



**5<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE  
OF OBSERVATORIO DE LA ALIMENTACIÓN AND FUNDACIÓN ALÍCIA  
FOOD HERITAGE, TOURISM AND SUSTAINABILITY**

**Barcelona, 18- 21 June 2019**

Food heritage, like heritage in general, has been considered both a socio-cultural construction – which can symbolically represent an identity– and an added-value industry. The political-cultural logic emerges from the desire to recover cultural elements which, having disappeared or being in the process of disappearing, are considered an expression of identity. The commercial logic, on the other hand, tends towards appropriating as part of “heritage” anything that can be turned into a commodity, either because of its dimension as entertainment or as an object of consumption. These dimensions can be either exclusive or complementary.

Based on what has happened so far, it can be stated that all the knowledge and practices related to the production, transformation, distribution and consumption of food, and which are transmitted across generations within a region or community, make up a collective heritage. All of these elements are manifestations of an important biocultural diversity –they constitute an irreplaceable common legacy and occupy a specific space, still to be defined, within the agri-food universe. The diversity of terms used to designate these different elements (“traditional”, “typical”, “specific”, “authentic”, “local”, “premium”...) points to the difficulty of characterising and assessing this knowledge and these practices.

The main obstacle lies precisely in the cultural dimension of heritage. It involves aspects which are difficult to objectify or “normalise”, such as memory, tradition, identity, transmission and behaviour. Another difficulty is that it is a living heritage in many different ways, with all the problems involved in its management and maintenance. In addition, turning something into heritage causes a shift in its status, turning products specific to a local culture into premium products appreciated beyond their place of origin. Therefore, this conversion into cultural heritage, with its immaterial, fluctuating and pliable nature, becomes difficult to manage for the various stakeholders involved.

Many state and regional governments are actively seeking to learn about the food heritage of their populations in order to promote policies for production development and to boost local development through the promotion of local products and cuisine. Local cuisines are increasingly becoming resources that can be exploited as part of the tourist offer. The tourism and catering industries not only contribute to the promotion of traditional cuisine and its possible recovery, but also to its transformation and redefinition, under varying and sometimes conflicting parameters: on the one hand, the “selection”, “reduction” and “simplification” of specific dishes and products considered to be representative, and on the other, their “idealisation”, “replication” and propagation.

Indeed, the success of this food-as-heritage construct raises some specific concerns related to the production sector and its short-, medium- and long-term sustainability, in terms of its impact on the land and landscape, resources, activities, profits, and even local, regional and state-level food policies.

Given the possibilities for comparison offered by the international dimension of this Conference, the questions below are proposed as an invitation to participate and contribute answers based on our own diversity of experiences, countries, approaches, problems, types of involvement, responsibilities, etc.

Who are the main agents turning food into heritage, and what are their aims? What criteria have been used for the construction of a food heritage? How are environmental, social and economic benefits generated from the promotion of food heritage, and who are its beneficiaries?

Are the traditional know-how, food practices and local cuisines recognised as markers of living identities and cultures? How can such large and varied diversity be analysed? Are there practices, social groups or regions which are discriminated against in the food heritage map?

Is it necessary to change the strategies for turning "typical, local or traditional" cuisine into heritage in a world in which not only products, techniques and practices have been globalised at a speed never seen before, but also trends, fashions, values, information and food critiques?

From the point of view of food heritage and its sustainability, is tourism a right, a resource, an intrusion, a threat...? Does it bring about benefits and damages, "winners" and "losers"?

In the case of so-called rural tourism and food & wine tourism, what connections can be found between an experiential offer, visit or workshop, and the dedication to a "genuine" praxis? To what extent can the need to preserve this "genuine" praxis be questioned (beyond the need to define it more or less traditionally, adapt it to reality, develop it as a business model, invent new professionals, train them...)?

If global urbanites have discovered a source of well-being and entertainment in tradition, can rural and tradition-rooted communities be denied the possibility to boost their local products through their adaptation, innovation and creativity?

Faced with growing concern about food planning, supply and access to healthy and sustainable food in large cities, what role does food heritage play in securing this right? And what role does it play in the reformulation of the relationship between the countryside and the city? Or in development models and the transformation of the food system?

### **Paper submissions:**

Those interested should send the abstract of their papers (minimum 300 maximum 500 words) by **30 September 2018** to the following email address: [congreso2019@odela.org](mailto:congreso2019@odela.org). The abstracts can be submitted in Spanish, Catalan, English, Portuguese and French. The following information must be included with the abstract:

- Title of the research paper
- Full name of author/authors (please specify main author if several)
- Professional and/or personal address
- Contact phone number
- Email address
- Short biographical note (maximum 150 words).

Acceptance of papers will be notified on 15 November 2018.

Date of the next update: late June 2018.

### **For more information:**

Observatorio de la Alimentación - [congreso2019@odela.org](mailto:congreso2019@odela.org) - Phone number: +34 934 034 559

### **Organizing Committee:**

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