

ASERS

# Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism

Quarterly

Volume XIII

Issue 4(60)

Summer 2022

ISSN 2068 – 7729

Journal DOI

<https://doi.org/10.14505/jemt>

ASERS  
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# Call for Papers Fall Issues 2022 Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism

**Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism** is an interdisciplinary research journal, aimed to publish articles and original research papers that should contribute to the development of both experimental and theoretical nature in the field of Environmental Management and Tourism Sciences.

Journal will publish original research and seeks to cover a wide range of topics regarding environmental management and engineering, environmental management and health, environmental chemistry, environmental protection technologies (water, air, soil), pollution reduction at source and waste minimization, energy and environment, modeling, simulation and optimization for environmental protection; environmental biotechnology, environmental education and sustainable development, environmental strategies and policies, etc. This topic may include the fields indicated above, but are not limited to these.

Authors are encouraged to submit high quality, original works that discuss the latest developments in environmental management research and application with the certain scope to share experiences and research findings and to stimulate more ideas and useful insights regarding current best-practices and future directions in environmental management.

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DOI: [https://doi.org/10.14505/jemt.v13.4\(60\).20](https://doi.org/10.14505/jemt.v13.4(60).20)

## Assessment of Gastronomic Tourism Potential in the Ganja-Gazakh Economic Region of Azerbaijan

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### Suggested Citation:

Aliyev, V. (2022). Assessment of Gastronomic Tourism Potential in the Ganja-Gazakh Economic Region of Azerbaijan. *Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism*, (Volume XIII, Summer), 4(60): 1142 - 1150. DOI:[10.14505/jemt.v13.4\(60\).20](https://doi.org/10.14505/jemt.v13.4(60).20)

### Article's History:

Received 14<sup>th</sup> of March 2022; Received in revised form 7<sup>th</sup> of April 2022. Accepted 20<sup>th</sup> of May 2022; Published 28<sup>th</sup> of June 2022. Copyright © 2022 by ASERS® Publishing. All rights reserved.

### Abstract

We have shifted our focus away from the sea-sand-sun triad and toward other tourist kinds as a result of shifting tourism trends throughout the world and in our own country. Gastronomy tourism can bring visitors to the location at any time of year. Because it is not affected by seasonality, it is a step ahead of other forms of tourism in this respect.

Lack of promotion in determining the gastronomic potential of the Ganja-Gazakh economic region of Azerbaijan and highlighting gastronomic values, the presence of a bad image in English about the importance of the Ganja province, the lack of collection of gastronomic delicacies under one roof, mainly meat and meat products included in the target values, the lack of sufficient government support for tourism. There are no gastronomic holidays, etc. Among the negative results obtained as a result of the study are such problems as the inadequacy of the physical conditions in the activity. The Ganja-Gazakh economic region is one of the factors that positively influence the Ganja-Gazakh economic region due to its geographical location, having fertile lands, many civilizations, cultural and historical structure and unique cooking techniques.

The purpose of this study, which analyzes the unique features and defining factors of the modern tourism industry that has developed around gastronomy, based on the study of existing market structures as well as future developments. The research method chosen for this purpose is a case study analysis at both empirical and theoretical levels. The example of the Ganja-Kazakh economic region, where gastronomic tourism has developed recently with its unique characteristics, provides a suitable basis for proposing a strategic plan to develop the industry by using the dynamics of its great potential.

**Keywords:** tourism experience; culinary tourism; gastronomy tourism; food tourism.

**JEL Classification:** L83; Z32; R11.

### Introduction

The tourism industry, which gains a significant momentum with each passing year, is a great source of income and employment. Both developed and developing countries have significant recreational resource potential, and tourism is a fast rising part of their economies (Akbulayev 2022). Today, all destinations are aware of tourism. This awareness leads to increased competition between destinations. Over time, new directions appear and "how can you win this rivalry?" An attempt is made to find an answer to the question. Destinations that want to gain a competitive advantage develop strategies and go for product diversification. Destinations identified by tourists for the tourism industry have played an important role in the branding of this region. It is revealed that tourists choose according to their interests when planning their choice of destination. It is clear that one of these areas of interest is food and drink, no matter what destination is chosen. Based on this, one of the most important areas of tourism at present is gastronomic tourism. In gastronomic tourism, which is important for every country, especially developed cities are mentioned with their local flavors.

If a region has a unique and different culture and diversity, it is possible to talk about the culinary culture for that region. Due to its geographical location, Azerbaijan has hosted different civilizations for centuries. This

diversity has caused different cultures to create a food culture in different regions. Our cuisine is in competition with many international cuisines with its cooking technique and presentation, while having its own unique and diverse examples in food culture. In this context, in recent years, especially our cities such as Ganja-Gazakh economic region have been very popular destinations for local tourists for gastronomic tourism. Unfortunately, foreign tourists are not aware of this tourism potential of the Ganja-Gazakh economic region.

## 1. Literature Review

Villagomes Buele conducted a study on "Gastronomic experience as a factor in motivation and satisfaction in coastal destinations", and the results show that the gastronomic motives that most influenced tourist satisfaction were "enjoying seafood", "tasting a typical dish" and "enjoying food on the beach" (Villagomez-Buele et.al. 2020).

"The Future of Food Tourism in a Post-COVID-19 World: Insights from New Zealand," by Joanna Fountain. Food and tourism are two significant parts of New Zealand's economy and identity examined in this research. It also addresses the question of what role food and beverages can or should play in ensuring the long-term viability of tourism-dependent economies. (Fountain 2021). "Gastronomy tourist experiences: the cookery workshops of Cinque Terre," by Jithendran Kokkranikal and Elisa Carabelli. The study adds to the literature on third-generation gastronomic tourism practices by concentrating on tourists' participation in interactive eating scenes in Cinque Terre cookery classes. (Kokkranikal and Carabelli 2021). The food image of France, Italy, and Thailand, countries recognized for their popular cuisine, is depicted in Karim and Qing-article chi's "Culinary Tourism as a Destination Attraction: An Empirical Examination of Destinations' Food Image." (Karim and Geng-Qing Chi 2010). The article "The role of luxury gastronomy in culinary tourism: An ethnographic study of Michelin-Starred restaurants in France" by Wided Batat analyzes Michelin-starred chefs' roles as change-makers and promoters of tourism activities in both rural and urban locations (Batat 2021).

Previous tourism studies show that 40% of a tourist's budget is spent on food and drink. (Boyne, Williams and Hall 2002). The consumption of food and drink is a mandatory necessity for the tourist, as well to gain information about the culture and identity of the destination. (López-Guzmán and Sánchez-Cañizares 2011). Ranta, taking Thailand as an example in his study, stated how important the state-supported practices are in terms of gastronomy tourism (Ranta 2015). Privitera is a study of culinary tourism in Italy. Results include identifying key considerations for tourists going on a food tour, as Sicily's gastronomic heritage is recognized as a valuable tourist product and the opportunity to explore the diversity of local and regional culture (Privitera 2020). The findings of this study show that, among other factors, social and environmental sustainability has a significant impact on the frequency with which Italian tourists try local foods and beverages in agri-tourism areas (Ricardo, *et al.* 2019).

## 2. Research Methodology

The study relies solely on secondary data. As a result, several prior studies have been chosen to provide an overview of how local food development in the tourism industry is carried out. The selection of literature is based on the article's objective. Food tourism is defined as visiting primary or secondary food producers, gourmet festivals, restaurants, and other sites with the primary purpose of enjoying food as the primary reason for visiting, according to the definition. The selected literature was prepared based on research conducted in regions that were not classified as gourmet hotspots, in order to be compatible with the Azerbaijani environment. The restrictions of this article apply to the literature that has been cited. In Azerbaijan, there has been little research on the evolution of native food. The majority of the research was based on studies conducted outside of Azerbaijan. This can lead to biases in the study's diverse social and cultural contexts, which differ from the Azerbaijan context. The researchers examined a wide range of secondary data sources, including printed books, research papers, articles, conference proceedings, government reports, and other secondary data sources available both online and offline.

### Gastronomy and Tourism

Nearly 1.5 billion people in the world participate in tourism activities (UNWTO 2019). In the face of this amount, it becomes inevitable that tourism professionals will feed on sources other than the trio of sea, sand and sun. The most important of these sources is undoubtedly gastronomic tourism. Gastronomy tourism can provide an unlimited number of services to tourists every month of the year, every day of the month, and even every hour of the day.

Despite the fact that food is one of the most significant aspects of the tourism experience, it has only recently become recognized as a vital part of tourism and an area of study in its own right. While stating that

many different terms are used for food tourism, Long stated that each term used approaches the issue from a different perspective. (Long 2015) Gastronomy tourism is defined as the pursuit of unique food and drink experiences. In the areas where it passes, there are the main directions of authentic gastronomic and wine tourism. The authenticity of a dish means that the product is unique to the region or country from the point of view of the consumer (Groves 2001).

Visiting gastronomic tourism, primary and secondary food producers and food festivals

They defined it as the travels made to taste and get to know the food produced in the accommodation establishments and restaurants in the destinations (Hall and Mitchell. 2000)

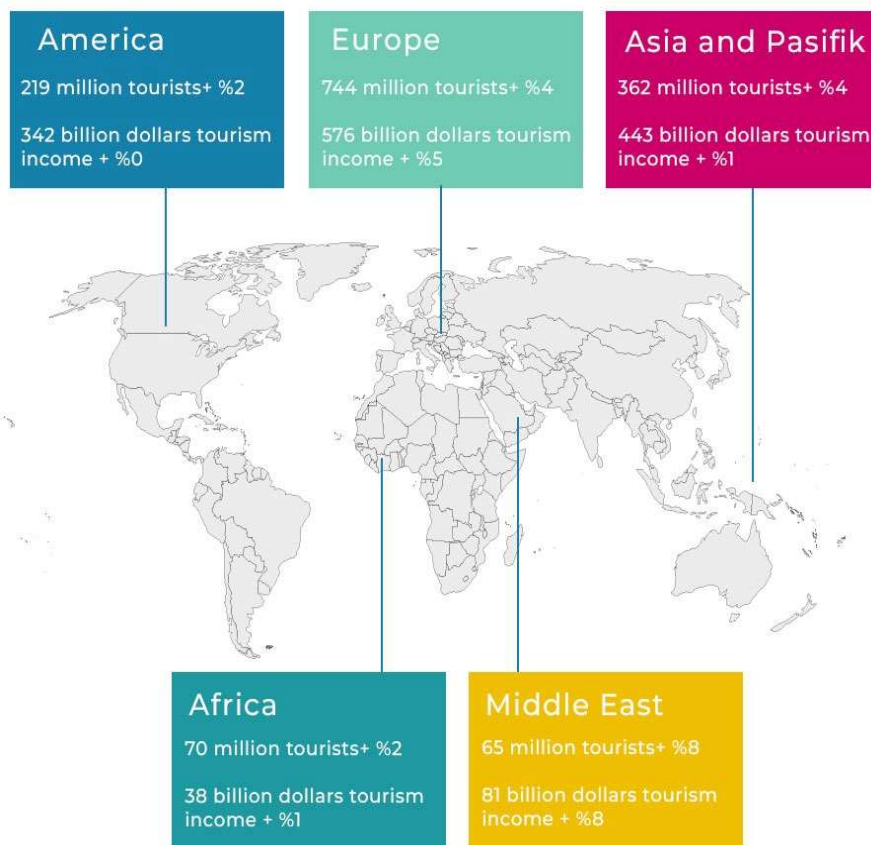
While an ordinary visit to a restaurant cannot be considered gastronomic tourism;

- a. Desire to consume a special quality food,
- b. Desire to consume a product of a particular region,
- c. The desire to taste a dish prepared by a particular cook,

It should be among the motivations for a gastronomic visit (Michael Hall and Sharples 2003).

### Gastronomy Tourism around the World

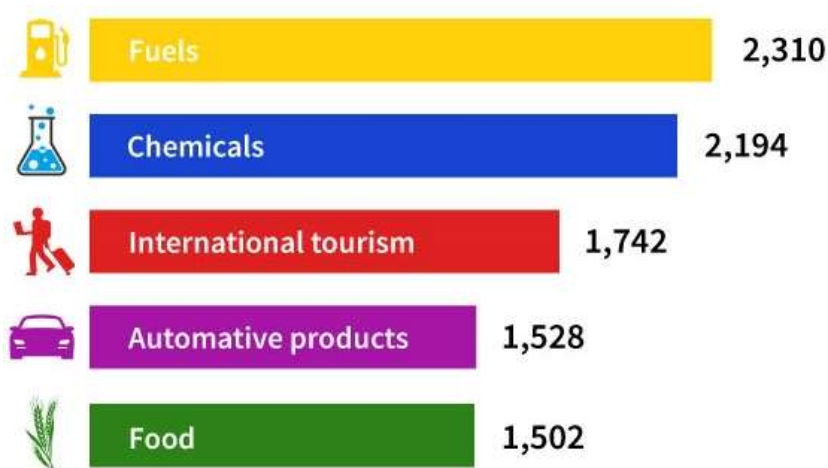
Figure 1. The number of tourists going to America, Europe, Asia-Pacific, Africa and the Middle East in 2019, the tourism revenues of the regions and the rate of increase in revenues compared to the previous year are given.



Source: (UNWTO, International Tourism Highlights 2020)

The reason why the data is 2019 is that the tourism providers do not reflect the reality due to the 2020-2021 pandemic. When the data is examined, it is seen that Europe ranks first with 744 million tourists and 576 billion dollars in tourism income. Then comes Asia-Pacific with 362 million tourists, 443 billion dollars tourism income and America with 219 million tourists and 342 billion dollars tourism income. While Africa has a tourism income of 38 billion dollars with 70 million tourists, the Middle East has a tourism income of 81 billion dollars with 65 million tourists. If we look at the increase rates in the number of tourists compared to the previous year, Asia-Pacific and Europe grew by 4%, the Middle East by 8%, the Americas by 2% and Africa by 2. The increase rates in tourism arrivals are respectively; Asia-Pacific 1%, Europe 5%, Middle East 8%, Africa 1% and America 0%.

Figure 2. Among the world's export earnings in 2019



Source (UNWTO, International Tourism Highlights 2020)

The reason for the data being 2019 is that the tourism destinations do not reflect the reality due to the 2020-2021 pandemic is seen. Based on these data, it can be stated that tourism and gastronomy have a very important potential for countries to generate income.

Table 1. The Top Ten Most Popular Foodie Destinations on The Planet (2022)

Rank	City	Country	Food Tour	Dishes
1	Rome	Italy	Around the Prati District in Rome, take a sunset food tour.	Buffalo Mozzarella; Prosciutto With Fig; Ricotta; Scamorza With Spina
2	London	UK	Secret Food Tours: London Bridge	Fish & Chips, Sausage Rolls and traditional Bacon & Egg Baps,
3	Paris	France	Taste Of Montmartre is a secret food tour in Paris.	Baguette; Local Cheese And Chocolate
4	Dubai	UAE	Tour of Dubai, including Old Town, Dubai Creek, Souks, and Street Food.	Manousheh – Pizza Of Dubai, Iranian Sangak – One Of The Most Popular Dishes, Chelo Kebab – A Heavenly Taste, Al Harees – Taste The Tradition
5	Barcelona	Spain	Cooking in Spain is an interactive experience.	Spanish Tapas; Traditional Paella; Sangria
6	Madrid	Spain	Original Private Food Tour in Madrid	wines, cheeses, delicacies, cured meat, spanish tapas, vermouth
7	Sao Paulo	Brazil	São Paulo: Liberdade Food Tour on Sundays	Picanha, Moqueca Feijoada, Acai, Barreado, Pão de Queijo, Pastels
8	New York City	USA	"Best of Brooklyn" Food and Culture Tour (Half-Day)	Pizza; Pierogi; Cannoli;
9	Bangkok	Thailand	Taste Of Thailand Food Tours' Bangkok Food Tour.	Som Tam; Larb
10	Tokyo	Japan	Tokyo After Middle of the night: A Japanese Food Tour	Yakitori; Monjayaki; Wagashi

Source (Tripadvisor 2022)

Food cultures are effective in the image of countries. But it is seen that some countries are identified with their cuisines. France, Italy, Indian, Chinese, Spanish cuisines are world famous cuisines. France, Italy, Spain, Australia are the first countries that come to mind in wine tourism and again in cheese tourism in France, Switzerland, Italy and the Netherlands. Belgium and Switzerland when talking about chocolate, Germany when talking about beer, Costa Rica and Guatemala when talking about coffee, Sri Lanka and Japan when talking about tea. It is possible to examine a few of these examples in the context of the following countries.

### Spain

It is well known that gastronomy has played a significant role in the development of the tourism sector, particularly since 2010, in Spain, which is one of the most visited nations in the world. Spain has managed to be among the



most important gastronomy countries in the world. While there were one hundred and seventy-one Michelin Star Restaurants throughout Spain in 2014, this number reached one hundred and eighty-six in 2018. There are nine three-star, twenty-three two-star and one hundred fifty-four one-star Michelin-starred restaurants throughout Spain. It is estimated that Spain earned approximately 9.6 billion dollars from gastronomic tourism in 2016. In the San Sebastian region, there are sixteen Michelin-starred restaurants, three of which are seven three-star Michelin-starred restaurants operating in the country. San Sebastian, regarded as a model region for gastronomy in the world, manages to maintain the quality of products by adhering to certain rules, from agriculture to the table (TUROB 2018). Today, San Sebastian has left terrorism behind and was chosen European Capital of Culture in 2016 and has become one of the most important gastronomic cities in the world. The San Sebastian Gastronomika International Gastronomy Congress and Fair, organized for the twentieth time this year, has become one of the most important events in the world with the participation of famous chefs from five continents. (SanSebastianGastronomika 2018)

## France

France is known for its wine and cuisine. It's uncommon to see one without the other. Each location has its unique gastronomic specialties and exploring them all will require more than one trip. Taste with forks at the ready! France is known around the world for its cuisine and manner of life. The French gastronomy dinner and its rituals have been designated as an intangible cultural asset by UNESCO since 2010. The importance placed on the pleasures of the table can be found in everyday life as well. The three-meal day is very important to the French. Breakfast is traditionally served in the morning, lunch about 1 p.m., and dinner around 8 p.m. (C. France 2022).

How did Lyon, France, become the gastronomic capital of the world? Lyon, France's gastronomic capital and home to one of France's most known chefs, Paul Bocuse, is blessed with an exceptionally broad selection of cuisine. This is due to its strategic location as a crossroads for regions with high-quality products, as well as the talent and creativity of its chefs. Lyon has almost 4,000 restaurants, with cuisines to suit all budgets, ranging from traditional Lyonnais "bouchon" restaurants to Michelin-starred restaurants, as well as modern bistros and century-old brasseries. (E. France 2019)

## Kore, Japonya, Tayland

Played a key role in the Korean cuisine cultural promotion project, with a series published in 2003 (exported to 150 different countries), traditional Korean cuisine, culture and cooking techniques have reached many people. Korea, whose cuisine has become a center of attraction for China and Hong Kong, has accelerated the introduction of Korean cuisine to the world by launching the "Korean Cuisine to the World" campaign in 2009. Japan is one of the world's branded cities and has over 55,000 Japanese restaurants around the world. It has been observed that the main purpose of 76% of tourists coming to Japan is to enjoy Japanese food, and 95% of tourists are satisfied with experiencing Japanese cuisine (Unwto, 2017).

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the Basque Culinary Center (BCC), the Japan Tourism Agency, and the Nara Prefectural Government are pleased to announce that the 7th UNWTO World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism will be held in Nara, Japan, from the 13th to the 15th of December 2022 (UNWTO 2022).

## 3. Tourism in Azerbaijan

### 3.1 Tourism Statistics from Azerbaijan

The diamond model and clustering scenario were used to examine the general state of the tourism sector in Azerbaijan, as well as the competitiveness of tourism (Ahmadov, Mammadov and Mirzayeva 2021). Azerbaijan has a lot of potential for tourism growth. Nature, climate, historical sites, food, our people's rich culture, and other aspects all contribute to the growth of various tourism locations. Mineral pools, hot springs, and mud baths abound in Azerbaijan, providing excellent chances for both relaxation and therapy. The world's only therapeutic Naftalan (white) oil has received widespread acclaim. The development of tourism in Azerbaijan has resulted in an increase in the number of visitors to our nation each year. In addition, in line with the rule on the "ASAN Visa" system issued by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated October 20, 2016, e-visas can be obtained through the "ASAN Visa" system within 3 hours beginning in 2017. The number of tourists increased as a result of this event. Qatar, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Japan, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, China, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Israel, and the United Arab Emirates are among the countries that grant one-time electronic visas to their nationals at international airports in the Republic of Azerbaijan. (Gov 2021). In Table 1, it is necessary to indicate the number of tourists visiting Azerbaijan since 2010.

Table 1. Statistics of tourists visiting Azerbaijan by years

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
person	2 006,2	2 248,8	2 696,7	2 849,6	3 170,4	-	-

Source: (Azerbaijan, Annual Report for tourism 2021)

Due to the fact that the tourists visiting Azerbaijan fell in the 2020-2021 pandemic period in the statistics according to the years, and due to the tourism scene, data were not taken into account. According to statistics, the majority of visitors to Azerbaijan are tourists from the Russian Federation, followed by Georgia, Turkey, Iran, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar and Bahrain. Compared to previous years, there has been an increase in the number of visitors to Azerbaijan in 2019.

Table 2. Expenditure purpose of foreign tourists arrived to Azerbaijan for tourism purpose, mln. Dolar

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Expenditure mln \$	1267,2	0,8304	13447	15661	17484	-	-

Source: (Azerbaijan, Annual Report for Tourism 2021)

It is understood from the research that the number of foreign visitors to Azerbaijan, as always, is higher than the number of visitors to our Republic. In a competitive environment, there is no doubt that prices in the Azerbaijan domestic tourism market will be lower than in previous years.

### 3.2 Gastronomy Tourism in Azerbaijan case of Ganja and Gazakh

Azerbaijan cuisine, which is considered one of the most important cuisines of the world, which contains various flavors, is among the countries where tourists prefer to go for gastronomic tourism, thanks to its deep-rooted history and rich content. Dolma, noodles, dushbara, giz-biz, piti, khangal, various kinds of pilafs, kebabs. These are just a few examples of our national cuisine. Azerbaijani cuisine, with its historical roots and originality, combines the features of the region, as well as diversity. However, the rich culinary culture of our country is characterized by a factor that is superior to its delicious dishes, fragrant drinks and beautiful fruits. High hospitality is the basis of the culinary philosophy of Azerbaijanis. All this indicates the potential of kitchen tourism in Azerbaijan. It is close to the cuisine of other Eastern countries due to its cooking, dark spices and complete additions. Currently, in Azerbaijan, along with the specific features of the ancient methods of cooking, the requirements of modern cuisine are widely taken into account. The beautiful nature of our country, natural resources, rivers, lakes, the Caspian Sea have allowed us to form a vast and irreplaceable national cuisine. We can also add high-calorie meat and fish dishes, vegetarian and vegetable dishes in accordance with vegetarian requirements. Our cuisine is also notable for its variety of local wines, mineral waters, pickles and sweets. Various tours are organized for tourist groups visiting our country along the culinary route, designed to demonstrate the potential of food tourism in Azerbaijan. These tours, which continue throughout the year, offer airport pick-up, accommodation, examples of national cuisine in Baku-Gabala-Sheki (360 km), Baku-Masalli (245 km), Baku Guba (157 km) and Baku Ganja routes (297 km). Restaurants include breakfast, lunch and dinner, as well as visits to various historical monuments, sights and excursions. In particular, Ganja attracts an influx of local and foreign tourists every year.

Regions, including Ganja and Gazakh Economic Zone, reflect ancient history. This situation is also reflected in the country's cuisine. These Regions are distinguished by their unique desserts and dishes. Unlike Baku baklava, baklava cooked in Ganja is light-colored and cooked in a copper pan over embers. Ganja dovga, made from greens such as mint, spinach and celery; Meat, white cheese, or greens, cakes are the favorite delicacies of the local cuisine that you must taste when you visit Ganja. Another dish that should be on your travel menu is Shah pilaf, which is reminiscent of a pie covered with lamb, dried fruits and onions and covered with flatbread. At the same time, as in other regions of Azerbaijan, kebabs are popular. The difference here is that the meat of the western region differs from other regions. Thousands of local and foreign tourists travel to Ganja every year from the effects of these meals. The "Wine Road" tourism route, which partially covers the Ganja-Gazakh tourism region and was developed by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Azerbaijan, is important. Although it covers western regions such as Ganja, Goygol, Tovuz and Shamkir, publicity is very weak compared to other countries in the world. Such roads often involve fields interacting with local residents. This allows foreign tourists to explore the region as well as winemaking, traveling to specific wineries and exploring the winemaking process. A clear example of this is the wine and cognac factories located in Goygol, Ganja and Shamkir. Each economic and geographical region of the country prepares dishes according to its climatic indicators, ethnic composition and traditions of the region. This shows that the country has a diverse culinary culture.

Table 3. Catering turnover by Ganja-Gazakh economic region

Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
USD	58 931	64 862,0	73 519,6	76 601,5	78 555,	-	-

Source: (Azerbaijan, Main indicators of catering 2021)

Table 4. By Ganja-Gazakh economic region, the number of overnights in hotels and similar places

year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
overnights	155 079	113 943	170 580	205 239	189 577	-	-

Source: (The State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan 2021)

Table 5. By economic region, the number of people who have been accommodated in hotels and similar enterprises.  
Economic region of Ganja-Gazakh

year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
person	89 847	41 331	43 011	56 868	78 665	-	-

Source: (The State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan 2021)

Note: Due to the fact that the tourists visiting Azerbaijan fell in the 2020-2021 pandemic period in the statistics according to the years, and due to the tourism scene, data were not taken into account.

## Conclusion and Suggestion

Gastronomy tourism is unquestionably an important component of local food identity, as it is influenced by social values, culture, the natural environment, and the local economy. The goal of this study is to uncover the gastronomic tourist potential of Azerbaijan's Ganja region, to determine the role of gastronomy tourism in Ganja tourism, and to give recommendations for its growth. From the statistical examples we have included in our research, it is obvious that even though the Azerbaijani city of Ganja has a special culture and products with its food and wine, it is not well known. This may be due to the lack of regional marketing activities. However, since this research cannot determine the situation in detail, new research is needed to evaluate the situation of Azerbaijan in this regard. As there has been no previous study to determine the gastronomic image of the Azerbaijan destination, the lack of regional image studies is also noticed. It may be beneficial to analyze the potential of Azerbaijan's destination well and to use regional elements in marketing activities. In addition, regional marketing studies, examples of which are encountered in the world, should be included in Azerbaijan and the preparation of its legal basis should be started. As in France, determining and legalizing the characteristics that a food or beverage must have in order to be named with a specific name and/or region can help preserve and increase the characteristics of regional products. Inventory work, which is the first step in determining the assets or properties owned, can be done more effectively in Azerbaijan. For this purpose, various evaluations, criticisms and suggestions have been developed that are thought to contribute to the Ganja gastronomy tourism observed in the restaurants in the tourism sector in Ganja.

- A study can be carried out to determine the local flavors that are mostly offered in food and beverage establishments in Ganja.

- The personnel working in food and beverage establishments should be trained on Azerbaijani cuisine, and it should be ensured that the personnel have extensive knowledge about Azerbaijani food and beverages and their presentations. In addition, the staff should know the menu of the establishment well and be able to give ideas and suggestions to the guests about the food. In order for tourism education in Azerbaijan to grow in a complete way, the "Tourism Education Strategy" must be made and put into place based on the priorities of the Strategic Roadmap (Bayramli and Sarkhanov 2021)

- Since there are not many studies in the literature on Ganja, studies on gastronomy and tourism can contribute to the literature on a national basis.

- Scientific meetings, festivals and competitions such as national and international conferences, panels and congresses should be organized and encouraged to promote Azerbaijan's culinary culture in the best way, and experts should be provided to take part in these events.

- In addition to meat and meat products, the menus of food and beverage establishments in Ganja province should include other local products specific to Ganja.

- Social media platforms featuring the gastronomic products of the province of Ganja can contribute to the promotion of Ganja in gastronomy tourism.

- As a result, Ganja has an important potential in terms of local dishes and products and gastronomic tourism. However, realizing this potential requires serious marketing efforts. In this regard, more effective results

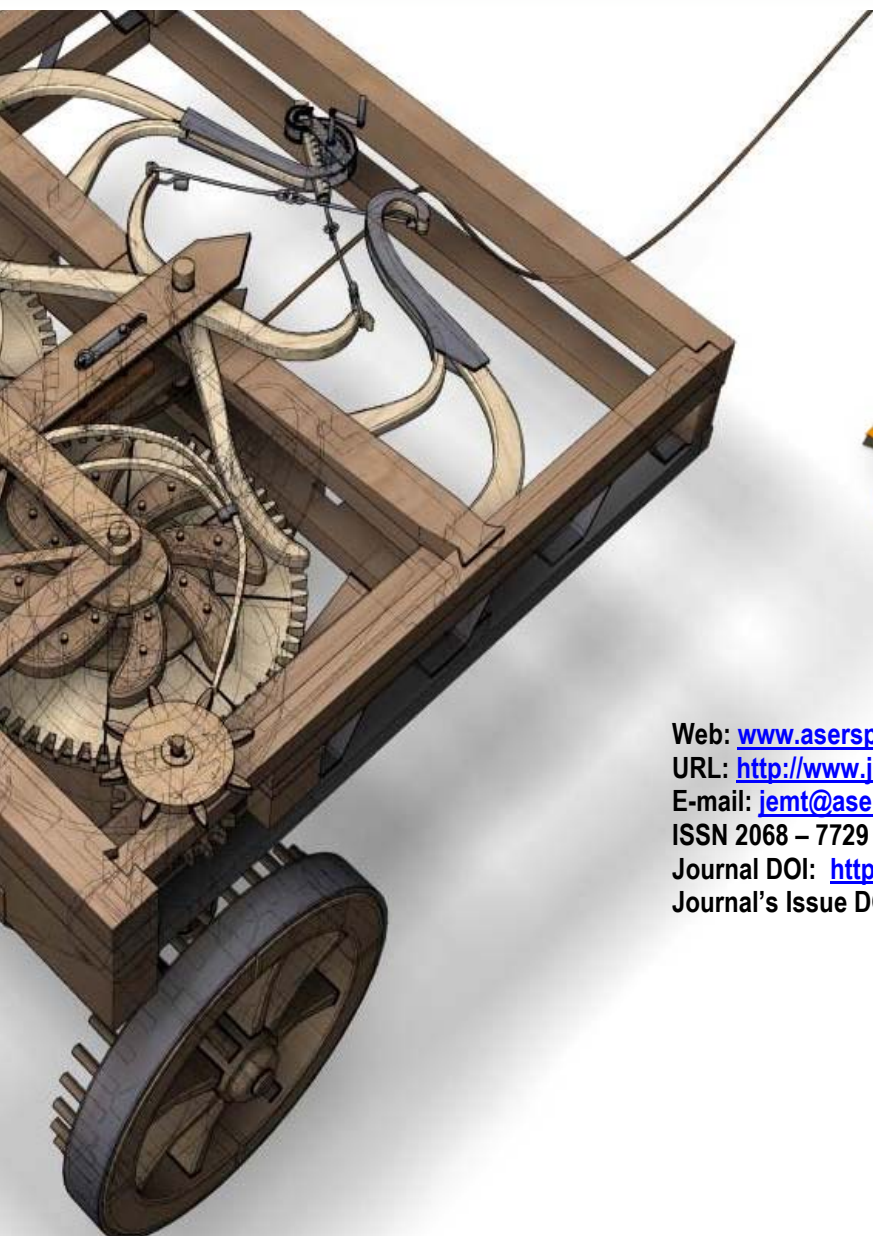
can be achieved only with the joint efforts of public institutions, private enterprises, manufacturers, non-governmental organizations and the university in the province.

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ISSN 2068 – 7729

Journal DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14505/jemt>

Journal's Issue DOI: [https://doi.org/10.14505/jemt.v13.4\(60\).00](https://doi.org/10.14505/jemt.v13.4(60).00)