.4. Data Analysis

As this is an exploratory study, correlational analyses were favored in order to reduce the dimensionality of the data, highlight factors that are related to each other, and to identify patterns and relationships between variables that are not always obvious (Byrne, 2016; Costello & Osborne, 2005). Exploratory factor analysis was conducted using principal components analysis (PCA) with VARIMAX rotation and Pearson's correlation tests (r) for the 20 items identified in the previous section (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). The PCA met the criteria of sample adequacy (a proportion of 6.55 subjects per item), Bartlett's test of sphericity (χ^2) with a significance level of $p \leq 0.05$, and a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test (KMO) of 0.864 (greater than 0.70, following the guidelines of (Schumacker & Lomax, 2015)).

The application of Pearson's correlation (r) after PCA is justified to gather additional information on item consistency and redundancy as well as to validate the retained factor structure (PCA) (Field, 2018; Stevens, 2002; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019).

Reliability was calculated using Cronbach's alpha (Coutinho, 2015). A score of 0.80 was considered a good indicator of reliability (Urbina, 2014). This analysis was carried out using IBM® SPSS version 28.0.1.

4. Results

4.1. Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test

The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy indicates an excellent fit of the sample to the PCA criteria (KMO = 0.864). Bartlett's test of sphericity showed an approximate chi-squared value (χ^2) of 1338.189 with a significance value of $p < 0.01$, indicating a significant correlation between the variables analyzed ($\chi^2 = 1338.189$, $df = 190$, $p \leq 0.01$) (see Table 5).

Table 5. KMO and Bartlett's tests.

Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.864
	Approx. Chi-squared	1338.189
Bartlett's sphericity test	gl	190
	Sig.	0.001

Source: Authors' preparation based on SPSS output.

4.2. Factor Extraction and Variance Explained

The results of Principal Component Factor Analysis (PCA) indicate the presence of five main factors explaining the structure of food preferences, accounting for 66.453% of the explained variance of the concept under study. Each factor represents a different set of attitudes and behaviors towards gastronomy, reflecting everything from the appreciation of local and seasonal products to the recognition of innovation and authenticity of gastronomic products. The VARIMAX rotation converged after 13 iterations, confirming the robustness of the analysis. Table 6 shows the factor loadings for the five components and the communalities (h^2) for each item (see Table 6). The analysis of each factor (F1, F2, F3, F4, F5) shows that the association between the item and its component is good ($r \geq 0.5$) or very good ($r \geq 0.7$).

Table 6. PCA and reliability (α); Factor loadings, communalities (h^2), eigenvalues, and explained variance (%).

Items \ Components	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	h^2
Q4.4. The use of seasonal products in dish preparation influences the purchase decision.	0.828	0.033	0.232	0.069	0.136	0.764
Q4.6. The use of local products influences the choice	0.729	0.210	0.048	0.447	−0.107	0.790
Q4.10. Considering the well-being of local producers and communities in the purchase decision	0.625	0.304	0.156	0.164	−0.121	0.549
Q4.3. Dishes prepared individually and at the moment of tasting	0.562	0.216	0.297	0.147	0.271	0.546

Table 6. Cont.

Items\Components	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	h^2
Q4.5. Importance of customs and traditions during the preparation and tasting process	0.533	0.447	0.124	0.191	0.365	0.669
Q3.6. Enjoy trying traditional dishes from each region	0.134	0.760	0.258	0.265	0.056	0.735
Q3.9. Value the friendliness of restaurant service providers	0.206	0.699	0.151	−0.147	−0.178	0.607
Q3.4. Preference for traditional regional cuisine	0.152	0.682	−0.030	0.447	−0.043	0.690
Q3.1. Eating is a moment of pleasure	0.108	0.587	0.253	−0.023	0.131	0.438
Q4.1. Importance of using regionally grown/produced products	0.393	0.540	0.433	0.303	−0.046	0.727
Q3.8. Interest in new gastronomic experiences, through modern recreations of traditional Portuguese cuisine	0.179	0.218	0.791	0.074	−0.009	0.711
Q3.10. Importance of innovation in dishes, namely through gourmet modifications	0.206	0.158	0.707	0.173	0.194	0.635
Q3.2. Interest in gastronomic routes	0.110	0.235	0.638	0.426	0.219	0.705
Q4.2. Valuing locally sourced organic products	0.510	0.311	0.518	0.221	−0.078	0.680
Q3.5. Interest in renowned/well-known restaurants	0.133	0.003	0.400	0.685	−0.012	0.647
Q4.7. Valuing historical knowledge as a guarantee of authentic preparation	0.432	0.229	0.150	0.665	0.119	0.718
Q3.3. Participation in gastronomic events	0.251	0.045	0.424	0.590	0.224	0.643
Q4.8. Valuing the traditional appearance of dining establishments	0.349	0.477	−0.020	0.543	0.162	0.671

Table 6. Cont.

Items\Components	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	h^2
Q4.9. The use of processed food products is not important, as long as the taste is maintained	0.144	0.023	0.023	−0.073	0.839	0.732
Q3.7. Preference for international cuisine (from other countries)	−0.112	−0.074	0.212	0.345	0.673	0.634
Eigenvalues	39.821	9.248	6.278	5.764	5.342	
Shared variance (%)	16.133	15.316	13.677	13.093	8.235	
Cronbach's alpha (α)	0.826	0.801	0.807	0.793	0.524	

Source: Authors' preparation based on SPSS output.

Factor 1, called '**Endogenous products**', reflects the importance attached to using seasonal and local products, taking into account the well-being of producers (Q4.4, $r = 0.828$; Q4.6, $r = 0.729$; Q4.10, $r = 0.625$; Q4.3, $r = 0.562$; Q4.5, $r = 0.533$). It highlights tourist motivations and consumption trends that are strongly influenced by the sustainability perspective associated with tradition.

Factor 2 focuses on the association between the gastronomic experience and the appreciation of traditional dishes, quality of service and customer care. It emphasizes the importance of the traditional/local and of hospitality in what is called '**Local gastronomy**' (Q3.6, $r = 0.760$; Q3.9 $r = 0.699$; Q3.4, $r = 0.682$; Q3.1, $r = 0.587$; Q4.1, $r = 0.540$).

The interest in innovative gastronomic experiences and modern interpretations of dishes, revealing a demand for novelty within tradition, is reflected in **Factor 3**, labeled '**Quality and innovation**' (Q3.8, $r = 0.791$; Q3.10, $r = 0.707$; Q3.2, $r = 0.638$; Q4.1, $r = 0.518$).

Factor 4, called '**Authenticity and tradition**', indicates that historical and authentic knowledge is valued in the preparation of dishes (Q3.5, $r = 0.685$; Q4.7, $r = 0.665$; Q3.3, $r = 0.590$; Q4.8, $r = 0.543$).

Factor 5 combines a number of items that show a preference for international cuisine, indicating an openness to external influences, which is why it has been named '**Diversity**'. This component suggests that tourists' motivations are also related to discovering the cuisines of other cultures (Q4.9, $r = 0.839$; Q3.7, $r = 0.673$).

The PCA results suggest that consumers value authenticity and tradition as much as innovation and variety, revealing a rich dynamic panorama of food preferences.

The internal consistency analysis was assessed using Cronbach's alpha (α) with an overall result of $\alpha = 0.910$, indicating the reliability of the items. Similarly, Cronbach's alpha (α) showed excellent internal consistency in factors F1 ($\alpha = 0.826$), F2 ($\alpha = 0.801$), F3 ($\alpha = 0.807$), and F4 ($\alpha = 0.793$). For Factor 5, the Cronbach's alpha value is lower ($\alpha = 0.524$), although it is considered to be within the acceptable values for analyzing the internal consistency of this factor. This result is also understandable because F5 consists of only two items.

Removing any of the individual items forming each of the factors did not improve the overall alpha (α), suggesting that all the items contribute significantly to assessment of the same construct.

4.3. Pearson's Correlation Matrix: Relationship Between Tourists' Motivations and Destination Attributes

A Pearson's correlation (r) was performed, the results matrix of which (Appendix A) made it possible to determine which factors extracted in the PCA were the most relevant and to eliminate some redundant items. This analysis facilitated a richer and more detailed interpretation of the data structure, helping to expand understanding of the factor results (Byrne, 2016; Costello & Osborne, 2005; Fabrigar & Wegener, 2011; Field, 2018; Hair et al., 2018; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019).

The results were analyzed based on statistical significance ($p < 0.05$; $p < 0.01$) and strength of correlations, considering strong (r between 0.5 and 1), moderate (r between 0.3 and 0.5), and weak (r between 0.3 and 0.5) correlations (Field, 2018).

Strong (r between 0.5 and 1) and statistically significant correlations were observed between the following items: Q3.2 (interest in gastronomic itineraries) and Q3.3 (participation in gastronomic events), with a correlation of $r = 0.643$, suggesting that individuals who are interested in gastronomic itineraries are also highly likely to participate in gastronomic events. This reflects a consumer profile that values collective experiences imbued with local culture, linked to gastronomic culture. There is another strong correlation ($r = 0.775$) between Q4.1 (importance of using local products) and Q4.2 (appreciation of local organic products), indicating a substantial relationship between the consumption of local products and concern about organic production. This behavior shows a growing tendency to value sustainable and authentic practices in food consumption.

The most significant **moderate** (r between 0.3 and 0.5) and statistically significant associations were observed between: Q3.1 (Eating is a moment of pleasure) and Q4.1 (Importance of using local products) ($r = 0.459$), indicating that people who associate pleasure with eating also tend to value the origin of the products they consume, especially those produced locally. The link between enjoyment and consumption suggests that the gastronomic experience is strongly associated with the quality and authenticity of the ingredients. The correlation between Q3.4 (preference for traditional cuisine) and Q3.6 (desire to try traditional dishes) ($r = 0.631$) shows that consumers tend to value traditional cuisine and at the same time show interest in trying new variations in such dishes, reinforcing the idea that tradition and innovation can coexist in the gastronomic experience.

The **weak** correlations (r between 0.3 and 0.5), although statistically significant, indicate there are other factors, possibly not covered in this analysis, which could be the subject of future studies and which influence consumers' gastronomic choices, such as personal preferences or cultural issues: the correlation between Q3.7 (Preference for international cuisine) and Q3.1 (Eating is a pleasure) ($r = 0.104$) indicates that a preference for international cuisine is only slightly related to the perception of pleasure in eating. Another example is the correlation between Q3.3 (Participation in gastronomic events) and Q3.1 (Eating is a pleasure) ($r = 0.208$), which suggests a small but significant relationship between eating pleasure and participation in gastronomic events.

In summary, the strongest correlation was found between Q3.2 (interest in gastronomic itineraries) and Q3.3 (participation in gastronomic events), indicating a high propensity for consumers to connect with gastronomic activities when they are interested in exploring new itineraries. In addition, the correlation with the appreciation of local and organic products suggests the importance consumers attach to authenticity, as well as their concern about the origin and production methods of food. Finally, the correlations between tradition, innovation, and food enjoyment provide valuable insights for the foodservice sector, allowing restaurants and producers to adapt their marketing and product development strategies to meet consumers' preferences better and create richer experiences that connect with their cultural and food expectations.

5. Discussion

The relationship between gastronomy and tourist motivation is an increasingly significant field of study within tourism research, as highlighted by the previous literature (Kivela & Crofts, 2006; Ramos & Pinto, 2024). This study builds upon existing findings while adding unique insights into the motivations and preferences of young gastronomic tourists.

The results corroborate the literature review regarding the main motivations of gastronomic tourists or foodies. In line with Ellis et al. (2018), Rachão et al. (2019), and Ramos and Pinto (2024), it has been proven that this community seeks destinations where they can experience authentic gastronomic experiences, also stating that this is a form of cultural immersion, valuing local identity, the use of endogenous ingredients, and the preservation of local traditions, according to Garofalo et al. (2024) and Sims (2009). Regardless of the level of motivation, primary or secondary (Kim & Eves, 2012; Mensah et al., 2023), for young gastronomic tourists, gastronomy plays an important role in creating their tourist experience. While much of the previous research has focused on gastronomy as a central or complementary motive for travel, this study highlights the nuanced preferences of Generation Z travelers who blend traditional values with modern trends, offering new perspectives on culinary tourism. In this respect, the gastronomic product must be a food offering that integrates cultural, historical, geographical (Hjalager, 2010), and sensory elements of a particular region or community (Koerich & Sousa, 2021), including, in addition to the dish itself, the production process, the ingredients used, preparation methods, and the context in which it is consumed (Mak et al., 2012). The previous literature demonstrates that gastronomy serves not only as a means of cultural immersion but also as a differentiating factor that can enhance destinations’ competitiveness (Ellis et al., 2018; Garofalo et al., 2024; Rachão et al., 2019; Ramos & Pinto, 2024). Our findings are consistent with these perspectives and further elaborate on how young tourists perceive and prioritize authenticity and sustainability in gastronomic products. This aligns with the emphasis in earlier studies on the importance of local and organic ingredients in fostering a sense of authenticity (Garofalo et al., 2024; Sims, 2009) while also extending these ideas to younger demographic groups whose influence on tourism is growing.

This research has revealed five main factors (see Figure 1) that mold the gastronomic preferences of young foodies in Portugal, each one reflecting different values and motivations.

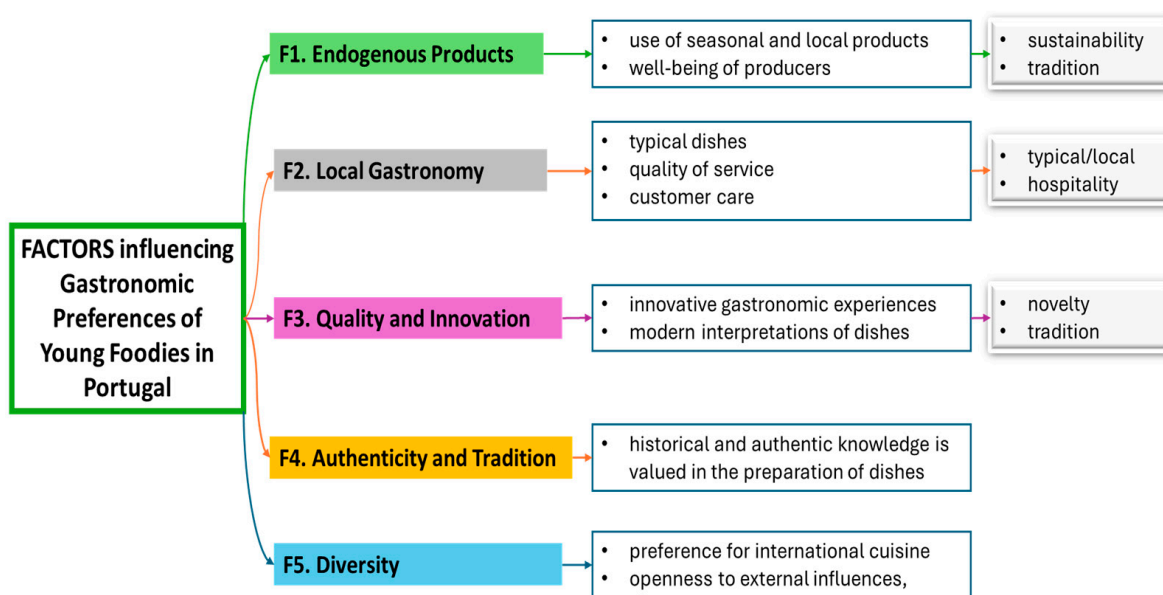


Figure 1. Main factors influencing the gastronomic preferences of young foodies in Portugal. Source: Authors’ preparation.

Throughout the literature review, the three perspectives presented emphasize different dimensions of gastronomic tourism and its impact on tourists' motivations: one focusing on the gastronomic product, another on local gastronomy and endogenous products, and a third on tourists' motivations as the main decision-making factor when choosing tourist destinations (Nesterchuk et al., 2022). The first two factors identified are in line with the current focused on 'local gastronomy and endogenous products', emphasizing cultural integration and regional cuisine as the main factors influencing tourist motivations (Duque et al., 2023; Ferreira & Sánchez-Martín, 2022; Pirnar & Çelebi, 2021):

Factor 1, 'Endogenous Products', highlights the strong importance tourists place on sustainability, emphasizing seasonal and local products with respect for producers' well-being. This aligns with motivations for sustainable consumption tied to cultural tradition, when the endogenous products have certificates or quality recognition, such as Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) or Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) (Duque et al., 2023; Perez-Galvez et al., 2020; Rinaldi, 2017; Sengel et al., 2015).

Factor 2, 'Local Gastronomy', underscores the connection between the dining experience and the appreciation of local dishes, hospitality, and service quality, stressing the appeal of traditional cuisine and the warmth of local service, helping to create a unique and attractive destination by deepening the connection between tourists and the local culture (Ferreira & Sánchez-Martín, 2022; Pirnar & Çelebi, 2021).

Expanding upon the work of previous researchers (Duque et al., 2023; Roy & Roy, 2024; Sengel et al., 2015), our study underscores the role of regional cuisine and its certification, such as Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) or Protected Designation of Origin (PDO), in shaping the perceptions of young foodies. While these certifications are widely recognized as symbols of quality, this study reveals that for younger tourists, such endorsements also signal a commitment to cultural preservation and sustainability, further motivating their destination choices.

Factors 3 and 4 are part of the theories based on the 'motivation of the gastronomic tourist', in which the motivational factors identified and the level of satisfaction they experience during their trips trigger feelings of loyalty to destinations (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2019; Goolaup & Mossberg, 2016):

Factor 3, 'Quality and Innovation', reflects a demand for creative modern reinterpretations of traditional dishes, showing that tourists seek novelty within a traditional framework; their satisfaction often being motivated by the quality and uniqueness of the gastronomic offerings (Jonson & Masa, 2023; Onat & Güneren, 2024; Pai et al., 2024; Prat & Valiente, 2014; Ullah et al., 2022).

Factor 4, 'Authenticity and Tradition', points to a preference for historical knowledge and authentic preparation methods in culinary experiences, emphasizing a commitment to culinary heritage, based on the desire and willingness to experience local gastronomy, which includes tasting local dishes, learning about culinary traditions, and taking part in multiple food-related activities (Jonson & Masa, 2023; Öğretmenoğlu et al., 2023; Pérez-Priego et al., 2023; Santa-Cruz et al., 2020).

Our findings complement earlier conclusions by (Garofalo et al., 2024; Jonson & Masa, 2023; Ullah et al., 2022), who identified that local gastronomy acts as a pull factor for tourist motivation. This study expands on this by introducing practical frameworks that can support local businesses, such as fostering partnerships between food producers, chefs, and tour operators to create integrated gastronomic routes. Such initiatives not only amplify the visibility of local products but also facilitate cultural exchange and economic growth in rural or culturally rich areas.

Finally, Factor 5, 'Diversity', captures a preference for international cuisine, showing an openness to culinary influences from various cultures. This factor was not identified

within the scope of the literature review, revealing itself as a new motivational driver for young gastronomic tourists. This study advances motivational theories by focusing specifically on how young gastronomic tourists value the interplay between tradition and innovation. Previous reviews have highlighted three main perspectives in gastronomic tourism research: gastronomic products, local gastronomy and endogenous products, and tourist motivations (Nesterchuk et al., 2022). Our research integrates these dimensions into a cohesive framework, highlighting how young tourists' preference for experimentation with traditional cuisines challenges and enriches the notion of authenticity in gastronomic tourism. For instance, while traditional studies (Garofalo et al., 2024; Santa-Cruz et al., 2020; Ullah et al., 2022), classify tourists as either food-centric or those for whom gastronomy is a secondary motive, our findings indicate a growing category of "blended foodies". These individuals seek culinary experiences that are deeply authentic but also infused with innovative twists, reflecting the dynamic culinary preferences of younger generations.

Overall, the PCA (Principal Component Analysis) results indicate that tourists value a balance between authenticity and innovation, as well as tradition and diversity, creating a dynamic blend of culinary preferences that supports both cultural continuity and global exploration in food tourism.

In addition, the correlation analysis carried out yielded insights into tourists' gastronomic preferences and the factors that shape their gastronomic experiences.

The strong, statistically significant correlation between Q3.2 (Interest in gastronomic routes) and Q3.3 (Participation in gastronomic events) ($r = 0.643$) indicates that individuals interested in gastronomic routes are also highly likely to participate in food-related events. This suggests a consumer profile that values communal, culturally rich experiences tied to local cuisine, reflecting a preference for immersive and interactive food tourism experiences (Garofalo et al., 2024; Jonson & Masa, 2023). Similarly, the strong correlation between Q4.1 (Importance of using local products) and Q4.2 (Valuing organic local products) ($r = 0.775$) reveals a strong link between appreciation of local sourcing and concern about sustainable, organic practices. This behavior highlights a growing consumer trend prioritizing authentic, eco-friendly consumption.

Moderate correlations further clarify these preferences. For example, the correlation between Q3.1 (Eating as a pleasurable moment) and Q4.1 (Importance of using local products) ($r = 0.459$) suggests that individuals who find pleasure in eating also tend to value the local origin of their ingredients, underlining a relationship between enjoyment of food and the quality or authenticity of its components (Berbel-Pineda et al., 2019; Jonson & Masa, 2023; Prat & Valiente, 2014). Additionally, the correlation between Q3.4 (Preference for traditional cuisine) and Q3.6 (Interest in trying traditional dishes) ($r = 0.631$) suggests a consumer tendency to appreciate traditional dishes while also enjoying new takes on typical foods, supporting the idea that tradition and innovation can coexist within a satisfying gastronomic experience.

Lastly, weaker correlations, though statistically significant, suggest that other factors outside this analysis may also influence food preferences. For instance, the slight correlation between Q3.7 (Preference for international cuisine) and Q3.1 (Eating as pleasure) ($r = 0.104$) indicates that the enjoyment of international food is only mildly related to the pleasure of eating itself. Similarly, the correlation between Q3.3 (Participation in gastronomic events) and Q3.1 (Eating as pleasure) ($r = 0.208$) shows only a slight connection, suggesting that the pleasure derived from eating does not strongly influence the desire to participate in food events. These weaker correlations indicate that personal or cultural factors, potentially unaddressed in this analysis, may also shape individual food choices and preferences, offering avenues for future research. Building on the dimensions outlined in previous work (Berbel-Pineda et al., 2019; Jonson & Masa, 2023; Onat & Güneren, 2024; Björk &

Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2019), our study elaborates on the behavioral intentions, motivations, and loyalty of young tourists. While earlier studies highlighted the general link between positive gastronomic experiences and future travel intentions (Berbel-Pineda et al., 2019; Onat & Güneren, 2024), this research delves deeper into how these factors influence younger demographics specifically. For example, Generation Z tourists are shown to favor destinations that prioritize innovation while maintaining cultural authenticity, suggesting a dual focus for destination planners.

In short, although the study is constrained by its specific geographical focus and sample size, it bridges gaps in earlier research by incorporating a generational perspective, offering targeted insights that align with but also expand on the foundational work of (Duque et al., 2023; Nesterchuk et al., 2022; Ramos & Pinto, 2024; Roy & Roy, 2024). These results provide valuable insights into the identification of consumer profiles with different gastronomic interests, as well as helping to understand the most relevant factors that explain the relationship between these variables, offering new clues in theoretical terms and practical support for more appropriate organization, planning, and management of tourist destinations.

6. Conclusions

Through this research it was possible to conclude that the motivations of young gastronomic tourists or young foodies gravitate towards:

1. A strong appreciation of authenticity and sustainability: consumers who show an interest in local and organic products tend to value authenticity and sustainable food practices.
2. A taste for cultural and social experiences: those who take part in gastronomic routes and events tend to be more involved in activities that connect the act of eating with cultural and collective experiences.
3. A link between tradition and innovation: the preference for traditional and regional dishes, combined with a taste for experimenting with new and diverse variations, reveals that innovation and tradition coexist in the motivations of many young gastronomic tourists.

While these findings provide valuable insights, the study is limited by the specific context and sample. The research focuses on young people under 26, with approximately two-thirds of respondents in this age range. This age group may not fully represent the broader culinary tourism population, and their motivations may differ significantly from those of older generations. Furthermore, the study is confined to Portugal, meaning that the conclusions are limited to this specific cultural and gastronomic context. As such, while the findings offer meaningful perspectives on young gastronomic tourists, they should be considered within these contextual constraints to avoid overgeneralization to the broader, global culinary tourism landscape.

6.1. Theoretical Contributions

This study advances motivation theory in tourism by focusing on Generation Z foodies, offering a deeper understanding of their specific motivations within the broader context of culinary tourism. The research also integrates gastronomic tourism into destination development models and contributes to conceptualization of the “foodie experience” as a distinct tourist phenomenon. By honing in on young foodies, this study refines existing theories on tourist motivation, specifically in the context of gastronomic-focused travel, and offers new insights into the driving forces behind young people’s choices when selecting destinations. Additionally, it expands destination development models by emphasizing the critical role of gastronomic tourism, helping to bridge the gap between gastronomy and

tourism development theories. It highlights how local cuisine and culinary experiences can become pillars of a destination's appeal, thus contributing to sustainable tourism development. Finally, this research provides a foundation for defining the "foodie experience" as a unique aspect of tourist behavior, supporting future research on how culinary-focused tourism impacts traveler satisfaction, destination loyalty, and perceptions of local culture.

6.2. Practical Contributions

The study provides valuable practical guidelines for destination marketing organizations (DMOs) seeking to attract and cater for young foodies. Through deeper understanding of the motivations driving this specific segment, DMOs can craft more targeted marketing campaigns, devise bespoke culinary itineraries, and promote local gastronomy in ways that resonate with young travelers. These tailored strategies will help position destinations as desirable culinary hubs, ultimately increasing their appeal to young food-oriented tourists.

In addition, the research underscores gastronomic tourism's potential to drive economic development, especially in rural or culturally rich areas that may be underrepresented in broader tourism markets. Specific recommendations include fostering partnerships with local food producers to create authentic culinary experiences, enhancing the visibility of regional cuisine through digital platforms and social media, and organizing food-focused events and festivals to attract both domestic and international visitors. These initiatives can stimulate local economies by boosting tourism-related spending, supporting small businesses, and promoting regional culinary heritage.

Furthermore, the study emphasizes the importance of sustainability in gastronomic tourism. It advocates a holistic approach that encourages local sourcing of ingredients, supports traditional cooking methods, and raises awareness about responsible consumption practices. Local businesses, policymakers, and tourism boards are encouraged to collaborate in developing frameworks that prioritize sustainable practices, ensuring that gastronomic tourism not only generates economic benefits but also respects environmental and cultural sustainability. These strategies could contribute to the long-term viability of culinary tourism, making it a powerful tool for sustainable development in destinations worldwide.

6.3. Study Limitations and Future Research Directions

Several limitations of this study must be considered when interpreting the findings: (1) Sample composition: The sample consists primarily of young individuals, with two-thirds under the age of 26, which may not reflect the broader demographic of culinary tourists. As such, the findings are specific to this group and may not be generalizable to older age groups or the general tourist population. Future research would benefit from a more diverse and balanced sample across different age groups to provide a more representative understanding of the broader "foodie" population. (2) Geographical context: The study is limited to Portugal, and the findings are specific to the local gastronomic context. This regional focus limits the generalizability of the conclusions to other destinations or broader global trends in culinary tourism. Future research could extend this work to include other countries or regions with different culinary traditions, offering a more comparative perspective on gastronomic tourism. (3) Correlational analysis: The study relies on correlational analysis to identify relationships between variables, showing associations but not establishing causality. While significant connections between preferences for local products and organic choices were found, future research should explore causal relationships to provide deeper understanding of the factors influencing culinary tourism. (4) Self-reported data: The study relies on self-reported data, which may not accurately reflect actual behaviors or preferences when traveling. Future research could incorporate behavioral observation to

complement self-reported data for a more comprehensive understanding of gastronomic tourist behavior.

These limitations provide opportunities for further research. Future studies could address these gaps by incorporating more diverse samples, using behavioral observation techniques, and expanding the geographical scope to better capture the motivations and preferences of a wider range of gastronomic tourists.

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Institutional Review Board Statement: The study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki, and approved by the Ethics Committee of Polytechnic University of Coimbra (protocol code D92/2024 and date of approval: 18 December 2024).

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement: The original contributions presented in this study are included in the article. Further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Appendix A

Table A1. Pearson's correlation matrix: relationship between tourists' motivations and destination attributes.

	Q3.1	Q3.2	Q3.3	Q3.4	Q3.5	Q3.6	Q3.7	Q3.8	Q3.9	Q3.10	Q4.1	Q4.2	Q4.3	Q4.4	Q4.5	Q4.6	Q4.7	Q4.8	Q4.9	Q4.10
Q3.1. Eating is a moment of pleasure	1	0.321**	0.208*	0.319**	0.206*	0.384**	0.104	0.216*	0.334**	0.261**	0.459**	0.345**	0.260**	0.237**	0.363**	0.266**	0.228**	0.242**	0.063	0.245**
Q3.2. Interest in gastronomic routes	0.321**	1	0.643**	0.362**	0.446**	0.488**	0.350**	0.587**	0.158	0.493**	0.518**	0.501**	0.434**	0.342**	0.425**	0.376**	0.467**	0.367**	0.164	0.269**
Q3.3. Participation in gastronomic events	0.208*	0.643**	1	0.360**	0.512**	0.314**	0.305**	0.361**	0.057	0.459**	0.494**	0.468**	0.363**	0.363**	0.426**	0.492**	0.486**	0.360**	0.241**	0.297**
Q3.4. Preference for typical and traditional regional cuisine	0.319**	0.362**	0.360**	1	0.271**	0.631**	0.016	0.279**	0.340**	0.166	0.521**	0.384**	0.212*	0.259**	0.464**	0.494**	0.394**	0.480**	0.031	0.346**
Q3.5. Interest in renowned/well-known restaurants	0.206*	0.446**	0.512**	0.271**	1	0.231**	0.261**	0.321**	0.130	0.430**	0.424**	0.411**	0.371**	0.256**	0.235**	0.375**	0.539**	0.396**	0.046	0.238**
Q3.6. Enjoy trying typical dishes from each region	0.384**	0.488**	0.314**	0.631**	0.231**	1	0.130	0.405**	0.464**	0.410**	0.599**	0.517**	0.412**	0.245**	0.462**	0.397**	0.469**	0.507**	0.061	0.411**
Q3.7. Preference for international cuisine (typical of other countries)	0.104	0.350**	0.305**	0.016	0.261**	0.130	1	0.166	-0.159	0.208*	0.091	0.130	0.142	0.149	0.218*	-0.005	0.281**	0.175*	0.357**	0.032
Q3.8. Interest in new gastronomic experiences, through modern recreations of traditional Portuguese cuisine	0.216*	0.587**	0.361**	0.279**	0.321**	0.405**	0.166	1	0.254**	0.594**	0.486**	0.484**	0.343**	0.345**	0.351**	0.277**	0.301**	0.278**	0.047	0.347**
Q3.9. Value the friendliness of restaurant service providers	0.334**	0.158	0.057	0.340**	0.130	0.464**	-0.159	0.254**	1	0.222*	0.415**	0.321**	0.257**	0.206*	0.298**	0.229**	0.213*	0.330**	-0.054	0.346**
Q3.10. Importance of innovation in dishes, namely through gourmet modifications	0.261**	0.493**	0.459**	0.166	0.430**	0.410**	0.208*	0.594**	0.222*	1	0.453**	0.436**	0.405**	0.326**	0.380**	0.297**	0.452**	0.345**	0.227**	0.293**
Q4.1. Importance of using regionally grown/produced products	0.459**	0.518**	0.494**	0.521**	0.424**	0.599**	0.091	0.486**	0.415**	0.453**	1	0.775**	0.466**	0.432**	0.544**	0.517**	0.513**	0.549**	0.053	0.491**
Q4.2. Valuing locally sourced organic products	0.345**	0.501**	0.468**	0.384**	0.411**	0.517**	0.130	0.484**	0.321**	0.436**	0.775**	1	0.471**	0.552**	0.419**	0.523**	0.464**	0.395**	0.056	0.514**
Q4.3. Dishes prepared individually and at the moment of tasting	0.260**	0.434**	0.363**	0.212*	0.371**	0.412**	0.142	0.343**	0.257**	0.405**	0.466**	0.471**	1	0.487**	0.552**	0.384**	0.531**	0.444**	0.221*	0.379**
Q4.4. The use of seasonal products in dish preparation influences the purchase decision	0.237**	0.342**	0.363**	0.259**	0.256**	0.245**	0.149	0.345**	0.206*	0.326**	0.432**	0.552**	0.487**	1	0.516**	0.650**	0.427**	0.312**	0.178*	0.422**
Q4.5. Importance of customs and traditions during the preparation and tasting process	0.363**	0.425**	0.426**	0.464**	0.235**	0.462**	0.218*	0.351**	0.298**	0.380**	0.544**	0.419**	0.552**	0.516**	1	0.522**	0.485**	0.524**	0.245**	0.390**
Q4.6. The use of local products influences the choice	0.266**	0.376**	0.492**	0.494**	0.375**	0.397**	-0.005	0.277**	0.229**	0.297**	0.517**	0.523**	0.384**	0.650**	0.522**	1	0.584**	0.520**	0.022	0.567**
Q4.7. Valuing historical knowledge as a guarantee of authentic preparation	0.228**	0.467**	0.486**	0.394**	0.539**	0.469**	0.281**	0.301**	0.213*	0.452**	0.513**	0.464**	0.531**	0.427**	0.485**	0.584**	1	0.659**	0.087	0.457**
Q4.8. Valuing the traditional appearance of dining establishments	0.242**	0.367**	0.360**	0.480**	0.396**	0.507**	0.175*	0.278**	0.330**	0.345**	0.549**	0.395**	0.444**	0.312**	0.524**	0.520**	0.659**	1	0.162	0.420**
Q4.9. The use of processed food products is not important, as long as the taste is maintained	0.063	0.164	0.241**	0.031	0.046	0.061	0.357**	0.047	-0.054	0.227**	0.053	0.056	0.221*	0.178*	0.245**	0.022	0.087	0.162	1	0.037
Q4.10. Considering the well-being of local producers and communities in the purchase decision	0.245**	0.269**	0.297**	0.346**	0.238**	0.411**	0.032	0.347**	0.346**	0.293**	0.491**	0.514**	0.379**	0.422**	0.390**	0.567**	0.457**	0.420**	0.037	1

** The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level ($p \leq 0.01$). * The correlation is significant at the 0.05 level ($p \leq 0.05$).

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