

## CULINARY TOURISM IN ROMANIA – PROFESSIONAL POINTS OF VIEW

Conference paper

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### **Abstract**

The purpose – Romania has many resources for tourism development. The main focus of this paper is to provoke a debate about the opportunity of the culinary tourism development in Romania. Also, we intent to do an analysis regarding the premises for culinary tourism as niche in Romanian tourism.

Design – During the past twenty years, Romania has issued various strategies/policies of development at national, regional, or local levels, but these, more or less, approached the development of the tourism sector as a whole. We open this paper from the question if in Romania, at the present moment, culinary tourism has the role that it really can have it, and if not, what solutions can we find to solve this?

Method – The paper is the result of an empirical research, an exploratory study that includes literature review, meaning of seeking the good practices reported, and finally a SWOT analysis.

Approach – Our paper attempts to outline the elements, which coordinate the Romanian tourism industry linked to this specific direction and also for future studies we intend to identify possibilities of development, namely culinary tourism based on application of some strong arguments consistent with local, regional and national characteristics. We chose this topic because we want to raise awareness of the stakeholders involved concerning developing this area, which we think can be transformed into a strategic direction of development.

Findings – In Romania natural tourism resources are those which, over the years have been preserved in one form or another, untouched by human activities. These resources can be sold directly in tourism activity as "raw material" to create various tourism products.

All this can be exploited, but we cannot compete with other countries that are more popular among tourists for the same kind of tourism.

Judging all these we think it is normal to move towards a kind of tourism that we can differentiate and attract the interest of those who want to travel and have new experience, unique and authentic. We strongly believe that in Romania this possible direction can be culinary tourism.

The originality of this paper – in our knowledge, at the present moment to deal a niche tourism, as culinary tourism could be in Romania, is a still a neglected objective, however this approach and this suggestion are novelty, as we demonstrated.

**Keywords** culinary tourism, niche tourism, Romania, SWOT, 3E theory

### **INTRODUCTION**

Exceptional touristic resources of Romania, (natural based tourism and likewise some heritage resources) are those which over the years have been preserved in one form or another, untouched by human activities. These resources can be sold directly in tourism activities as "raw material", to create various tourism products. All this can be

exploited, but we cannot compete with other countries that are more popular among tourists for the same kind of tourism<sup>1</sup>. (Tomescu: 2000)

In all these past years, which saw changes in the socio-economical and political systems in Romania, the expectations of the contribution of tourism to GDP<sup>2</sup> were not fulfilled, therefore Romania is still looking for a more efficient model of development of this economic sector that is tourism. We started this paper from the question if in Romania, at the present moment, culinary tourism has the role that it really can have, being preoccupied to find solutions; we choose this topic because we want to draw the attention of the stakeholders concerned with developing this domain, which we think can be transformed into a strategic direction of development. Also, such a strategy would undoubtedly be able to boost other economic sectors beside tourism and the local development. For sure, developing this type of tourism and having profitable results relies on taking action at national, regional, local as well as international level, with state help, by developing adequate policies. Both food and tourism as the fundamental two elements of culinary tourism have a diverse range of links with the local economy, which implicitly leads to the value of these assets. The two elements named above associated to a local development strategy, as well as to an adequate policy of local authorities (which in our opinion should support this activity responsibly) have an important impact that leads to the growth of economic activities in the area (the visitor spending combined with increasing economic activity which leads to more tax for local authorities).

In Romania's recent years, different strategies/politics of development at national or regional, or local levels have been issued, but these approached more or less tourism sector development<sup>3</sup>.

Judging from these, we think it is normal to move towards a kind of tourism that we can differentiate and attract the interest of those who want to travel and have new, unique and authentic experiences. We strongly believe that in Romania this possible direction can be culinary tourism.

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<sup>1</sup> Tomescu, A.M., *Calitatea produsului turistic*- Editura Universitatii din Oradea, 2000, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> In 2013, tourism contributed 5.1 % of Romania's GDP, which places the country in the 154th position out of a ranking of 184 countries analysed by the World Travel and Tourism Council (Hungary (10.6 percent); Albania (16.7 percent), Bulgaria (13.3 percent), Czech Republic (8.4 percent) and Slovakia (6 percent). Data in Report "Travel&Tourism" Economic Impact 2014 –ROMANIA, p.1;source: <http://static.sursazilei.ro/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/romania20141.pdf> .

<sup>3</sup> For instance one target of the national development strategy in Romanian 2007-2013 is to reduce disparities between regions, also find a way to do this indicates the regional and local tourism development by increasing tourist attractiveness of regions through creation an appropriate infrastructure and improve specific services, development of alternative forms of tourism, protection and promotion of natural and cultural heritage locally and regionally.(National Development Plan 2007-201- issued December, 2005 by Romanian Government).

## CULINARY TOURISM AS A NICHE

Culinary tourism, referred also as gastronomic tourism, food tourism, or wine and food tourism, is a niche area of tourism. (Hjalager & Richards, 2002; Hall et al., 2003; Hall & Mitchell, 2005). Actually, it is a way to of making difference in the touristic offer among plenty of other products and forms tourism that compete directly to win the race in attracting consumers. Culinary tourism as a form of speciality tourism considered a niche tourism and is in antithesis with “mass tourism”, and this comes as a support to our concept namely: “3E Theory<sup>4</sup>”, concept regarding the people`s desire to travel. (Botezat & Tomescu: 2003).

In the framework of the affirmation: “gastronomy is a strategic element in defining the brand and image of a destination”<sup>5</sup>, culinary tourism can become a significant contributor to the localization and to the differentiation process, as a response to a extreme increase of the competitiveness. Also, it is important to stimulate and increase awareness and interest in maintaining the traditions and the authenticity, which both are part of maintaining diversity and variety directed to increase local pride and keeping cultural identity, both considered very important in this era of globalization. Already there is the evidence suggesting that motivation to travel for gastronomic reasons is a valid argument. Most people consider the pleasure to eat, the taste, the aromas, the feature of the food, the quality, the variety and the diversity being notable as travel experience, in fact there is about seeking for unique culinary experiences and enjoyment of taste.

Worldwide, a variety of gastronomic activities such as: food festivals, food tours, visit food producers, visit food markets, wineries, food fairs, thematic museums (chocolate, bread, beer, pastas, mustard etc.) are being promoted.

To discover a destination through its cuisine is considered by many a challenging, interesting and satisfying experience. Consumption of food can be an unforgettable experience. Food and drink are means to penetrate the culture of the place in a more profound and more complex way, through the senses, what it is not a mere a physical or physiological experience.

Also, the results of the data analysis reveal that gastronomy plays a major role in tourism<sup>6</sup>. (Jakša Kivela& John C. Crotts 2006). Culinary tourism is a niche tourism, and the needs that move the travellers in this segment are situated in the Maslow`s hierarchy of needs at superior levels (ego needs, self-esteem, accomplishment etc.).

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<sup>4</sup> 3E = Enjoyment, Entertainment, Evolution. (presented by Botezat E and Tomescu A.M., at Conference "Educating for Tomorrow`s Tourism", Ohrid, Republic of Macedonia, 2003).

<sup>5</sup> Global Report on Food Tourism, UNWTO, 2012, p. 12.

<sup>6</sup> Jakša, K. & Crotts, J.C.; Tourism and Gastronomy: Gastronomy's Influence on How Tourists Experience a Destination, *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, August 2006 Vol. 30 No. 3, 2006, 354- 377.

Basically, there are three types of tourists after their culinary interests:

- those who participate by chance at culinary experiences in their travels;
  - those who enjoy the opportunity to taste traditional foods and drinks of the places visited(although they do not choose their destinations according to this);
  - those who deliberately seek such culinary experiences.
- Hall (2005) classifies tourists from culinary interests and involvement:
- Gastronomes – High interest/ high involvement;
  - Indigenous Foodies –High & Moderate interest/ high involvement;
  - ‘Tourist’ Foodies – Low interest/ low involvement
  - Familiar foods – Low interest/ low involvement.

“Niche tourism is an economy of imagination where individual preferences and practices are co-ordinated, packaged and sold.”<sup>7</sup>

## ROMANIA AND CULINARY TOURISM

Since ancient times, the population on Romania’s territory has seen an interest in culinary arts. There are remaining information about Dacians<sup>8</sup> and their feasts organised by kings at various political or religious events. On the other hand, written sources by foreign travellers in old chronicles talk about inns or organized feasts. Since nineteenth century, there was a systematic research devoted to culinary culture of the Romanians by a - range of people<sup>9</sup> (Mihai Lupescu, Simion Florea Marian, Dimitrie Gusti, Al. O. Teodoreanu, Octavian Stoica, Marius Vulpe, Radu Florescu, Radu Anton Roman etc.).

Romania cannot compete with countries with tradition in tourism, so we need to search and find niches that are suitable to actively support and develop tourism. In Romania everyone is talking about the possibilities and the great potential in the development of the tourism market, but unfortunately, as in many other areas things remain at the level of conjecture and discussion. At present, in Romania there - is little concern regarding the niche that is the culinary tourism.

At first we focused on searching for information in the literature, this paper is an exploratory study, an empirical research based on secondary sources (literature review conducted in subject area) and observation of the Romanian good practices regarding culinary tourism.

Romanian people like to eat. Like in many other cultures, shared meals and spent moments around the table are important moments of life. A great number of proverbs and sayings have developed around the activity of eating. Milestones events of life

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<sup>7</sup> Robinson, M. –Foreword p.XX, in Novelli, M. (editor);”Niche Tourism: Contemporary Issues, Trends and Cases”, Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford, 2005.

<sup>8</sup> Dacians were the ancient inhabitants of Dacia (located in the area in and around the Carpathian Mountains and east of there to the Black Sea). This area includes the present-day countries of Romania and Moldova, as well as parts of Sarmatia (mostly in eastern Ukraine), Moesia (Eastern Serbia, Northern Bulgaria), Slovakia and Poland.

<sup>9</sup> Anton Roman, R., *Bucate, vinuri si obiceiuri românesti* – ediție revizuită, Editura PAIDEIA, 2001, p. 167.

such as baptisms, weddings and funerals are occasions for each small or large Romanian community to get around a rich meal; religious holidays (Christmas, Easter, Mother Mary, The days of Saints as Constantin & Elena, St. John, St. Nicholas, and over 15 considered important saints etc.) come with spiritual moments, but also with joy to taste various delicious dishes. A shared meal is a beloved custom among Romanians (family, acquaintances, fellow workers etc.), being an opportunity to socialize.

It is often said that Romanian cuisine has been influenced by different cultures, with which it came into contact (Turkish, French, Austrian, Hungarian, Slovak, Russian, etc.). But also it is said that we not only have assimilated those particular characteristics, but we have enriched and perfected them, thus resulting a cuisine based on diversity of local resources, on Romanian habits<sup>10</sup> (Stanciulescu, 2011). Due to many cultures and traditions that came into contact with a great variety can be found, but what can be said is that foreign dishes were adapted to almost all Romanian habits. This is the reason that it has changed and adapted. We thought that this would be one explanation for why the largely foreign tourists visiting Romania appreciated with pleasure the traditional food, in addition of being informed that many of dishes are made by using organic raw materials. The latter is yet another reason to appreciate cooked food that might taste so different also because many Romanian cooks use the Slow Food procedures. Unfortunately, Romanian cuisine is too little known and promoted abroad.

Due to climatic conditions, to resources and to the geographic relief of Romania, a specific cuisine, over the centuries, was established here,. It may notes the variety of assortments of raw materials for food (meat, fish, venison, pork, beef, lamb etc. alongside aromatic plants - as spicy, a wide range of vegetables, poultry, dairy products etc.), all being very tasteful making the good food and thus highly appreciated by people.

In the last seven years in Romania efforts were made to offer customers more and more products that address life style, culinary culture (even gourmet), the wine civilization etc, issues almost totally neglected by most Romanians for nearly seventy years (1945-1989, in the communist era; and the last twenty years).

Also we note in recent years a growing tendency of interest towards this tourism niche market. Thus, we found a gastronomic calendar of 2014 that covers various culinary events, which will be held in Romania this year. Another event we found is the International Congress of Culinary Traditions (the first congress) held in Bucharest, where for four days (13-17<sup>th</sup> of March 2014) representatives from 37 countries attended talks. The result of this event will be the first edition of the Encyclopaedia of World Culinary Traditions which will be launch in Luxembourg this year. On this occasion, have been inventoried major gastronomic events that traditionally take place in seven regions of Romania (Transylvania, Moldavia, Bucovina, Oltenia, Banat, Maramures, Danube Delta).

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<sup>10</sup> Stanciulescu, G. (ed.), *Cercetare exploratorie pe un eșantion de disponibilitate privind ospitalitatea și industria ospitalității în județul Bihor*, Editura Universității, Oradea, 2011, p. 89.

On one hand among the specific activities of culinary tourism, we can see that in Romania are organized only few and this leaves room for improvement. Thus there are reported several wine routes (Alba<sup>11</sup>, Buzau<sup>12,13</sup>, Prahova<sup>14,15</sup>, Vrancea<sup>16</sup>, Satu Mare<sup>17</sup>) which are the result of the last years of EU-funded projects, capitalizing Romanian millenary tradition of cultivation of the vine, and wine production. Romania currently has an area planted with vines over 180,000 ha<sup>18</sup> (before 1989 this area was over 300,000 ha), which ranks Romania the top 5 in Europe and 10th in the world. In the ten historical regions Romania has over 43 large vineyards and more than 100 smaller vineyards (100-500 ha)<sup>19</sup>.

No other museums or thematic roads are further highlighted (?!), with two exceptions - which are not related to culinary tourism but, in our view it may to use for this niche activity. Thus ie. The Egg Museum of Bukovina, which presents very old tradition of the people of country to paint Easter eggs. Another example is the Hunting Museum, a thematic museum in Posada, Prahova County, who is exhibits some of the most valuable hunting trophies known in the world. Romania may still be considered a paradise for wildlife hunting, still being one of the few countries of Europe, where the habitat and the wildlife range is unaltered by human civilization. In these museums activities related to food preparation according to various recipes ("specialized restaurants", or "cooking workshops", or "gourmet workshops" based on typical hunting recipes/wild dishes, respectively food based on eggs) might be organized.

On the other hand we already took into account the food fairs and festivals that are organized in Romania. Most of food fairs and festivals are organized in the idea to preserve and convey authenticity and ancestral traditions. These events are becoming more and more frequent, organized at Peasant Museum in Bucharest, or in highly visible places in the city, but also in localities / communities that are beginning to understand this niche and want to exploit it profitably.

The cooking workshops are not a usual activity organized for adults but there are dozen for children as well, in the idea and the spirit of educating the young consumers. In the rural tourism activities we can indicate several initiatives to present: the pig slaughter tradition around Christmas which is part of this theme<sup>20</sup> life and activities of a sheepfold, with specific foods as rustic tours<sup>21</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.taravinului.ro/> (accessed 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2014)

<sup>12</sup> <http://travelbuzau.com/oferte-turistice/crame-turism-oenologic> (accessed 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2014)

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.galdrumulvinului.ro/> (accessed 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2014)

<sup>14</sup> [http://www.ampathos.ro/drumul-vinului---prahova-partea-i---septembrie-2012\\_132.html](http://www.ampathos.ro/drumul-vinului---prahova-partea-i---septembrie-2012_132.html) (accessed 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2014)

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.galdrumulvinului.ro/> (accessed 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2014)

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.antrec-se.ro/index.php?option=com\\_wrapper&view=wrapper&Itemid=21&lang=ro](http://www.antrec-se.ro/index.php?option=com_wrapper&view=wrapper&Itemid=21&lang=ro) (accessed 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2014)

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.vinuri-pe-net.ro/info-stiri/vrs/IDstire/80/t/drumul-vinului-satmarean> (accessed 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2014)

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.madr.ro/ro/horticultura/viticultura-vinificatie.html> (accessed 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2014)

<sup>19</sup> <http://cramaonline.weebly.com/podgorii-din-romania.html> (accessed 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2014)

<sup>20</sup> [http://www.antrecalba.ro/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=461:sacrificarea-traditionala-porcului-de-craciun-si-riscul-de-trichineloză&catid=23:comunicate-partenere](http://www.antrecalba.ro/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=461:sacrificarea-traditionala-porcului-de-craciun-si-riscul-de-trichineloză&catid=23:comunicate-partenere) (accessed 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2014)

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.toursbylocals.com/RusticTourbyCristiP> (accessed 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2014)

After all, and as we see are a few activities, but there still exist unexploited potential.

For this paper, the related topic documentation was carried out online. The search was conducted using the keywords as: *culinary tourism Romania, gastronomic tourism Romania, Romanian gastronomy, Romanian culinary tourism*. (boolean advanced search). What have we learned? At the moment we carried out the survey, we found that there were very few studies that were focused on this topic. (In international database Ideas of RepEc only 4 of 70 papers, ), in Romanian academic Journals for years 2006-2013 we found only 3, respectively 2 responses in Romanian specialized journals on topic such tourism which are: "Cactus" published by Bucharest University of Economy, and "Tourism Journal" edited by "Stefan cel Mare" University - Suceava, which are also indexed in international database we found only 5 papers on this topic. This means in our opinion a less exploited research and development opportunity as against hidden potential, status that must be changed according to its real potential. Most of the studies found there focuses on Romanian rural tourism (over 112), here including culinary tourism which is not differentiated as a potential economic activity by itself, ignoring its features such niche nature.

In EconPapers international database from 57 returned response to *culinary*, 3 were Romanians authored; *gastronomic* from 37 returned responses, it was only one Romanian authored; *gastronomy* from 44 returned responses it was only one Romanian authored. (see References)

We are aware that this search is not exhaustive, but for the purposes of our paper it may be considered enough relevant.

As another start point and for practical purpose we used SWOT analysis to generate a profile.

Table 1: SWOT Analysis

Straights	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural areas are prevalent in Romania;</li> <li>• A relatively high rural population ratio, over 48% (2011)[3];</li> <li>• Rich traditional heritage that can be promoted (folklore, songs, music, popular customs, local foods and drinks);</li> <li>• Popular crafts (pottery, wood carving, weaving, furrier's, leather, cooking etc.);</li> <li>• Diversity of potential products from rural area;</li> <li>• Traditional architecture (well-preserved);</li> <li>• The demand of tourism in this segment can be fulfilled by the existent accommodation;</li> <li>• Many multicultural rural areas;</li> <li>• Offers that pull consumers to specific destination and has large potential to grow;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor cooperation between stakeholders;</li> <li>• Poor/lack of education in gastronomy as a part of lifestyle of most Romanian citizens;</li> <li>• Lack of a strategy for this kind of tourism;</li> <li>• Lack of inventory of artisan products or locally made products that could potentially serve as the foundation for culinary events/festivals.</li> <li>• Poor promotion of culinary events;</li> <li>• Quality of supply is poor;</li> <li>• Insufficient cooperation between suppliers in rural areas;</li> <li>• Quality unbalanced supply of natural, local products;</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevalent offers of organic food.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders non-coagulated (lack of association concerning service rendered);</li> <li>• Lack of specific activities of culinary tourism – (thematic museums, cooking workshops, thematic tours);</li> <li>• Current economic crisis.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EU funded projects that may create additional tourism infrastructure that can help the development;</li> <li>• Projects finance the promotion of traditional crafts forgotten;</li> <li>• Connect the adjacent tourist products offers by agritourism, ecotourism etc.;</li> <li>• Material and moral revival of cultural and historical heritage of rural areas;</li> <li>• Thematic restaurants (gastronomy and oenology);</li> <li>• Non-availability of quality promotional strategies;</li> <li>• Abandoned villages.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abandonment of traditions;</li> <li>• Lack of transfer of know-how in various traditional crafts;</li> <li>• Legislation which does not stimulate development of economic sector;</li> <li>• Competition from other destinations / similar products from neighbouring countries in the neighbours;</li> <li>• Insufficient human resources educated;</li> <li>• Easy access to other similar competing destinations</li> <li>• Insufficient awareness of stakeholders to develop the need of capitalize the culinary tourism (especially local authorities, state authorities link to tourism activity);</li> <li>• Bureaucracy and corruption.</li> </ul>

At first glance, this analysis would be the recognition of involvement in rural economic restructuring. In this case, traditions, diversity and authenticity can be considered resources of development. In conclusion the niche, namely -culinary tourism- should be integrated. Other arguments in favour of this approach would be about encouraging the consumption of typical products, the opportunity to eat and buy directly from farmers of agro-food, buy several times organic food, many actors would propose and produce typical menus with local food and drinks.

Romanian cuisine continues to be rich spiritually through elements of complex traditions of food, and of table culture. The influences of neighbouring countries (Serbia, Hungary, Bulgaria) or others as Germany, Austria, Russia and Turkey despite the distance, and also many other elements on culinary aspects that gave the local peculiarities creating an unity, that is highlighted in anthropological studies about food culture in Romania<sup>22</sup>. (Muresan, 2006)

To establish what good practice is, we consider various events organized in Romania at national, but more frequently at regional, or/and local level. For instance we remark an higher interest for education in gastronomy area (started with mass-media support).

<sup>22</sup> Mureşan, L.; Aspecte istorico-geografice ale alimentaţiei în spaţiul românesc, „*Omul și Natura*”, Editura Bioedit, Ploieşti, Vol. XVI, 2006, p. 121.



Lists of events where the focus is on national / local cuisine can be easily found in Internet: Vintest (National Event of Wine testing), yearly Festival of Walnuts in Baia-Mare, numerous location for Stuffed Cabbage Meat-Rolls Festival, Bread Fair, Pancake Fair, Plum brandy Fair, Polenta Festival, Sausages Fair, Traditional Cheese Fair/Festival, Porcini (Mushroom) Festival, Potato Festival, Grape Harvest Festivals, Slow Food Fair, wine tasting event organised by Enoteca<sup>23</sup> Millesime<sup>24</sup> etc. Numerous are local events, unfortunately without being promoted at national, or international level. These we consider to be not yet exploited resources.

Another example of good practice we pointed in recent months a growing tendency of interest towards this tourism niche market. Thus, we found a gastronomic calendar of 2014 that covers various culinary events, which will be held in Romania this year. Another event about we found out is the International Congress of Culinary Traditions (the first congress) had held in Bucharest, where for four days (13-17<sup>th</sup> of March 2014), were attended by representatives from 37 countries. On this occasion, have been inventoried major gastronomic events that traditionally take place in seven regions of Romania (Transylvania, Moldavia, Bucovina, Oltenia, Banat, Maramures, and Danube Delta).

An Eurostat publication showed the importance of domestic tourism for the tourism sector – domestic tourism expenditure by residents was twice as high as inbound tourism expenditure by non-residents<sup>25</sup>. (Demunter and Dimitrakopoulo, 2011) The share of domestic trips in the total number of trips was around or above 90 % in Bulgaria, Greece, Spain, France, Portugal and Romania. Thinking into this framework, in first instance is to develop culinary tourism as a branch of domestic tourism thinking that is proper strategy for a country with 20 million citizens taking into account the arguments presented above.

## CONCLUSION

Homemade meal, simply but intense, savoury, lavish, tempting, tasty, juicy, delicate, delightful, delicious, drizzled, fantastic, fluffy, flavourful, fruity, creamy, crumbly, fresh, colourful, buttery, crunchy, cheesy, crispy, piquant, scent, velvety are few adjectives (and there are many more) I could recall when I have evoked an authentic traditional Romanian meal. These adjectives addressed to the senses, to the emotions, there are the very strong, beside the arguments mentioned above (well populated market, not enough exploited direction, potential of the market –meaning).

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<sup>23</sup> Enoteca (plural: *Enoteche*) is an Italian word, derived from the Greek word Οινοθήκη, which literally means "wine repository" (from *Oeno/Eno-* Οινός "wine", and *teca* Θήκη, "receptacle, case, box"), source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enoteca>

<sup>24</sup> Millésime - Culture and civilization Wine Magazine is a publication with national distribution published by Wine Culture and Civilization Centre, established in 2009, located in Oradea see <http://www.millesime.ro>

<sup>25</sup> Demunter, C.; Dimitrakopoulo, Ch.; Domestic tourism. – EUROSTAT Industry, trade and services. Population and social conditions – in *Statistics in Focus*, vol. 49, 2011, 6.

Expect to see destination marketing organizations more fully exploit this marketing opportunity for greater economic development. Likewise, there is still tremendous potential for destinations to build their brands by creating and growing ties to the culinary tourism phenomenon.

In spite of the fact that Romania has many resources for tourism development, Romania cannot compete with countries with tradition in tourism, so it is needed to be searched and to found various niches that are suitable to actively support and develop tourism activity, that could made of more interest Romanian destinations.

At present, in Romania there are too few concerns regarding this niche, that is the culinary tourism and it has not yet the role that it really can have, according to the identified potential (see SWOT analysis). The solutions may come as approach from a strategic point of view, involving stakeholders - such as service providers, and the local authorities if they understand and they become aware of the role it can play this tourism niche for the sustainable development, but simultaneously also for a better local development.

The analysis done in this paper regarding culinary tourism, niche in Romanian tourism, has been identified the strengths, weaknesses, opportunity and threats meant to sustain this activity by SWOT analysis.

In our opinion based on literature review and observation as an answer to the question of this research it is affirmative. Arguments that support this affirmative answer are a higher tendency in practice for this topic.

The future of culinary tourism in Romania looks promising due to its high potential.

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