



Review

Gastronomy as a Sign of the Identity and Cultural Heritage of Tourist Destinations: A Bibliometric Analysis 2001–2020

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Abstract: Gastronomy represents a significant part of the cultural heritage and identity of tourist destinations; however, related scientific literature is scarce. Considering these aspects within the field of tourism and hospitality, and selecting the articles written in English indexed in the Web of Science and Scopus from 2001 to 2020, the objective of this research is twofold: (1) to present a bibliometric analysis of the literature on gastronomic heritage (71 articles); and (2) to analyze some aspects (main topics, frequency of key terms, methods, and data sources) of the research on case studies in Asia and Europe (46 articles), as they are the most prominent regions on the representative list of the intangible cultural heritage of humanity (UNESCO). The study shows the temporal evolution of the literature on gastronomic heritage in parallel with UNESCO's actions on cultural heritage. The results reveal that most articles relate gastronomic heritage to the sustainability of tourist destinations, and that European case studies address sustainability more than Asian studies do. Regarding the methodology to analyze Asian and European case studies, qualitative research predominates. Within quantitative studies, the use of online content generated by consumers and marketers as a data source is rare.

Keywords: hospitality; intangible cultural heritage; gastronomic heritage; destination identity; sustainable tourism; literature review; bibliometric analysis; Asia; Europe; UNESCO



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1. Introduction

To create or develop a food identity for gastronomic heritage in multicultural countries, acculturation, assimilation, adaptation and longitudinal gazetting are necessary [1]. These are then passed from generation to generation to, finally, become a gem of wisdom among local people [2]. Ethnography defines a specific cultural moment as a continuous static cultural pattern [3]; however, as time goes by, this becomes a dynamic process of constant modification. On 16 May 2001, the Executive Board of UNESCO approved a preliminary study on the protection of traditional culture and folklore, as well as working definitions of the concept of “intangible cultural heritage”, or ICH [4]. The ICH safeguard was definitively approved at the 2003 convention [5]. The term ICH includes traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices related to nature and the universe, or the skills needed to produce traditional crafts. However, gastronomic heritage was not fully recognized until 2010, when UNESCO included in the ICH list the traditional cuisine of Mexico and gastronomic dining of the French, plus a comestible handmade product (a gingerbread craft from Northern Croatia) [6]. According to the UNWTO [7], gastronomy tourism is a type of tourism activity characterized by the visitor's experience linked with food and related products and activities while travelling, including authentic, traditional, and/or innovative culinary experiences (p. 44). Therefore, gastronomic heritage fits into the practice of gastronomy tourism through the authentic or traditional culinary experiences of travelers.

Regarding gastronomic heritage, two clearly differentiated periods can be distinguished: (1) the period before the full recognition of gastronomy as an ICH domain (2001–2010) and (2) the period after this recognition (2011–2020). Prior to 2001, two outstanding studies on the subject appeared in 1998, one on traditional cuisine as a tourist attraction in rural French areas [8] and the other on the evolution of cultural heritage in Americans' eating habits [9]. Another interesting article, published in 1999, looked at the relationship between gastronomy and heritage as a key motivator for travelling [10]. Before the recognition of gastronomic heritage by UNESCO, several countries stood out for successfully promoting gastronomy as an attraction factor for tourist destinations. Examples include Malaysia with halal food [11] and Croatia with Dalmatian cuisine [12], which attracted the attention of various countries who sought to imitate it. Malaysia was also regarded by the UNWTO as a model and has received international publicity. In recent years, several authors have addressed traditional cuisine as a cultural element and identity of tourist destinations [13] as well as gastronomic heritage as a factor in sustainable place development [14]. Moreover, tourism destination marketing and management organizations (DMOs) are interested in the influence of gastronomic heritage as a factor in tourism development [15].

Gastronomy is an important component of ICH because of its cultural value. Gastronomy combines functions such as identity, historical characteristics, reference time points, or just simply heritage, and becomes a key development project that encompasses tradition and modernity, and specificity and universality. These should be integrated into an area's local life and activities, and they form the cultural value of gastronomy [16,17]. Although traditional cuisine is part of the history, culture, identity and economy of any tourist destination, its gastronomic heritage, recognized as an ICH by UNESCO, represents a major contribution worldwide. For that reason, this study focused on gastronomic heritage as a more general concept that includes other important types of heritage, such as culinary heritage. However, world gastronomic heritage as recognized by UNESCO has not received relative attention in academia [13]. Gastronomic heritage tourism for the purpose of revitalizing a region or country's economy rarely seems to include world gastronomic heritage as a theme.

There are currently 584 intangible world cultural heritage manifestations distributed in 131 countries. Of these, 24 are world cultural heritage cases related to gastronomy and are distributed in 33 countries, accounting for 4.1% of the intangible heritage. In terms of different geographic regions, Asia has the largest number, with 12 gastronomic heritage manifestations, and Europe has six (Figure 1). Regarding the country, Turkey, coincidentally a country whose territory lies between the Asian and European continents, has three world gastronomic heritage manifestations and ranks first in the world [6].

At present, there are many regions that consider gastronomic heritage as a theme for local development, and they all seem to focus on economic development [15,17,18]. However, any systematic study of gastronomy as a cultural or identity intangible heritage of tourist destinations is rare. Therefore, to narrow this gap in the literature, this study aims to integrate the literature of the 21st century on gastronomy as a cultural heritage and identity of tourist destinations.

Hence, a focus of this study is to narrow those gaps and present a literature review (providing a comprehensive bibliometric research) on this trend in relation to gastronomic heritage, which is relevant to culture and identity. That is to say, the major aims of this study are to conduct a review of the concept in the academic sphere, to identify how this notion is used and what disciplines address it, and to define the existing research lines for the study of gastronomic heritage through the review of related literature written in English in the field of travel, tourism and hospitality indexed in the Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) databases from January 2001 to December 2020. The research mainly highlights regions of Asia and Europe because, as previously stated, most of the world's gastronomic heritage belongs to these two continents (UNESCO, 2021); moreover, from a geographic and historical perspective, Asia and Europe are connected. Most of the countries in Asia

were European colonies as a result of their advantageous locations for trading and strategic military factors, and Europe transmitted its civilization and languages to Asia to build a national image there as well. Similarly, Europe has been culturally influenced by Asian peoples since ancient times; thereby, cultural, technological and other ideas have been exchanged between these continents for millennia. Due to their geographic relationship, Europe and Asia have communicated through migration, trade or colonization. Thus, a deep mutual influence on culture and lifestyle have developed [19].

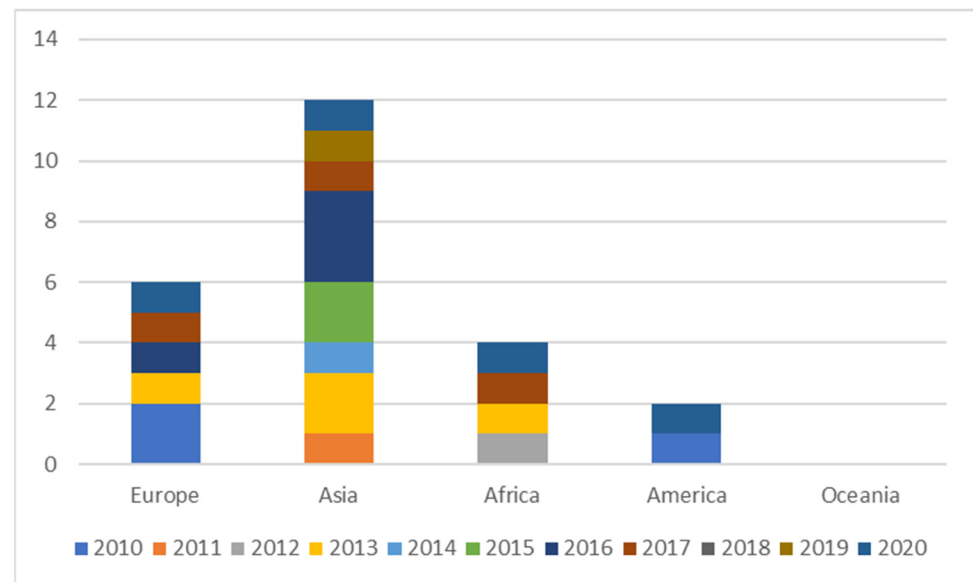


Figure 1. Gastronomic ICH recognized by UNESCO [6] per continent and year. Authors own elaboration.

In summary, the aims of this research are: (1) to present a state of the art study on gastronomic heritage at the world level; (2) to analyze some aspects of research on case studies in Asia and Europe; (3) to explore the background of destination identity and cultural heritage formed by gastronomic heritage; and (4) to contribute to the academic research and body of knowledge in the field.

2. Literature Review

Before analyzing previous reviews related to gastronomy, this Section contextualizes the relevance of gastronomic heritage as a catalyst for economic development, a pole of attraction for tourists, and a sign of the identity and cultural legacy of tourist destinations.

2.1. Gastronomic Heritage and Economic Development

After a decade (2003–2013) of efforts by UNESCO and related academic circles to promote gastronomic heritage, the concept progressed from an abstract definition. It gained regionally specific recognition as an entity and, finally, gained international recognition. Although international gastronomic heritage has cultural, identity and economic functions, it has not attracted relative attention in academic circles. Thus far, only [13] has published scientific literature related to international gastronomic heritage through a literature review. Faced with this apparent lack of academic interest, some data highlights the importance of the impact of gastronomic heritage on economic development. After Croatia [12] and Malaysia [20] successfully saved their declining economies by tapping into their gastronomic heritage, tourism products based on traditional foods or local cuisines began to be valued by the government and the private sectors of other countries.

There are many examples of the economic impact generated by gastronomic heritage in an increasing number of countries. For instance, one study showed that the production value of Italian food products with protected denomination of origin (PDO) and protected geographical indication (PGI) is EUR 2.84 billion, which accounts for about 7% of the total

gross production value (GPV) of Italy's agriculture [21]. In a 16-day Munich Oktoberfest in Germany, about 6.2 million visitors spent approximately EUR 955 million on beer, local pork sausages, and local chicken [22]. In the United States, sales of ethnic foods total USD 11 billion and were projected to increase to USD 12.5 billion by 2018 [23]. Due to the significant potential of local cuisine, traditional foods and gastronomic heritage to increase a country or region's economy, their promotion has become the goal of development for private stakeholders and for governments.

2.2. Gastronomic Heritage as an Attraction Factor for Tourism

Although the goal of developing gastronomic heritage tourism to revitalize the economy is the same in most countries, the strategies for accomplishing this are quite different. As far as tourists are concerned, eating local foods is a way to break out of their routine daily activities and to venture into unfamiliar cuisines. They consider doing so as part of the travel experience, and this is very different from eating exotic foods at home or at nearby restaurants in their everyday lives [24]. Therefore, the design of gastronomic heritage tourism products must, primarily, be able to meet tourists' expectations and create a satisfactory gastronomic heritage tourism experience in order to achieve the objectives noted above in the highly competitive international tourism market [25]. Adapting a gastronomic heritage; changing the ingredients, recipes and methods of preparing and cooking traditional foods to meet the tastes of international tourists; matching the natural and cultural heritage to increase the attraction of local cuisine; and maintaining the original appearance of the gastronomic heritage to the extent possible, are all important. These, and other strategies related to gastronomic heritage, must be designed specifically to achieve economic development.

However, if too much attention is focused on the benefits of gastronomic heritage for economic development, there is a danger that the original gastronomic heritage will be sacrificed. The development of gastronomic heritage products based on economic development is a double edged sword. On the one hand, gastronomic heritage is not only beneficial to economic recovery or promotion but also conducive to the sustainable operation of the industry. On the other hand, the "tourist oriented" model of product development may result in the loss of tourists who pursue "authenticity", after a while. Therefore, from the perspective of economic and tourism sustainability, it is necessary to ensure a balance between the authenticity of the gastronomic heritage of a destination and the gastronomic products offered to tourists.

Among the many types of travelers and their reasons for tourism, those who pursue an authentic experience play an important role that may change a destination's food landscape. As the postmodern dining experience is full of symbolic motivations, tourism related industries aim to recreate, modify and present a gastronomic heritage that is adapted to meet tourists' expectations and perceptions of authenticity and aesthetic appeal [26]. These gastronomic heritages include the processes of adaptation, simplification and vulgarization [3]; additionally, some tourists pay increasingly growing attention to the authenticity of the cultural elements in the gastronomic heritage tourism experience [27].

In addition, to fully attract all kinds of tourists, even cities with international certifications (such as those recognized by UNESCO as a Creative City of gastronomy) must strengthen the development of tourism products that bind food with various activities [28]. Satisfying the travel goals of "survivors" (for which food is not the main intention), "enjoyers" (for which food is the main intention), and "experiencers" (for which food paired with other activities is the main objective) can have an absolute advantage in the highly competitive international tourism market [29].

2.3. Gastronomic Heritage and Cultural Patterns

For a country that is multiethnic or characterized by cultural diversity, the formation of identity is not only related to national identity but also provides a positive image of the

country. Traditional foods represent a simple way to be part of a national identity; therefore, creating an identity for traditional foods has become a goal of many countries [30].

Cultural patterns, such as social practices, lifestyles and the gastronomic culture of a specific cultural moment longitudinally, are dynamic and continue to change [3]. The formation of a region's cultural identity is the product of a series of processes, such as acculturation, assimilation, adaptation, public recognition and even gazetting [1,31]. Likewise, the formation of a food identity as a cultural element follows similar processes and, after its elaboration and improvement over time and the added wisdom of local people, ends up selectively granting special recognition to certain foods that will be representative of that gastronomic identity. The so called acculturation process involves absorbing new cultural patterns and integrating these into the daily life of a region, and then adapting them to the prevalent culture, while retaining their unique cultural roots [32]. The assimilation process includes a combination of the characteristics inherent to the host culture, with the background of the original culture of gastronomic heritage [33]. This process of the host culture and the original one coexisting in the same time and place while maintaining their differences is called adaptation [34]. Officially certifying the cultural heritage of a place or region is one way to preserve and maintain its culture and food and is known as gazetting. After gazetting, the gastronomy or cultural heritage becomes a regional or ethnic product, which has positive significance for its cultural preservation [8].

Since group, region and time are important factors in the formation of gastronomic heritage, the definitions of these three terms from different dimensions, such as politics, language and religion, will produce different results, thereby making gastronomic heritage a somewhat vague and amorphous term [35]. The process of creating a gastronomic heritage is not a staged and superficial phenomenon but a continuous, self-generating process that can influence and change the local gastronomic scene, and the relationship between tourists and destination is also very important [3].

2.4. Gastronomic Heritage as a Hallmark of Tourist Destinations

For tourists, one the fastest and most direct ways to understand local culture is to consume its traditional foods. Nevertheless, not all tourists, especially short term tourists, necessarily choose traditional foods for their three daily meals. Studies have found that tourists consistently spend time seeking the tastes of home cooked dishes with which they are familiar or that they identify as close to their favorite dishes [36,37]. Similarly, other studies have shown that tourists tend to desire familiar tastes and resist foreign ones [36]. When they travel to a place with a different environment, culture and even language, many tourists want a feeling of "home" for comfort, and perhaps the simplest and most direct way to accomplish that is through food [38,39]. Therefore, when they crave familiar tastes, travelers look for either traditional dishes similar close to the "taste of home" or global fast food chain restaurants [40]. Tourists in unfamiliar environments have been found to show more resistance to changing their normal food consumption patterns. This natural resistance allows them to access a familiar feeling, on the one hand, and, on the other, creates an interpersonal boundary with foreigners or residents in the destination [40].

In relation to traditional foods, although the pursuit of modernization, industrialization, consumerism and tourist oriented trends interferes with the concept of local specialties, it cannot affect or change preferences for traditional foods to which local residents are accustomed. No matter how tourists or local restaurants have made changes in order to adapt traditional dishes, local residents will still prepare them using high quality ingredients, according to traditional recipes and cooking techniques [3].

Gastronomic heritage, which includes culture and identity elements, can evoke image, memory and pride, or inspire habitual consumption. It can also become a way of life and even a source of revenue [41]. Regardless of whether it is to maintain, modify or create a gastronomic heritage, the primary condition must be related to the local culture, and it must also have the function of revitalizing the economy before becoming a gastronomic heritage product. It is worth mentioning that only after undergoing processes of accultura-

tion, assimilation, adaptation and gazetting will the gastronomic heritage function as an “identity” [1]. From this perspective, whether the gastronomic heritage can become the local identity depends on the area’s residents, and this is also the main factor in regard to it being passed on through generations. In other words, people with the same cultural background share collective experiences different from those of individuals or groups that may not have contact with each other, and, thereby, food, identity, and culture are maintained or reproduced [42].

Food complements other elements of the cultural environment. Food itself and the manufacturing process are both important parts of the food heritage because they not only reflect cultural norms and values, geography and the physical reality of the place but also involve generations. They may also entail other elements of human civilization such as religion, language, politics and power, agricultural landscape and family relations [43]. As far as travelers are concerned, they participate in gastronomic heritage tourism that integrates culture, history or narrative; some aim for gastronomic heritage itself, while others hope to experience complete and authentic gastronomic heritage tourism. Still others, the so called post-tourists, do not care whether or not they experience authentic gastronomic heritage tourism [44]. In terms of industries, the development of gastronomic heritage tourism products that combine culture with history or narrative must consider cost and sustainable operation factors. Therefore, it is necessary to carefully plan for manpower consumption, food preparation, and the authenticity and actual operational logistics [45]. Therefore, the greatest challenge for industries has consistently been whether to provide expensive and authentic but unsustainable products, or to budget for inauthentic products that might result in the loss of some customers.

The economic growth prior to the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in people spending more time and money on gastronomic experiences [46]. Gastronomic tourism can offer participants pleasure related to food; it can also give them an understanding of and familiarity with the cultural knowledge behind particular foods. In recent decades, this type of tourism has strived to meet the needs of a new generation of gourmets, also called “foodies”, and is the main reason for the surge in the number of gastronomic tourists [16]. Tourists experience culture through food. The UNWTO [47] emphasizes the importance of food when tourists choose destinations, since it ranks third after culture and nature. Moreover, according to Mora et al. [48], “gastronomic experiences form the backbone of the motivations and subsequent satisfaction and loyalty of travellers in a tourist destination” (p. 1). With the increase in the variety of tourists and their aims for travelling, diverse, innovative and rich gastronomic heritage products can create advantages for industries and destinations in the highly competitive international tourism market.

2.5. Literature Reviews Related to Gastronomic Heritage

Food and drink are essential during any journey [49]. Gastronomic heritage is an indispensable element for travelers to better understand local culture [50] and functions to enhance the cultural identity of an area and revitalize its economy [8]. Therefore, many authors have addressed food and wine in relation to tourism and others have focused on gastronomy as ICH. Table 1 presents a sample of researchers who analyzed the literature related to gastronomy through a systematic review or bibliometric analysis. The two articles [13,51] that considered gastronomy in relation to UNESCO’s ICH are not replicable because the keyword combinations used in the search are indeterminate and cover periods prior to the definition of ICH. The first article search formula, [51], was imprecise because, on the one hand, it combined the keywords “intangible” and “heritage” and, on the other, “gastronom*” and “heritage”. The authors did not find a common definition of gastronomic heritage in their search, nor a significant impact of the ICH list on the marketing of gastronomy. In relation to the second article, [13], the authors used indeterminate combinations of the keywords “food”, “culinary”, “cuisine”, “heritage” and “UNESCO” and found references to UNESCO’s ICH list, such as “French gastronomy” and “Mediterranean diet”. The rest of the literature analyses in Table 1 are focused on “food tourism” [15,52,53], “wine

tourism” [54–57] and “gastronomy tourism” [58]. The latter article, [58], is interdisciplinary in nature and collected publications from six bibliographic databases.

Table 1. Sample of related literature review.

Ref.	Year	Research Topic	Time Span	Database	Type	N
[51]	2016	The impact of UNESCO gastronomy elements	1991–2013	WoS	BA	231
[54]	2017	Wine tourism	1994–2014	Sc, WoS	BA	238
[55]	2017	Wine tourism and sustainability	1994–2015	Sc	LR	43
[58]	2018	Gastronomy tourism	1985–2015	Six DDBB	LR	214
[52]	2018	Food and gastronomy research	1976–2016	16 journals	BA	462
[15]	2019	Food tourism and regional development	1985–2017	Sc, WoS	LR	538
[56]	2019	Wine tourism research	1995–2014	20 vintages	LR	176
[57]	2019	Asian wine tourism research	2000–2018	Internet	LR	89
[13]	2020	Culinary intangible cultural heritage of UNESCO	2000–2016	EBSCO	BA	28
[59]	2020	Restaurant research	2000–2018	WoS	BA	740
[53]	2020	Destination food research	2000–2018	WoS	BA	176

Note. WoS = Web of Science; Sc = Scopus; BA = Bibliometric analysis; LR = Literature review.

Unlike the investigations in Table 1, the present study collects the articles in the WoS and Scopus databases using equivalent Boolean search formulas that guarantee consistent results. Within the field of travel, tourism and hospitality, the terms related to gastronomy are combined with the keywords “heritage” and “identity”. The results Section begins with a general bibliographic analysis that mainly contains bibliometric data [60], followed by a segmentation by periods and continents. Finally, the results show some aspects of the research related to Asia and Europe, taking into consideration the locations of the case studies.

3. Materials and Methods

The bibliometric method can be based on scientific research published and indexed in databases through quantitative analysis. By using the database combined with statistical analysis within a specific research scope, analyzing the characteristics of the publication over a certain period, and distributing the content (such as the number of documents, authors, journals, and countries, etc.) to understand current research trends and important topics in this field [60], we can see that, in the earlier stage of research, the selection of appropriate databases is closely related to the accuracy of bibliometric analysis. In addition, there are differences between fields and journals according to different databases, and a suitable database can improve the reliability and validity of bibliometric research.

Scopus, the largest database, is known for its interdisciplinary scientific literature dating back to 1970, including peer reviewed journals, books and conference proceedings or conference papers, and over 77.8 million publications in total. Additionally, the collected documents are widely cited by scholars in various fields [54]. By contrast, Web of Science (WoS) was the first database to track journal quality and collect critical scientific literature from the year 1900 onward, with a total of more than 159 million publications. In the field of tourism management, the relevant documents collected by WoS are appropriate in terms of number and type and are recognized by scholars [52]. Therefore, both databases were selected to ensure the comprehensiveness of the bibliometric analysis.

This study systematically uses narrative statistics and inferential statistics [61,62]. Then, tables and figures are applied to present the results of quantitative analyses in order to clarify the observed phenomena. On the one hand, the development characteristics of contemporary gastronomic heritage can be discovered from the focus of academic research on gastronomic heritage; on the other, it also shows the research trends in different geographic regions. Finally, based on the research findings, implications for stakeholders are provided in regard to future research on gastronomic heritage.

The study plans to map the main countries, journals, universities and authors of gastronomic heritage research in Scopus and WoS databases and aims to understand

the research trends, focusses and evolutionary paths in different regions. In regard to scientific research on tourism, hospitality and gastronomy, the Scopus and WoS databases are complementary [15,54]. Furthermore, many scholars consider Scopus and WoS two representative databases for bibliometric analysis in this field [58].

3.1. Data Collection

The two databases, Scopus and WoS, provide a highly diverse classification of documents, including according to year, authors' names, subject category, document type, source publication name, institution, etc. In bibliometric analysis, the design of keyword research is strongly related to the accuracy of search results. A systematic literature review is applied through the ensuing section: the advanced keyword search of gastronomic heritage related articles in hospitality and tourism field by Boolean formulas in Scopus and WoS databases (Box 1) from 2001 to 2020. The advanced keyword search uses terminology regarding gastronomy, heritage, identity, tourism and hospitality fields, and 73 articles in Scopus and 32 articles in WoS were acquired, and by eliminating those that are repeated (27) and irrelevant (7), 71 articles in all were obtained, as shown in Figure 2. *Bibliometrix* [63], a tool run on an RStudio console, made it possible to merge articles from the two bibliographic databases with the elimination of duplicates.

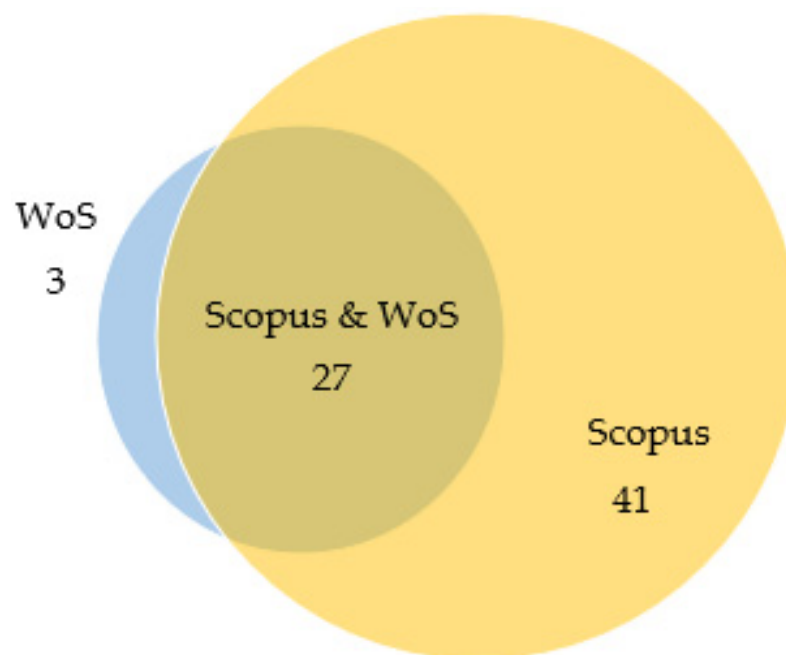


Figure 2. Venn Diagram: number of publications on Scopus and WoS.

Box 1. Boolean search formulas for gastronomic heritage terminology.

Scopus:

DOCTYPE (ar) AND LANGUAGE (english) AND PUBYEAR > 2000 AND PUBYEAR < 2021 AND TITLE ((gastronom* OR food* OR wine* OR drink* OR culinary OR dining OR restaurant*) AND (heritage* OR identit*)) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (travel* OR touris* OR hospitality)

Web of Science (WoS):

((((TI = ((gastronom* OR food* OR wine* OR drink* OR culinary OR dining OR restaurant*) AND (heritage* OR identit*))) AND TS = (travel* OR touris* OR hospitality)) AND LA = (English)) AND DT = (Article) AND PY = (2001–2020)

Indexes: SCI-EXPANDED, SSCI, A&HCI.

3.2. Coding Criteria

Within the variety of publications on the database, only the articles in English in scientific journals (e.g., WoS SCI-Expanded, SSCI and A&HCI) were collected, and two approaches [64] were conducted in regard to the research methods in the bibliometric study. First, a priori coding, in which the data can be classified based on the existing theory or research [52,65], was used; second, emergent coding, for which classifications are created from content analysis [66,67], was applied. After reviewing the context, theory is generated to produce the outcomes that highlight the deduction, the current subject matter and the major perspectives of the written accounts. These coding systems are universal for classifying bibliometric research and practice [68].

The study applied two stages of the research method: bibliometric and content analysis [65]. Aiming to contribute to the body of knowledge on gastronomy heritage and to provide a review on the research trends, such as the publication year, journals, countries, authors and universities, quantitative methods based on a priori coding were processed. Regarding the analysis of Asian and European case studies, a classification by continent, period, subject, methodology, data source, and destination was established, according to emergent coding.

Any action taken by international organizations on gastronomic heritage may attract the attention of academia, governments and the private sector, which may result in an increase in publication related activities. Therefore, this study divides the evolution of publications into two periods: 2001–2010, from the preliminary definition of ICH to the de facto recognition of gastronomy as ICH, and 2011–2020, after such recognition.

4. Results and Discussion

As mentioned, the study was conducted through the Scopus and WoS databases for literature research by bibliometric and content analysis methods. For the quantitative aspect, results include the following: (1) the most common keywords; (2) articles from 2001–2020; (3) major publishing countries; (4) major journals; (5) major authors; (6) major university affiliations; (7) most cited articles; and (8) research trends and focus in different geographic areas regarding the location of the first author and the tourist destination studied. Regarding the analysis of the case studies in Asia and Europe, the results include the following: (1) the most frequent keywords by periods and continents; (2) relationships between sustainability and gastronomic heritage; and (3) objectives, methods and data sources of the case studies.

4.1. Bibliometric Analysis

The keywords entered by the authors are a crucial source of data in the search formula in Box 1. Figure 3 shows the 50 most frequent authors' keywords. The key terms related to tourism, gastronomy, cultural heritage, authenticity and identity stand out considerably, which is consistent with the rationale of the research.

4.1.1. Evolution of Scientific Articles on Gastronomic Heritage

As seen above, in the introductory chapter, only three articles appeared in the previous period, 1998–2000. Similarly, Figure 4 shows that the scientific literature on gastronomic heritage remained minimal during the first period (2001–2010), with an average of less than one publication per year. This means that more than 87% of scientific production was concentrated in the second period (2011–2020), with a considerable increase during the years 2019 and 2020.



Figure 3. The 50 most common authors' keywords.

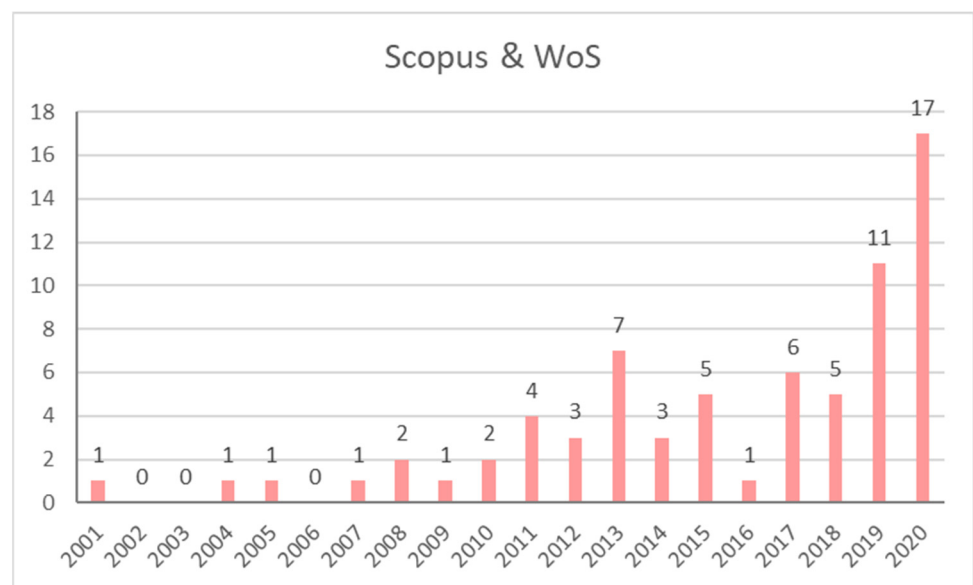


Figure 4. Number and evolution of scientific articles on gastronomic heritage.

4.1.2. Main Countries Publishing Articles on Gastronomic Heritage

The top 10 countries with the most publications about gastronomic heritage during 2001 to 2020 were analyzed. The results found that the top countries with the highest number of publications were the United States and Australia, with the total number of publications in these two countries (23) accounting for 32.4% of all publications (71); followed by Spain (7), the United Kingdom (6) and Italy (5). Canada (4) and France (4) are tied in sixth place, and India, Sweden and Japan occupy seventh place (Figure 5).

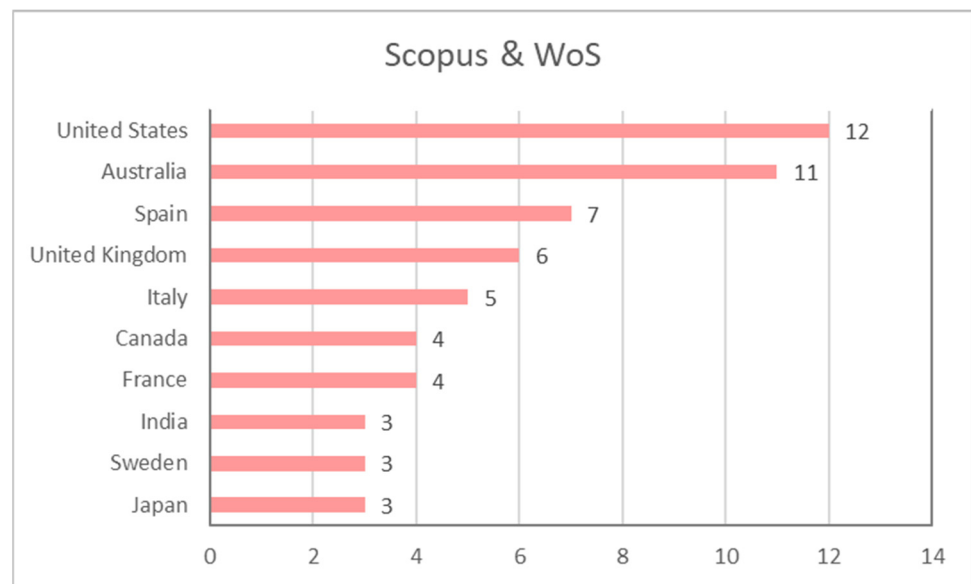


Figure 5. Number of articles per country of publication.

4.1.3. Main Scientific Journals with Articles on Gastronomic Heritage

Journals with two or more publications were analyzed. The results show that the *Journal of Heritage Tourism* has the most articles (7) on gastronomic heritage (accounting for 9.7% of the total number of publications; Figure 6).

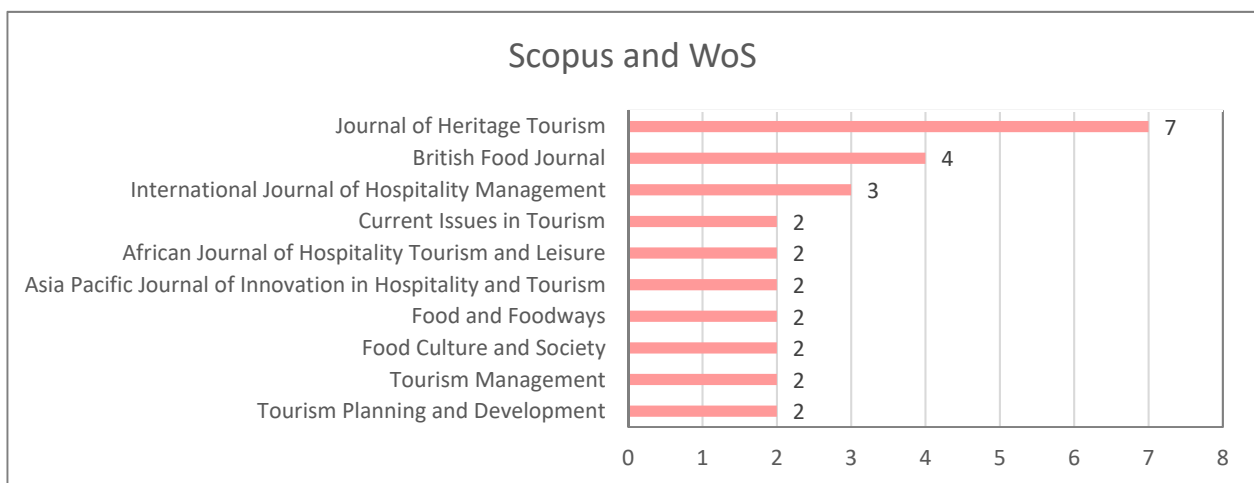


Figure 6. Journals with two or more articles on gastronomic heritage.

An important proportion of the research on gastronomic heritage was published in mainstream journals (such as those related to food, culture and tourism). These include the *Journal of Heritage Tourism*, *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *Current Issues in Tourism*, *Food and Foodways*, *Food Culture and Society*, *Tourism Management*, and *Tourism Planning and Development*. Moreover, gastronomic heritage research articles were also published in other journals, as follows: regional journals, e.g., the *Asia Pacific Journal of Innovation in Hospitality and Tourism* and the *African Journal of Hospitality Tourism and Leisure*; journals with a country reference in their title, e.g., the *British Food Journal*, *Australian Geographer*, and *Bulletin of Spanish Studies*; or those that mention a specific food product in their title, e.g., the *Journal of Wine Research* (Figure 6).

There are also a few publications in scientific journals that are less related to gastronomic heritage in tourist destinations. These journals presented seven publications and

accounted for 9.9% of the total, which highlights that the study of gastronomic heritage is gaining attention and is of increasing interest even to other fields of knowledge.

4.1.4. Main Universities and Authors on Gastronomic Heritage

Based on the quantitative analysis of universities with two or more publications related to gastronomic heritage, those with the most publications are located in Australia (Western Sydney University and Edith Cowan University, Joondalup; Figure 7). Among these 10 universities, European universities accounted for 73%, and there was only one in Asia (Universiti Putra Malaysia).

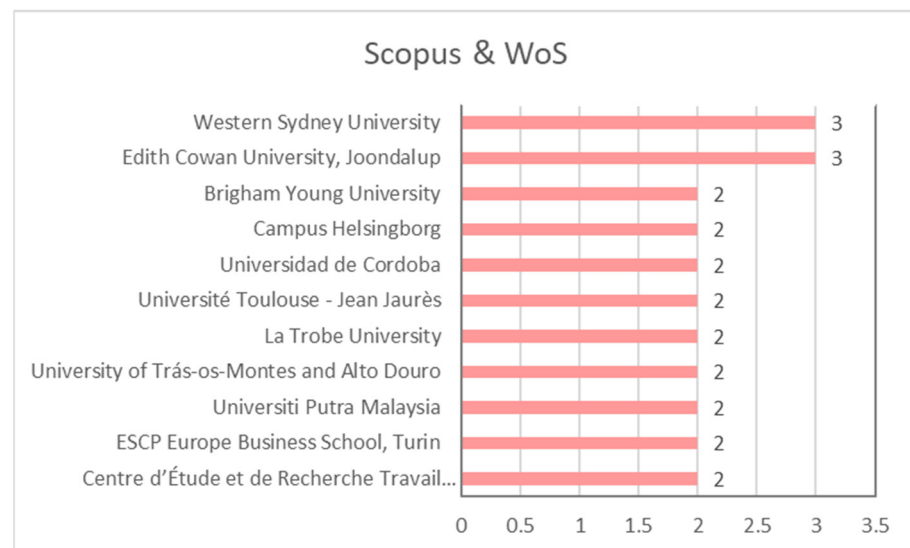


Figure 7. Main universities with articles on gastronomic heritage.

Figure 8 displays the main authors with articles on gastronomic heritage, whereas Table 2 compiles the principal information about the most cited articles. The results show that there are five authors with at least two publications, with three being the maximum number of publications per author: Alonso, A.D. (Australia; three publications with a total of 32 citations); Bessiere, J. (France; two publications with a total of 64 citations); Canovi, M. (Italy; two publications with no citations); Frost, W. (Australia; two publications with a total of 17 citations); and Medina-Viruel, M.J. (Spain; two publications with no citations). Their publications account for 15.5% (11/71; Figure 8) of the total.

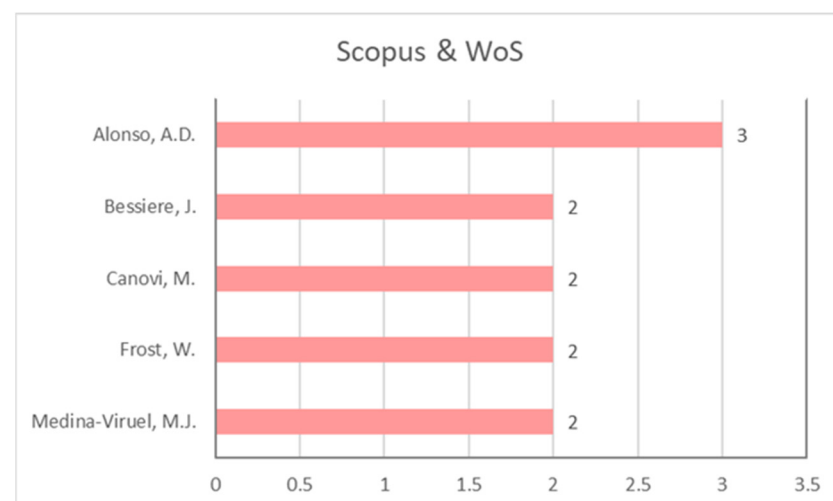


Figure 8. Main authors with articles on gastronomic heritage.

Table 2. Most cited articles in Scopus on 2021-08-31.

Ref.	Year	Authors	Journal	Sc.	WoS
[69]	2008	Everett S., Aitchison C.	<i>J. Sustainable Tour.</i>	233	222
[70]	2011	Lin Y.-C., Pearson T.E., Cai L.A.	<i>Tour. Hosp. Res.</i>	138	
[71]	2007	Fox R.	<i>Int. J. Hosp. Manage.</i>	124	
[40]	2010	Bardhi F., Ostberg J., Bengtsson A.	<i>Consum. Mark. Cult.</i>	71	67
[27]	2009	Gyimóthy S., Mykletun R.J.	<i>J. Vacat. Mark.</i>	66	
[17]	2013	Bessière J.	<i>J. Herit. Tour.</i>	54	
[24]	2013	Bessiere J., Tibere L.	<i>J. Sci. Food Agric.</i>	52	45
[72]	2014	Contò F., Vrontis D., Fiore M., Thrassou A.	<i>Br. Food J.</i>	38	29
[73]	2011	Nilsson J.H., Svård A.-C., Widarsson A., Wirell T.	<i>Curr. Issues Tour.</i>	38	37
[45]	2013	Ron A.S., Timothy D.J.	<i>J. Herit. Tour.</i>	36	
[74]	2017	Ganzaroli A., De Noni I., van Baalen P.	<i>Tour. Manage.</i>	33	34
[41]	2013	Alonso A.D., Krajsic V.	<i>J. Herit. Tour.</i>	31	
[3]	2013	Avieli N.	<i>J. Herit. Tour.</i>	30	
[75]	2004	Josiam B.M., Mattson M., Sullivan P.	<i>Tour. Manage.</i>	28	25
[76]	2016	Kim S., Iwashita C.	<i>Tour. Recreat. Res.</i>	27	

As mentioned, Table 2 lists the articles that have obtained more than 25 bibliographic citations in Scopus.

4.1.5. Articles on Gastronomic Heritage per Destination and Region

According to the three categories of Europe, Asia and other destinations (Figure 9), research on gastronomic heritage began in Europe (2001), and Asia is the latest to contribute to this body of research (2010). However, in the two periods, both Europe and Asia reached a large number of publications. Gastronomic heritage has gradually garnered an increasing amount of attention in international academic circles (Figure 9), and this result is also in line with the time sequence of the recognition of gastronomic heritage.

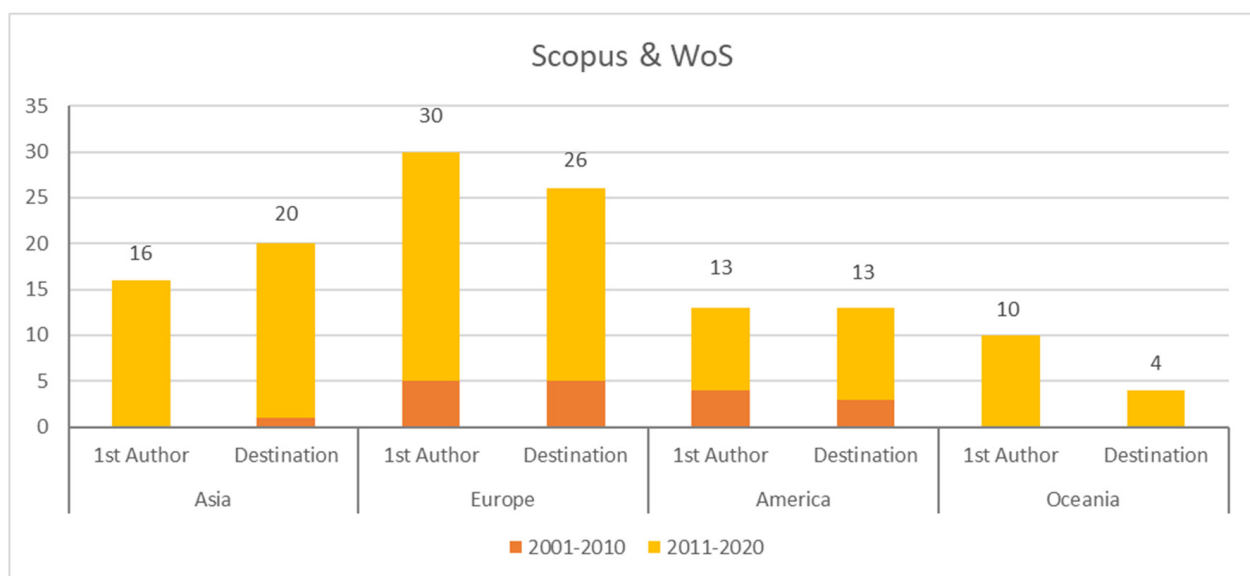


Figure 9. An overview of the continent of the first author and research destination.

Moreover, although recognition of world gastronomic heritage in Asia is not the earliest, the quantity is the largest (12) and is twice that of Europe (6) (Figure 1). In terms of the level of concern about the gastronomic heritage of the continent, the Asian scholars (14/16, 87.5%) are slightly more prolific than the European scholars (26/30, 86.7%), which fully reflects the difference in the amount of world gastronomic heritage.

It is also interesting to note that Africa is absent in Figure 9, despite the fact that it is the third continent in terms of the number of gastronomic heritage examples recognized by UNESCO (2021) (Figure 1) and that the first element to be recognized was as early as 2012.

A total of nine articles were published from 2001 to 2010, including one on Asia, five on Europe, and three related to other destinations. A total of 62 articles were published from 2011 to 2020, including 19 on Asia, 21 on Europe, and 22 about other destinations (Figure 9).

4.2. Analysis of Asian and European Case Studies

This Section focuses on the research in the two periods: (1) up to time of full recognition of gastronomy as an ICH factor (2001–2010, 9 articles) and (2) after this recognition (2011–2020, 62 articles). Therefore, as previously stated, there are 71 articles written in the 21st century (26 in Europe, 20 in Asia and 25 on other continents). Since this research focusses on Europe and Asia, the content of all European and Asian publications (46) was analyzed with special attention.

The above results (mainly Figure 9) show that most of the case studies on gastronomic heritage are located in Asia and Europe, which coincides with UNESCO's list on ICH provided in the introduction.

4.2.1. Most Common Keywords

Figures 10 and 11 show the most frequent words in the article's summary (i.e., title, abstract and keywords). Considering both continents (Figure 10) highlight tourism and heritage, the principal difference is food and identity in Asia versus wine and culture in Europe. The preponderance of research on wine in Europe aligns with previous studies [77]. Another difference is that Europe presents more diversity of keywords, with several having a similar rate of frequency, whereas Asia presents fewer keywords with a much higher frequency level than the rest. Regarding the periods, both highlight tourism and food. In the period 2001–2010, the tourist as well as the destination stands out, while in 2011–2020, wine, heritage and culture stand out (Figure 11). The preponderance of heritage and culture in the second period may be due to de facto recognition of gastronomic heritage by UNESCO's ICH list.



Figure 10. The 25 most frequent keywords from 2001–2020 case studies in (a) Asia and (b) Europe.



Figure 11. The 25 most frequent keywords from Asian and European case studies between (a) 2001–2010, (b) 2011–2020.

4.2.2. Relations between Gastronomic Heritage and Sustainability

Table 3 shows that most articles on gastronomic heritage and identity in Asia and Europe address sustainability: 36 of the total (46) documents accounted for 78%, indicating the importance of the research trend within the academic field from the perspective of regional identity [69] and cultural heritage [73], with 70% (14/20) of Asian destination research with an average of six (84/14) instances and 85% (22/26) of European destination research with an average of 15 (331/22) instances. In summary, case study research in Europe addresses sustainability more often than case study research in Asia does.

Table 3. Articles containing “sustainab*” and number of instances.

Articles	Instances	Region	Articles	Instances
36/46 (78%)	415 (avg: 12)	Asia	14/20 (70%)	84 (avg: 6)
		Europe	22/26 (85%)	331 (avg: 15)

4.2.3. Subject, Methodology, Data Source and Tourist Destination

Since most case studies (46/71) are located in Asia (20) and Europe (26), in order to understand the development and trend of gastronomic heritage research by regions and periods, a content analysis of the scientific literature is focused on both regions (Table 4).

Table 4 demonstrates that most researchers used qualitative and mixed methodologies, mainly through interviews, participant observation and secondary sources. Regarding quantitative methodologies, most researchers obtained data through questionnaire surveys. Taking into account the sources or agents of destination image formation [110–113], only two articles on European case studies collected online data generated by marketers and consumers. The first, [79], published in 2010, collected data on the websites of destination managers and restaurateurs. The second, [74], published in 2017, collected online customer reviews from numerous restaurants.

Table 4. Asian and European case studies.

C.	Period	Ref.	Subject	Method	Data Source	Destination
EU	2001–2010	[78]	heritage tourism	ethnographic portrait	people involved in food heritage	Languedoc, France
		[71]	gastronomic identity	literature review	7 national reports	Croatia
		[69]	food tourism, regional identity	mixed	3040 surveys, 3 reports and 12 interviews	Cornwall, England
		[27]	culinary heritage	qualitative mixed	In depth interviews, printed media and ethnographic fieldwork	Voss, Norway
		[79]	gastronomic heritage	web mining	42 city-halls and 169 restaurants.	Romania
		[73]	gastronomic heritage	qualitative	9 semistructured interviews and systematic observations	North-western Italy
		[17]	food heritage	qualitative	90 semistructured interviews	South-west France
		[24]	food heritage	mixed	480 survey questionnaires, observations and 30 interviews	South-west France
		[80]	food heritage	descriptive	culinary events	Istria, Croatia
		[72]	wine cultural heritage	deductive reasoning	rural development project	10 European countries
	[81]	wine and cultural heritage	quantitative	249 visitors survey	Alto Douro, Portugal	
	[82]	food and beverage heritage	quantitative	191 personal surveys	Catalonia, Spain	
	[83]	food identity	qualitative	54 semistructured in depth interviews	Poland	
	[74]	cultural heritage	quantitative	TripAdvisor reviews of 575 restaurants	Venice, Italy	
	[84]	wine heritage	descriptive	wine regions	Portugal	
	[85]	wine heritage	descriptive	cultural landscape	Hvar, Croatia	
	[86]	culinary heritage	quantitative	493 visitors survey	Poland	
	[87]	wine heritage, identity	qualitative	20 winery owners semistructured interview	Langhe, Italy	
	[18]	wine heritage, regional identity	quantitative	technical reports and 29 tourism boards survey	Croatia	
	[88]	wine heritage, regional identity	quantitative	technical reports	Salamanca, Spain	
[89]	gastronomic identity	descriptive	literature and guidebooks	Catalonia, Spain		
[90]	food heritage	quantitative	558 visitors survey	Cordoba, Spain		
[91]	wine heritage, identity	qualitative	28 wine producers survey	Langhe, Italy		
[92]	gastronomic heritage, regional identity	qualitative	observations, autoethnography and 9 local actors' interview	Gouda, The Netherlands.		
[93]	wine heritage, identity	quantitative	100 residents survey	Vila Nova de Gaia, Portugal		
[94]	wine heritage	qualitative	4 semistructured interviews	Tokaj, Hungary		
[40]	food heritage	qualitative	28 American consumers interview	China		
[70]	food identity	quantitative	24 brochures, 35 websites, 83 stakeholders survey	Taiwan		
[95]	food identity	literature review	Ottoman travel literature	Turkey		
[45]	food heritage	qualitative	observations and in depth interviews	Israel		
[3]	culinary heritage	qualitative	ethnographic fieldwork, participant observation of food events	Hoi An, Vietnam		
[96]	food and identity	literature review	Ottoman travel literature	Turkey		
[97]	food, identity	qualitative	semi-formal conversations and observation	Mumbai, India		
[76]	food heritage, regional identity	qualitative	12 Japanese tourists' interview	Gunma, Japan		
[98]	food heritage	qualitative	15 experts' in-depth interview	Isfahan, Iran		
[99]	culinary heritage	qualitative	Interviews and participant observation	Kyoto, Japan		
AS	2011–2020	[100]	gastronomic heritage	quantitative	1132 visitors survey	Melaka and George Town, Malaysia

Table 4. Cont.

C.	Period	Ref.	Subject	Method	Data Source	Destination
		[101]	gastronomic heritage	mixed	20 interviews, 470 questionnaires	Melaka and George Town, Malaysia
		[102]	gastronomic identity	quantitative	164 residents, 214 tourists survey	Gaziantep, Turkey
		[103]	culinary heritage	quantitative	450 tourists, 50 hoteliers	Rajasthan, India
		[104]	culinary heritage	mixed	interviews, observations, 402 questionnaires survey	India
		[105]	gastronomic identity	qualitative	experts and stakeholders' interview	Loei, Thailand
		[106]	winery's identity	qualitative	30 winery visitors interview	Yunnan, China
		[107]	food heritage	quantitative	98 stakeholders survey	Torqabeh, Iran
		[108]	culinary heritage	qualitative	stakeholders' in depth interview	Luzon Island, Philippines
		[109]	wine heritage	qualitative	local actors' interview, participant observation at wine tourism events	Yamanashi, Japan

Note. C. = Continent, EU = Europe, AS = Asia.

5. Conclusions

Bibliometric methods on all articles and analysis of some aspects (main topics, frequency of key terms, methods, and data source) of the research on case studies in Asia and Europe were conducted to investigate the current situation of gastronomic heritage, and the following conclusions can be drawn.

On the whole, the trend of the publications correlates with the recognition by UNESCO. The ICH was adopted by UNESCO in 2003 and gastronomy has been listed as an ICH since 2010. In addition, the internationalization of world gastronomic heritage can be considered a consequence of both milestones. Although the United Kingdom and the United States have never been included in the list of world gastronomic heritage, the amount of scientific literature published in these two countries has consistently outpaced the rest of the world. Australia, which is also an Anglo-Saxon country, has caught up in the second decade of the 21st century to become one of the leading countries in gastronomic heritage research. However, Oceania does not yet have the recognition of a single gastronomic heritage element by UNESCO (Figure 1). By contrast, consider Africa, which, despite being well-represented on UNESCO's list of ICH and the fact that some journals such as the *African Journal of Hospitality Tourism and Leisure* and the *African Journal of Microbiology Research* have published articles on gastronomic heritage, has produced no articles on this topic that focus on the continent.

It is worth mentioning that those countries listed as having world gastronomic heritage (e.g., Turkey, Croatia, Italy, Azerbaijan and Morocco) are far behind the three countries mentioned above (i.e., the UK, US and Australia) in terms of scientific production about gastronomic heritage. The total number of publications in Europe is not far from that in Asia, but the first study in Europe (1998) was published nearly 10 years earlier than the first Asian study (2007). However, with the gradual recognition and internationalization of gastronomic heritage, the number of gastronomic heritage elements in Asia has begun to surpass that of other continents, which has also prompted Asian academic circles to pay attention to Asian gastronomic heritage. This demonstrates that UNESCO's recognition of gastronomic heritage has had a significant impact on academia.

Eating represents much more than meeting one's physiological needs as a human being because, when it becomes part of a culture, the role of the food itself is no longer simply to satisfy the appetite; it takes on a diverse and functional role. The ways that food is presented in different regions and the knowledge behind it are the result of a series of cultural processes, such as acculturation, assimilation and adaptation, the effect of which is the configuration of a specific gastronomy identity. Overall, on the one hand, this gastronomic identity based on intangible cultural parameters conforms to the Convention for the Safeguarding of the ICH [5] and the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions [114]. On the other hand, activities combined with gastronomy, additional roles such as the cultural heritage tourism related to the Last Supper in Israel [45] or related services, can also be regarded as ICH. The impact of gastronomic heritage has gone beyond the meaning and function of the food itself; specialized research contributes to the development and stabilization of gastronomic heritage, and the involvement of nondirectly related fields serves to increase the vision and diversity of gastronomic heritage.

Apart from the influence of international organizations, another influence on the development of gastronomic heritage comes from the awareness of its importance for different countries. The Malaysian government, as well as that country's private sector, is committed to gastronomic heritage to boost the economy, and UNESCO has long considered Malaysia a model. Turkey has a reputation for having the most significant gastronomic heritage worldwide, and its government and private sector have exerted great effort to revitalize the economy through this heritage. The scholars in both countries are expected to pay greater attention to the study of gastronomic heritage.

In summary, the present study aimed to explore and describe the evolution and current status of gastronomic heritage research. Further, the study offers suggestions for

the direction of future research so that it can be considered regardless of the depth and breadth of the field, with a view toward having a positive impact on the societies, cultures and economies of countries. The literature review has highlighted that the number of studies that analyzed gastronomy as an element of cultural heritage and identity of tourist destinations is relatively small, despite the fact that publications increased considerably in 2019 and 2020. In addition, within these investigations, on the one hand, the use of online content generated by restaurateurs and diners as a source of data is rare, unlike other studies that have focused on gastronomic image [115–117]; on the other hand, most use qualitative methodologies through in depth interviews, participant observation, etc.

Thus, scholars have rarely expressed concern about culture and identity, an original function of the gastronomic heritage. There are also few publications on gastronomy such as UNESCO's ICH [13]. Greater attention has been given to sustainability [55], which governments and industries care about. While most articles mention sustainable tourism, empirical research on European case studies addressed the relationship between gastronomic heritage and sustainability more than research on Asian case studies. Regarding theoretical implications, the authentication of gastronomic heritage culture and identity contributes to cultural preservation and increases social cohesion, factors that have been confirmed by numerous studies [118]. It is critical to unite the theoretical frameworks obtained through the integration of cases on applying those gastronomic heritage functions to tourism markets and, especially, on the image projected by stakeholders and different genres of the perceived image sources of destination landscapes. In terms of practical implications, although gastronomic heritage tourism products that cater to all kinds of tourists can bring substantial business opportunities and economic benefits to the destination, gastronomy tourism stakeholders and the government must also invest resources to cooperate with local people and to contribute to the preservation of local gastronomy. Moreover, this research is one of the few gastronomic heritage bibliometric studies on the subject of culture and identity aspects in the scientific literature.

Specifically, according to the findings presented here, the authors believe that the developed research shows that revitalizing economies through promoting countries' gastronomic heritage as a national identity is the main purpose. This contributes to helping researchers understand the main factors in recent research in the 21st century and can further provide governments and industries with sustainable management perspectives.

There are some limitations regarding the bibliometric analyses, which can lead to a certain bias in the research, since rankings and ratings are followed to the detriment of the factual analysis of the articles, this type of analysis has been chosen since it gives us an initial overview of a topic of study on which there are few works. Due to the fact that the selected bibliographic databases included only WoS and Scopus, and this study limited the analysis to articles written in English, there may be other related investigations that have not been contemplated. Moreover, the analysis results do not fully present the knowledge system of the obtained articles. Regarding future research, an operational definition of gastronomic image formation [119] along with cultural [120] and identity [71] features of gastronomic heritage should be more central aspects.

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