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## Food and wine tourism and urban local development

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### Abstract

*Food and wine tourism in Italy is characterized by the reference to natural foods and to the history of the cities. For most of the foods the bond with the territories and especially with the cities was and is crucial. Always food, typically produced in a family business, have the same name of the cities, as if the city was the real corporate brand of taste. This city brand is often copied in many countries of the world to product industrial supplies that have a wide commercial distribution. These products are impossible to reproduce. They are the result of the combination of local products, craft skills, bonds with legendary or real historical events. The reflection on the food and wine tourism and urban development, comes from these assumptions. With a socio-anthropological approach, some methods and qualitative techniques were used, as the historical comparative method, document analysis and participant observation. These methods were applied to investigate three different Italian towns that gave the name to three foods: Marino, with the wine festival, Fabriano with its production of salami and Ascoli Piceno with the production of the Ascoli olive. The Marino Grape Festival is based on legendary events, on the presence of ancient vineyards, on the representation in the style of 1500s square machines. In Fabriano is produced a famous salami dates back to medieval times, reproduced in paintings and frescoes and handed down to us with a disciplinary unchanged. Ascoli Piceno has given its name to a prized food preparation called Oliva Ascolana. Marino has thousands of visitors every year to drink and buy wine and to participate in the grape and wine festivals. Fabriano has a tourism that seeks the history, architecture, art and the taste of his salami. The Ascoli olive stuffed with meat and spices is great tourist vehicle to Ascoli Piceno.*

**Keywords:** City brand; food and wine; festival.

### Introduction

Wine tourism in Italy is characterized by the genuine and natural foods and joint reference to the history of the city. For most foods the bond with the territories and especially with the city was and is crucial. Always food, typically produced in craft or family members, are indicated by the name of the city, almost the city was a real brand of taste. This city brand is often copied in many countries of the world to industrial products that have widespread commercial use.

These products are actually difficult to reproduce. They are in fact the result of the union of local products, craft skills and manufacturing processes

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experienced and often consolidated, skills and links with actual historical or legendary facts. Other variables that affect the processes of identification between areas, cities with the identifying mark, and acting as a motor in local development processes are technological change and creativity.

According to the paradigm of Florida (Florida R., 2003) creative talent and presence of technologies are at the basis of any development process, together with the territorial location, which is fundamental for the unequivocal identification of a product. In fact, the identification of a food production with a territory or a city seem to add richness, the added value of local traditions, the recognition of innovation in production processes and final products.

“The tradition”, Everardo Minardi writes about it, «would play also the social and cultural mediation that the crisis of standardized mass products requires ever more insistent in order to correspond to an extended demand for customization of goods and services». (Minardi E. Vardanega A., Salvatore R., Bortoletto N., 2007:10).

The “local tradition” factor within a system of production and commercialization on the other hand does not constitute an inseparable and inevitable link that brings a product into smaller areas, where technologies and knowledge systems, professional skills constitute the structural basis of the development processes.

The introduction of the variables related to the local tradition does not necessarily involve a reduction in the patterns and paths of a distant past now no longer workable, but it might help to achieve *“the most determined and full exploitation of all the resources considered marginal or not fully recognized that have never been subject to some mobilization, neither towards market integration, or in some way to an opposition strategy to the market”* (Minardi 10)

In other words, the recognition and actualization of the components of the tradition linked to a town or a territory is discovering and recognizing what creativity (sometimes over the centuries) has been able to build within the intersubjective systems, interpersonal relationships and of all those specific variables that make the cities attractive.

Finally, not the negation of resources historically related to creativity of the territories, nor the repetition of patterns and lifestyles that deny the modernization process in the name of a better mythologized past, but the rediscovery of variables under-utilized and sometimes unknown because fruit of individual or small local communities creativity.

This development paradigm that links a product and a place to make it attractive by the food tourism flows can certainly be considered a useful tool in order to redefine the socio-economic and cultural policies in order to achieve a new or renewed development of the cities that are affected by particularly acute post-industrial decay processes (Gui B. and Sudgen R. (eds), 2005:150-173).

It aims finally to rediscover and connect the cultural resources to produce very attractive symbolic goods, to reinterpret the social practices not directly related to the market. The aim is to identify the connecting systems between

these components and “new cluster that can give life to unprecedented development processes” (Minardi E. et al., cit., 2007:11).

In this way it encourages the local attractiveness (and the consequent tourism flows of taste), through certain specific food products. It is also to be noted that the cultural dimension of development (and the food and wine is a cultural dimension) is not possible without a certain horizontality also made of conventional production systems, supply chains, adequate services and infrastructure. Finally, *“the ability to mobilize a given culture - the one that Triglia defines spontaneous generation for membership - in order to develop a given system, it passes through the material factors (or generative for experimentation) that lead to the success of a network”* (Bortoletto N., in Minardi E. et al., cit., 2007:53).

In the general trend, that has seen in recent years, an accentuation of the attractiveness for everything related to nutrition and an increased interest in enogastronomy and phenomena of “taste”, - along with a veritable explosion of its business -, the manifestations of food and wine culture come therefore to set as decisive for the identification and creation of new spaces and innovative and almost always misunderstood ways.

Linked to the local community creativity and know-how popular, but projected on large screens opened by new technologies and the experimentation of roads and their mechanisms of other business sectors, oenological and food products, their processing and their preparations increasingly form the only and true identity of the city and its spaces.

The combination of these variables determines the districts and identifies production areas, which are qualified as “urban wine and food vein”. There are many examples in the Italian and international scene, from Dijon mustard to the Cremona mustard, balsamic vinegar of Modena to oysters from Brittany, from Parma and Reggio Emilia cheese (Parmesan cheese) to the Paella Valenciana, from salted codfish of Gaspè to “oliva taggiasca” (specific cultivar of Arma di Taggia, Liguria).

### **Food and wine culture and the construction of the urban brand.**

The construction of the urban food and wine brand is very often linked to those events that are sometimes seen as “spontaneous” expressions of popular culture, where you intend to populate a position of subordination with respect to the “high” food culture represented by old “circles” or newer fraternities and clubs, reserved to restricted intellectual elites (kitchen Academy, Chaîne des rôti-seurs, etc), where gastronomy becomes refined status symbol for a few acolytes or enlightened and wealthy gourmets (Di Francesco G., 2011).

In fact, in times of globalization and homogenisation also of alimentary type, these distinctions tend gradually to fade and eventually disappear in the movement towards certain wine styles that make exclusive and “trendy” just the “popular taste”, the “rediscovery” of hypothetical rural traditions, the search for the “genuine” and “typical”, together with a kind of propensity to form and educate the taste. In cultural terms, such training proposals are also

characterized in terms of aesthetics and taste, according to Bourdieu's lesson (Bourdieu P., 1983), becomes social distinction.

On the other hand, it is known as gastronomy [from the greek gaster = stomach and nomia = rule, administration, ed] is a cultural thing, "an expression of creativity and innovative culture" (Sciolla L., 2002:49) and eat «does not only mean feeding, but it means communicating, (Di Nallo E., 1986, p. 35) stay together and symbolically reproducing the strong points of your company's life. (...) The food offers values that go far beyond nutrition only understood in physical-chemical terms» (Di Nallo E., Cavassini, 1992:1-2)

When you take into account nutrition immediately you notice a big difference between human groups, that diversity is not given only by the natural environment and its resources but also from the production choices, from the edibility of the substances, the way to prepare foods, the way of presenting them and share them.

Beyond this diversity, however, is possible to trace common traits that characterize the local cuisine such as: "socialization, union, communion, convivial dimension that is established between people". [Vito Teti, 1999:88] Indeed it is «around the table that are formed and cemented groups, sometimes weave plots, are established business, you make promises and oaths. Around the table you create or consolidate friendships and relationships»; sharing food is crucial in the creation of networks of friendship and kinship.

The ability to create and innovate the food culture, is due to the «presence of contradictions and inconsistencies of cultural systems, the differences between groups, the presence of intellectual elites and minority groups and/or marginalized within a society, the emergence of new movements that may arise precisely to counter and replace a doctrine or ethic considered ambiguous or inconsistent» [Sciolla L., 2002:49] and that therefore may propose, reproduce and modify values and symbols on the basis of the evolution of social life. This means that the gastronomic phenomena, as indeed any other cultural phenomenon, is constantly changing, editing and processing on the basis of not always and not completely readable variables.

The analysis of the gastronomic phenomena cannot neglect either the economic and commercial trends, nor the ideological references, which sometimes affect them and influence, encouraging them, hampering them or modifying them.

It is in this logic and following these paths that it builds the link between product and cities for the creation of the urban food and wine brand.

#### *Food and wine urban development models*

This is precisely the reflection on the way the food tourism is related to local development. For this purpose, with a sociological and anthropological approach, they are used some methods and qualitative techniques, such as the historical comparative method, document analysis and participant observation.

These methods were applied to investigate three different Italian towns which gave their names to many food products: Marino, with the wine festival, Fabriano with its production of salami and Ascoli Piceno with the production of the “oliva Ascolana” (Di Francesco G., 2007 e 2013).

The first place is Marino, in the province of Rome, a town of 43,000 inhabitants where it produces for centuries a wine that takes its name from the same locality and which is known worldwide as one of the fine wines of the Castelli Romani. In the contemporary Italy in the town Marino comes an event that is celebrated as one of the first food and wine festivals of the twentieth century: the grape festival. We are in 1925, in full fascist era. Fascism in fact ordered that all Italian countries celebrate the grape festival, which later became, for certain specified characteristics, true symbol of some locations.

The first festival of contemporary Italy, at a time when it also gave impetus to tourism, especially rail, driven by the Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro, an association established to keep "alive the folklore of our lands with appropriate events and re-enactments; It organizes exhibitions and more that can practically benefit the problem of culture». [Cipriani R., 1979:16], was conceived by the poet and playwright of Roman origin Marinese Leone Ciprelli. The festival that united folklore, wine and typical dishes, arrived in 2016 to the 93 th edition, in some ways represents the prototype of the festivals in the contemporary world. The event arouses a huge uproar, so much so that one of the wonders of the festival, the fountains, so almost "miraculous", throw wine instead of water, are celebrated even in a well-known song of 1926, "*Na gita a li Castelli*", Franco Silvestri, now passed from the category of roman ballads in the repertoire of traditional Italian songs, with the lines: "*Lo vedi ecco Marino la sagra c'è dell'uva / fontane che danno vino quant'abbondanza c'è (...)*". which makes famous the city around the whole world (<http://www.comune.marino.rm.it/site.view/fd=urp/ff=comune/class=U2FncmU/id=19.htm>)

Structured according to a precise script, the festival includes and still includes:

- a religious program (a solemn procession that pays homage to the Madonna del SS. Rosario with the '700 with a car brought to the shoulder);
- historical references (re-enactment of the return of Marcantonio Colonna, who won the battle of Lepanto, with a parade);
- entertainment and popular games (parade of traditional carts of wine, bands and folk groups);
- promotion of food and wine events (distribution of grapes and wine tasting);
- an amazing and miraculous *coup de théâtre*, (miracle of the fountains that throw wine) tended to arouse amazement and to remain in the memory of the “guests” (Di Francesco, 2013).

The construction of the festival, as you can see, was based on various events that were related to factors of value-type, capable of attracting the attention of

visitors and promote the wine of Marino, famous among those of the Castelli Romani. In fact, it was aimed on religion, history, or rather on a strictly local event in some way linked to the larger national history (especially to victory against a fearsome enemy, as the Turkish infidels) scenically represented in costume, on entertainment and on rediscovery of folk traditions, typical products.

Despite some variation, these elements will come later in the construction of all subsequent festivals, as real constituent factors of the food and wine festival and the grape in particular.

Marketing considerations aside, the Wine was also based on a supposed revaluation of the rural environment, the rural world where were tied the grape growing and wine production. It was in fact referring to a "rural culture" which was a pure mental construct, within a mythical golden age, devoid of an objective historical and social foundation.

"The research (...) on the rural folklore" it was noted however "show the state of underdevelopment, the conditions that determine emigration, the endemic poverty that large sections of the population is gripping. (...) The same leisure events, apparently joyful, hiding this reality of economic subjection. Many cultural products are clearly crossed by a wider layer of ideal dependence. Some expressions, such as "*maggi*", arising from the poems of chivalry, is a fallout of the literature cultured and prove functional to the established order, during decantation and subjugation. There, Christians always defeat the "infidels", the champion is fighting to do justice against the "Saracen", the police and the good guys always win the forces of disorder and evil, in the general commotion". [Nesti, 1979:91]

The Marino Grape Festival, is based on legendary events, on the presence of ancient vineyards, on the representation according the style of the 1500s square machines.

Another example of how a city place name participates in building the brand identity of a product is related to the salami which takes its name from the small town of Fabriano, 31,000 inhabitants in the Marche region, listed by UNESCO in the list of Creative Cities for the category "handicrafts, popular arts and traditions".

The history of the Fabriano salami, like any traditional sausage, is lost in the mists of time. Undeniable, however, is its location in the geographical area of the town and the area that surrounds the Marche Apennines.

According to the product disciplinary drawn up by 17 local producers, the salami is recognized as a specifically "Fabrianese" typical product in 1877 and "lands within the folk tradition of Marche city thanks to Oreste Marcoaldi, author of "Customs and prejudices", "The most genuine words of the vernacular", "Songs and proverbs of Fabriano people"; in his little dictionary, the only voice "salsiccione, salami", it is stated that the salami is a Fabrianese specialty, as mortadella is Bologna specialty, zampone is Modena specialty". The Marcoaldi volumes have the merit to have given an assignment to some

salami and to have it made known throughout Italy. In 1881, the salami of Fabriano is mentioned in a letter by Giuseppe Garibaldi, who thanked his friend Benigno Bignonzetti (from Fabriano), for “the good salami received” as a gift.

It is “*salami packaged with completely lean pork, that is, fat and nerves taken off, tamp finely, one hundred and twenty pieces of lard added, twenty four in the form of dice, flavored with salt and black pepper*” (<http://www.salamedifabriano.it/>).

In the disciplinary still read it in traditional places of production «will still use the meat from native breeds of the hinterland Ancona from the typical dark color and coarse hair; this is because in the past was predominantly the black race, but today the pig, that is bred and used for the production of the Fabriano salami, is derived from the use of indifferent white and dark races as long as born in Apennines of Umbria and Marche territory».

As for the ideal age for slaughter is the one that historically “was defined by the tradition as” sopranno animal, “a pig with at least 12 months of age, fed with products derived from locally sourced crops strictly GMO free. We use only the best parts and top quality of pigs resulting from the shoulder (only the “Fiocco”), the thigh with the addition of the “Fondello”. Absolutely prohibited the use or addition of non top quality cuts. The fat is a percentage of about 8-12%, is taken from the back-lumbar adipose band and cut into cubes (in an amount proportional to the dough slender) of 0.5-1 cm” (Ibidem).

In short, it is not a product of any, but of a tasty meat and an important element for the identity of the country. A noble sausage, made by grinding the best part of the pig: the prosciutto 'which duly crushed, it only adds back bacon cut into cubes, salt, pepper and sometimes garlic.

The mixed dough is stuffed in a bowel which in turn is washed and passed in wine or vinegar, after having tied at the ends. The salami of Fabriano (30/35 cm long and with a diameter approximately 6 cm) are hung in pairs to dry some day at low heat to remove moisture. They are ready in 50 to 60 days, the ideal maturation period.

Consistent and rough to the touch, at the best moment of ripening is covered with a light dark brown mold. According to the description of the Slowfood is an excellent product, «the flesh is firm and tenacious, the color is dark red, with prominently white lard and fine grain. The cut is very fragrant, evolved and leaves no warn hints of flesh. In some cases, it can be felt slight smoky notes. The taste is sweet, vanilla and persistent. (...) Best salami, in fact, have always been products with heavy pigs (150-180 lbs) bred in the area». (<http://www.fondazione-slow-food.com/it/presidi-slow-food/salame-di-fabriano/>)

The product recalls one particular tourism very cultured and attentive to the natural products or niche, to artistic events related to its medieval and Renaissance painters and architecture, and finally to the demonstrations of traditional folklore. Here, as in Marino and in Ascoli Piceno (third example that we want to bring) there is the persistence and re-edition of challenges dating back to ancient times as the “*Palio di San Giovanni Battista*” (patron saint of the



city) and the Challenge of the Mallet, where 4 blacksmiths, one for each district, will compete in forging a key, which you will use to trigger a mechanism that will raise the banner of the neighborhood in the shortest possible time.

So, also in this case the exposed rules are valid and the presence of a religious program (celebration of the patron); historical and traditional references (the Palio of the Mallet refers to the traditional presence of blacksmiths in the area); promotional events of local products; the contraption of the mallet that triggers high the banner of the district who wins the prize.

"Oliva Ascolana" is the latest example of a food product linked to a city. In this case the raw material is the tender olive of Ascoli, valuable cultivar produced in "Picena" area (from Fermo to some areas of the province of Teramo), which is submitted to a particular softening process, said "curing", with a solution of sodium, in a concentration varying from 1.5% to 3% hydroxide, and the next phase of conservation under brine (<http://www.monnaoliva.it/cultivar-ascolana.html>).

Then the core is removed from the olives with a particular process. The pulp curls thus obtained are filled with a mixture of beef and pork and mixed with egg and parmesan. The olives so filled are then passed into the egg, flour, breadcrumbs and then fried in olive oil.

The preparation goes back to the creativity of a chef of the early nineteenth century, with the leftover meat for a hearty feast filled appropriately ground green olives in brine. The dish aroused so much interest and so much wonder as to be prepared by all people of Ascoli and become the symbol of the most important festivals and weddings. (<http://www.miglioriolive.it/olive-ascolane>).

The Ascolan stuffed olives are a gourmet delicacy of Ascoli territory and they are one of the most representative dishes of the Piceno nationwide. "Of their quality wrote Cato, Varro, Martial, Petronius Arbiter says that, in the Satyricon, how they were always present on the table of Trimalchio. Sisto V mentions them in a letter of thanks addressed to the Elders of Ascoli. Great estimators of specialty were also Gioacchino Rossini and Giacomo Puccini. Giuseppe Garibaldi was able to taste them, both in brine and stuffed, 25 January 1849, during his short stay Ascolan. The general was impressed and tried to cultivate in Caprera the seedlings he had by his faithful friend Candido Augusto Vecchi, but failed in his intent.

The production of stuffed olives in brine remained a domestic formula or craft until the second half of 1800, then also acquired a mode of industrial type.

Stuffed olives have subsequently experienced a major national and international circulation to become one of the most imitated and replicated preparations. In fact, the production areas of stone fruit, protected by the DOP, are limited to the territory of three provinces with the amount of product that seems far below the amounts destined to be ascolan fried olives.

Excluding imitations or mystifications, the product is the real food brand of the city of Ascoli Piceno, where every year there are several events related to



stuffed olives or in which the same preparations are served and attract a considerable flow of tourists.

In particular, reference is made to “*Ascoliva Festival*” which takes place in summer in the enchanting surroundings of Arringo square, one of the most beautiful historic squares in the town of Marche. The event presents numerous initiatives of producers and restaurateurs, including the preparation and tasting workshops, tourist paths equipped to know the result and methods of cultivation, book presentations, conferences, etc. Place of the event is the symbol of the Olive Village with exhibition stands and taste routes. (<http://ascolivafestival.wixsite.com/ascolivafestival>).

The Ascolan fried olives is however also a street food, that you can eat while walking among the medieval buildings and the classic streets of the city, taking one at a time from the characteristic cones of the street vendors.

“The first time we sold the stuffed olives in cone” recalls Nazareno Migliori, called Ze', one of the historic roasters of the ascolan fried “was during the Quintana of 1985. We were dressed as medieval innkeepers, and we were put under the arches of the Arengo Palace (the city hall), and was an instant success” (<http://www.miglioriolive.it/olive-ascolane>).

The words of Ze' Migliori, with reference to Quintana, the traditional chivalrous tournament with the ring race and procession in medieval garments, they still lead us back again to the typical paradigm of every food product which is also an urban brand.

Also for the city of Ascoli Piceno, the product and food preparations in their tourism function are related to local folk traditions, the revival of ancient rites, to the wonders of historical parades and equestrian challenges which also expresses a sense of collective identity a community.

Perhaps this is what causes the flow of tourists in the cities identified as paradigmatic of the possibility of linking tourism development with local products.

And thus, Marino has thousands of visitors every year to drink and buy wine and to participate in the grape and wine festivals; Fabriano has a tourism that seeks the history, architecture, art and the taste of his salami; Ascoli Piceno finds in ascolan stuffed olives with meat and spices a great vehicle for promoting tourism.

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