



What Does “Typical” Mean?

The Rise of Traditional Foods and Place-Based Labels

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1. THE EMERGENCE OF TYPICAL AND TRADITIONAL FOOD PRODUCTS

Over recent years, it has become common to find definitions such as ‘typical’, ‘traditional’, ‘locally sourced’ either on food bought at the supermarket or when reading a restaurant menu. What do these terms refer too? What are typical foods and why are consumers interested in them?

In general terms, a food product is defined ‘typical’ when it is characteristic, with a strong connection to the geographic area it comes from. Its unique nature can depend on various elements, such as particular organoleptic qualities connected to the particular climate of the area of production, or its use of artisanal processes passed down from generation to generation.

The thousands of different cheeses that exist in Europe are an example of typical products, often made using cheese-making and aging techniques shared by local communities. The unique characteristics of these foods – such as their aromas, flavours and consistency – arise from the work carried out over centuries to combine a number of different factors through craftsmanship: factors such as the climate and geography of the area,

the availability of natural resources, the local flora and fauna, food preferences influenced by tastes, religion and local culture.

Today, following a long period of industrial development that has essentially homogenised the food on offer, the unique qualities of **typical food** products and their specific provenance are being rediscovered and re-evaluated by consumers.

However, as we will see in this chapter, what makes a food product **typical** or **traditional** is a question that is not free from controversy, and is open to various interpretations dependent on the various designations and the discourses that accompany them.

2. AN INCREASINGLY 'GLOCALISED' WORLD

Recent interest in the origin and identity of food products cannot be separated from certain economic, social and cultural features of our time. In fact, we could say that food is a good indicator by which to understand a number of important changes taking place in the contemporary world.

With the globalisation of markets and the explosion of commercial exchanges between different countries and continents, particularly in the second half of the 1900s, products that were unknown up until a few decades ago have, given the ease with which they can now be found, become a common part of our daily lives – and our eating habits. Take the fruit and vegetables that arrive from distant countries. On the one hand, inter-continental transport has made the consumption of exotic fruits commonplace, whilst on the other, supplies from the southern hemisphere mean we have access to all varieties of fresh fruit and vegetables regardless of the season. Never before have we had access to such a choice, and never has food been as 'de-localised' as it is today, separated from the geographical environment and climate conditions with which it was originally associated.

At the same time, the expansion of food markets has allowed European producers to promote and export quality foods that were once purely for local consumers. This is easier between members of the European Union thanks to the common market, but it is equally possible with countries outside the Union, with whom commercial agreements have been reached.

This cultural and commercial exchange with distant places is causing contrasting reactions in western societies. The availability of 'ethnic' and 'exotic' foods certainly encourages curiosity in the new, allowing us to stand in the explorer's shoes each and every day. We can choose to immerse ourselves in different cultures, eating sushi, kebabs, couscous and all sorts of things, eating in foreign restaurants or trying out new ways of cooking in our own homes. The importation, at lower prices, of products that are already produced in our countries favours the consumer, allowing them to access goods that were once considered a luxury.

However, the simultaneous presence of local and foreign goods on the shop shelves stimulates in us a need for clarity. We feel disoriented by so much diversity. Furthermore, the numerous food scams uncovered over recent decades have demonstrated that we are not always able to fully determine the provenance of the materials that we buy, or their quality. A few years ago the substitution of beef with horsemeat in ready meals, such as frozen lasagnes, was discovered. The scandal, which exploded in Europe, brought to light not only widespread fraud, but an interminable and unknown **supply chain**: before entering the unsuspecting consumer's home, the meat in question had travelled thousands and thousands of kilometres through numerous countries, taking months to travel.

As if that were not enough, the importation of low cost products from economically-disadvantaged countries has placed many western producers in the agribusiness sector at risk. These producers, having to bear the highest production costs and most strict environmental, hygienic and qualitative standards have been significantly damaged by foreign competition with its unfair conditions, and by labelling systems that, very often, shed no light on the origin or various qualities of the goods in question.

Food globalisation and the consequent lengthening of **supply chains** has broadened our awareness and opportunities, whilst simultaneously making us more demanding when it comes to transparency regarding the geographical origin, sustainability and quality of the foods we put on our table.

To sum up, we can say that globalisation, first and foremost, poses an issue of identity: if what we are is expressed by what we eat, in an increasingly globalised world there is a growing need to reassert local food culture and, with this, our sense of belonging to a community.

In this sense, it is clear how we can only talk about local food in relation to the global expansion that has marked our economy and culture over recent decades. The tension between this expansion and the globalisation of goods and flavours and, as we have seen, the subsequent re-assertion of local values and products, has led to the creation of a neologism: 'globalisation' (with its adjective, 'glocal'). As we can easily tell, the word comes from a fusion between two opposite ideas: 'globalisation' and 'localisation'.

3. EUROPEAN QUALITY SCHEMES

What are the consequences of this apparently contradictory phenomenon of the globalisation and localisation of the food market?

At an institutional level, the demand for transparency when it comes to the quality and origin of foods on the market, and the protection of local food and wine delicacies, has, over recent decades, led to the development of complex regulations. New systems for the protection of locally produced foods, defending the interests of both producers and consumers, were first instituted nationally by certain European countries, and

later by the European Union using two tools for the common organisation of the food sector: the CAP (Common Agricultural Policy) and the CMO (Common Market Organisation).

Since 1992 in particular, the European Union has proposed new standards for certifying, protecting and promoting **typical** and **traditional food** production by all member states: these are the PDO, PGI and TSG schemes.

Last updated in 2012 (EU regulation 1151/2012), the 'geographic indications' system saw the harmonisation of those regulations previously developed autonomously by certain member states— France and Italy in particular — who were already using similar logos in order to protect product food quality.

The main objective of this regulatory system is to protect European food products from fraud or imitation, and to promote their unique nature, permanently binding the food's identity to its area of origin and its original characteristics. In this way, the system of protections adopted by European countries combines the two concepts of '**typical**' and '**traditional**'. On the one hand, regulated food products can be traced back to a geographic area of origin, a condition for the use of a particular denomination, whilst on the other, the regulations prove an historic connection between that kind of food and the geographic area, preserving its production methods for the present and the future.

As we will see, the three acronyms, often welcomed onto the packaging of the food we buy, stand for:

- Protected Designation of Origin (PDO)
- Protected Geographical Indication (PGI)
- **Traditional** Speciality Guaranteed (TSG)



Fig. 1. PDO, PGI and TSG Labels. Labels on typical and traditional food products certified by the European Union always carry, alongside the full name in clear view (for example, 'Kalamata olive oil'), one of the three coloured logos. The PDO label is easily recognised by its red colour, the PGI and TSG labels are both blue and yellow with differences in the illustration they carry.

3.1 WHAT ADVANTAGES DO THE EU LABELS BRING?

The PDO, PGI and TSG schemes link the use of a food designation (such as 'Munich beer' or 'Grana Padano') to precise criteria stipulating production and geographic origin, established through regulations known as 'production disciplinaries'. In this way, the product's name is conditioned by the fulfilment of regulations and passing specific tests.

When they work, the PDO, PGI and TSG schemes constitute systems of quality certification. Producers are granted the use of a particular name on their food labels that correlates to a label of quality (PDO, PGI and TSG), provided they respect specific rules governing production.

There are many advantages to these labels, both for producers and the consumer. The certainty that precise rules have been respected, ensured by the presence of one of these labels, is a guarantee for producers, because it avoids forms of unfair competition by other competing businesses and protects the brand's (the product's) good reputation. At the same time, by buying certified products, consumers can rely on quality control and the origin of raw materials, and choose according to consistent, guaranteed standards.

In other words, quality scheme labels play an important intermediary role, resolving the problem of a lack of direct communication between producers and consumers.

3.2 HOW ARE TYPICAL AND TRADITIONAL PRODUCTS REGISTERED?

Food producers, organised into consortia or associations, apply to register their own food speciality with the designated authorities of the member state (usually the Ministry for Agriculture). In this application, the applicant aims to demonstrate the connection between the food product and its geographical origin, providing evidence that demonstrates this connection and its historical standing.

Once the request has been considered and its viability established, it is the member state that forwards it to the European Union, which has just a few months (6 months for alcohol, 12 for all other products) to evaluate the request and decide whether or not to proceed to registration.

For a few years now it has also been possible for non-European producers to ask to register and certify their own **typical** and **traditional food** products. Once registration has been obtained, even non-member states can use the logos on their own food labels, meeting the standards and checks established by EU regulations.

3.3 PDO, PGI AND TSG: AN OVERVIEW

To date there are more than 3,300 **typical** and **traditional** products in the EU, and this number is constantly growing. Almost half of these are used for wines, whilst the rest are used by various food products (in particular fruit and vegetables, cereals, cheeses and cured meats), beers and liquors.

The member states that have embraced the scheme most wholeheartedly are those on the Mediterranean: Italy is the member state with the largest number of registered products (more than 800), followed closely by France (more than 700), Spain (more than 300) and Greece (more than 200).

Before we go on it is worth asking ourselves: what do the different labels mean and what is the difference between them?

As we see from this quality pyramid, different kinds of rules are applied depending on the kind of scheme adopted. It could be said that, as we move up the pyramid, the **typical** aspects associated with the product and recognised by each label intensify. Let's look at each one separately.

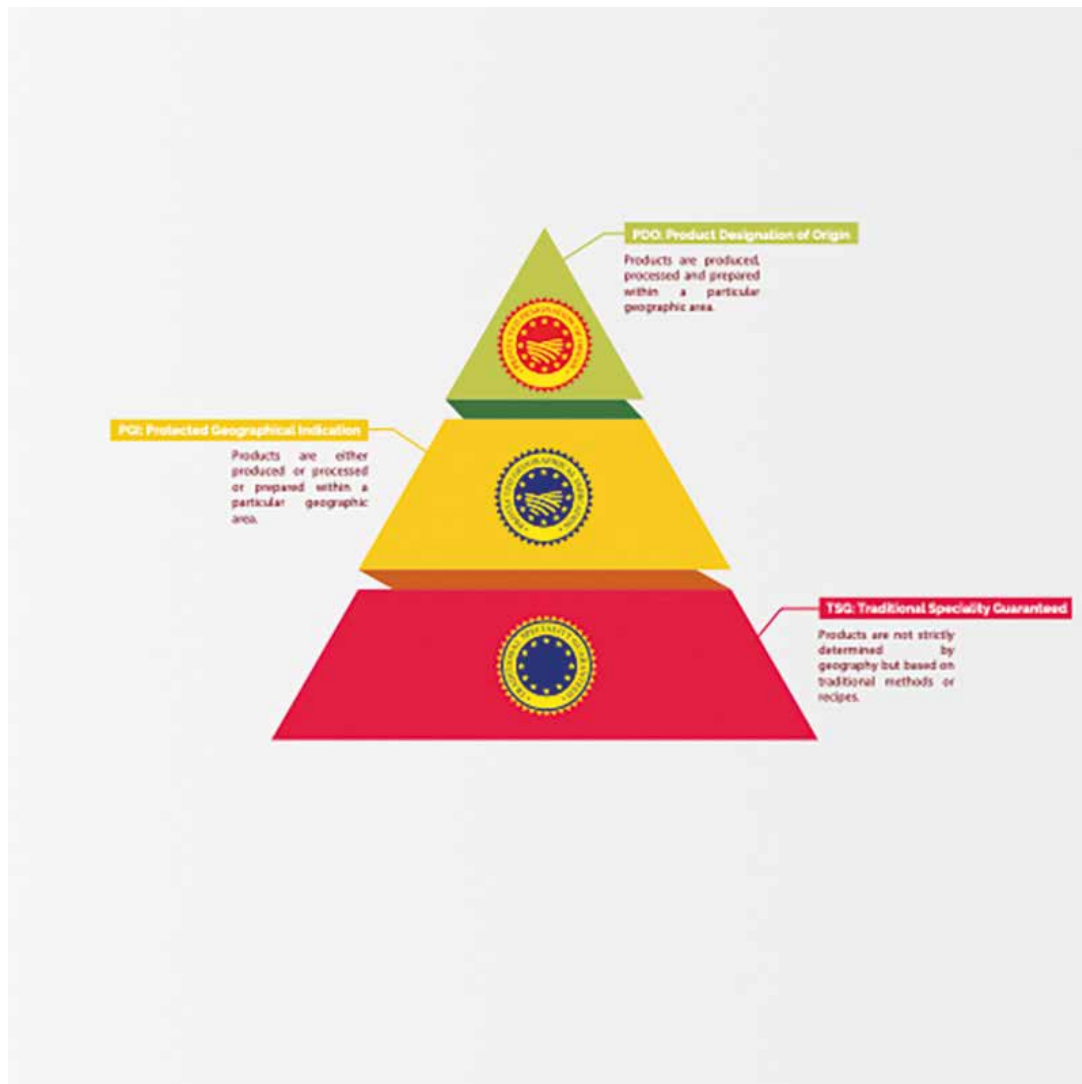


Fig. 2. The Quality Pyramid'. In the image we find a synthesis of the principles that characterise each quality scheme. The PDO scheme, at the top of the pyramid, guarantees the consumer that the food product has the strongest possible connection to its area of origin. The PGI scheme ensures that at least one of the phases in the production chain can be traced back to the indicated geographic area. The TSG scheme, rather than protecting typical aspects of the product's geographic origin, protects the continued use of the product's preparation methods over time.

3.3.1. PDO: PROTECTED DENOMINATION OF ORIGIN

Products with the PDO label are those with the strongest connection to their area of production. In order for a product to use this label, it needs to be produced, processed and prepared in the geographic area defined by the denomination. This means that the entire production chain, from the cultivation of raw materials to packaging, must take place in an area indicated in the regulation governing the PDO product.

The inimitable qualities of these products can be directly traced back to the geographical area of provenance, and not only in a purely physical sense. The physical environment not only refers to the specific factors affecting climate and geography, but also human ones, such as the know-how passed between generations, or the historical and cultural aspects that have made the development of a particular method possible. Just think of all those food products born from the integration of different cultures at a particular time in history, or foods that have sprung up around religious festivals and particular rituals.

One example can be found in the thousands of PDO wines produced in Europe using 'autochthonous' grapes. Their unique characteristics are the result of centuries spent adapting the genetic traits of the grape, through trial and error and cross-breeding, to the area's specific climate, to local tastes and the commercial demands that have followed over the passing of the centuries. In this sense, not even genetics can be separated from the mark humankind leaves on the environment around them. The institution PDO scheme connects producers to the use of grape varieties and **traditional** production techniques in order for them to be able to use a specific denomination of origin.

3.3.2. PGI: Protected Geographical Indication

The PGI label is given to those foods that can be identified with a geographic area of origin because of a particular quality or characteristic of the finished product.

In order to achieve PGI status it is necessary for at least one phase in the production, processing and preparation of the product to take place in the area of origin indicated in its name.

Unlike the more restrictive PDO status, the PGI quality scheme is generally more relaxed about the origin of the raw materials used in production. Many PGI products allow the use of national or non-European raw materials, this is not the case with PDO. PGI status is therefore used when, for example, the provenance of the raw materials is not a determining factor in the product's success, as with many other cases, when local production of raw materials cannot satisfy demand for that product.

For example, take those cured meats or cheeses that are not produced exclusively with local meat and milk, but that are recognisable and traceable to a place because of a particular production method. In these cases, PGI status allows for the use of foreign ingredients, but links the processing phase to the geographic area from which the recipe originates.

In other cases, as often happens with cereals, fruit and vegetables, if cultivation and harvesting are connected to the area of origin displayed on the label, it is possible to process and package the product elsewhere.

Producers of PGI products must nevertheless adhere to the strict production rules established in the ('disciplinary') regulation and, as with PDO, submit themselves to inspections by an external body.

3.3.3. TSG: Traditional Specialty Guaranteed

The TSG scheme aims to protect the production method and/ or the composition that identifies the product.

Whilst the PDO and PGI schemes connect a product to a geographic area of origin, TSG products do not impose restrictive geographical ties, but require the fulfilment of established rules governing production, as set out in the regulations.

Despite there being no insistence on geographical origin, the TSG ('disciplinary') regulations, like those governing PDO and PGI, specify a denomination of the product, a chemical, physical and organoleptic description, as well as the production method, the reasons (including historical ones) for its unique nature, and the necessary measures required for certification.

We can therefore say that, rather than protecting the **typical** aspects of the protected foods, the TSG preserves their **traditional** aspects, the authenticity of their production method and their connection to the past. The product is protected in a temporal sense, rather than a geographical one.

FOCUS1

Three Famous Products with PDO, PGI and TSG Status



Fig. 3. Grana Padano PDO, the most popular PDO product in the world.

Grana Padano PDO is a cheese made from cow's milk in Northern Italy. It is the bestselling PDO product in the world. A quarter of Italy's entire milk production goes to the production of this famous hard cheese, an obligatory condiment for those iconic Italian dishes, such as pasta. All

phases in the chain of production (the breeding and milking of the cows, the collection of the milk and its transformation into cheese, aging, its eventual grating) must take place in the provinces in the north of Italy as indicated in the **production disciplinary**. The aging period must, by law, be at least two months long, but the most common variants of Grana Padana are aged for at least 20 months. At the end of this aging period, each round weighs between 24 and 40 kilos exactly. Today, as tradition dictates, in the ninth month of aging, each round is checked by experts using a small hammer, a needle and a probe. These tools allow them to certify the consistency of the rounds and that the aging process has taken place successfully before the cheeses are cut. Only those considered suitable are then branded and sold with the denomination, 'Grana Padana PDO'.



Fig. 4. Münchener Bier PGI, the queen of Bavarian beer

Munich is the capital city of the federal state of Bavaria (Germany), and is famous for being among the top producers of quality beer. Just think, the first regulation for the protection of Munich beer production dates back to 1487, and each year the city hosts the largest public celebration in the world, 'Oktoberfest', attracting six million visitors in honour of its renowned beer. The only ingredients used in the production of this beer are water, malt, hops and yeast. However, variations in the methods of production (the level to which the malt is toasted or the temperature of the water) mean that dozens of different beers, known as 'beer styles', are made. Munich beer is produced using water extracted from the city's wells. This water is filtered through the layers of slate that formed millions

of years ago and, together with the specific yeasts used for fermentation, is the distinctive element for Munich's beer. Although, as indicated by the denomination, the processing phase must take place in the city of Munich, the PGI disciplinary allows for the use of cereals from other regions.



Fig. 5. Jamón Serrano TSG, the Spanish ham *par excellence*.

Ham is a popular and widespread food in Spain, with the first accounts of this product dating back to the Roman era. Today the nation is the world's top ham producer, producing more than 40 million pieces a year and boasting a yearly consumption equivalent to 5 kilos per capita. 'Jamón Serrano TSG', is the most common variety of Spanish ham and has won over the taste buds of the entire world with its soft texture and its sweetness. These organoleptic qualities are achieved through the methods of salting and aging the meat stipulated by the disciplinaries: in order to allow for its preservation, the pig's rear thigh is salted for at least 110 days and then aged. Serrano ham is recognised by its delicate purplish colour, and is used in typical Spanish dishes such as 'bocadillos', slices of bread with oil, tomatoes and jamón Serrano. The TSG quality scheme allows the quality of the Jamón Serrano to be protected, allowing its name and label to be used only when the traditional processing methods established by the regulation are followed. At the same time, as its production is not bound to a specific geographical area (unlike PDO and PGI), it can be produced anywhere in Spain.

4. SHOPPING LOCALLY: THE TREND FOR SHORTENING THE SUPPLY CHAIN

The system of European quality schemes we have just looked at sustains local food production, attempting to reconcile the unique nature of local products with the demand they be made available to a mass market. This system, based on a certification mechanism, provides administrative regulation pre-produc-

tion (the so-called 'disciplinary' that contain all the specific rules that must be complied with in the production of PDO, PGI and TSG products) and final checks on the producers, which ensure all necessary rules required for the use of the denomination and quality scheme have been followed.

Upon closer inspection, we see that the need for certifications exists precisely because of the modern transport systems, **supply chains** and distribution systems (like supermarkets), which allow goods to circulate and make a direct interaction between producer and consumer impossible.

As a result, labels attesting to the food's origin act as intermediaries in a process of communication: by creating a formal relationship based on trust, the physical and geographical distance between those selling and those buying is bridged. As such, PDO, PGI and TSG labels ensure the **typical** aspects of food products in a way that is compatible with modern ways of trading.

However, certification is not the only system that has arisen to meet the demand for **typical** and **traditional foods**. By relying heavily on **typical** aspects that focus on geographical **traceability**, European certifications neglect other aspects that for many consumers remain determining factors in the choice of a **typical** product: the **traditional** and family dimension, craftsmanship, a direct knowledge of the producers and authenticity.

As we have already seen, the growing demand for **typical** and **traditional** products has been driven by various issues, not just those affecting the food sector, but also economic, political and social reasons. In this sense, the demand for **typical** and **traditional foods** is often promoted as part of different cultural movements such as *Slow Food* [See Bankov chapter]. In this case, the mainstream food model becomes the object of broader criticism aimed at large-scale agribusiness, modern distribution networks and bad consumer habits.

In the wake of this new critical sensibility towards food, over recent years we have seen an attempt to return to forms of commerce that have long been replaced by large-scale distribution, often motivated by the will to recover direct contact between producers and consumers.

One example of this phenomenon is the rise of *farmers' markets*, found in all urban centres of different sizes. These markets, usually held on a weekly basis, do not give their space to traders but to the producers themselves, who sell the products they have produced themselves. Given the ethical stance that motivates this kind of trade, the producers who take part in farmers' markets are usually owners of small-scale agricultural business, often committed to sustainable agricultural practices, such as organic or biodynamic farming.

The food on offer varies between markets. In the smaller markets, the offering is generally limited to fruit and vegetables, whilst in the medium and large markets we can find bakers selling bread and cakes, farmers selling meat, milk, cured meats and cheeses, producers of beer, wine or other alcoholic bev-

erages, and even beekeepers selling honey and other products derived from bees.

The antithesis of the predominantly homogenous food on offer in supermarkets, the availability of products at farmers' markets (bound to the place in which the market is held) is strongly conditioned by climate and the seasons, and varies from market to market. It is not uncommon to find, for example, collectors of local, autochthonous mushrooms and herbs, or producers of non-edible artisanal products such as soap, natural cosmetics and textiles.

There are many benefits shared by those who support and frequent these kinds of markets:

- Environmental, because the shortening of the **supply chain** drastically reduces the distances covered by the goods and the energy wastage caused by transportation, stockpiling and refrigeration. Furthermore, the goods on offer respect seasonal cycles and the variable nature of low-impact agricultural production, and, as we have already mentioned, it is very common for these producers to respect low-impact production standards, such as those found in organic farming;
- Economic, because, by eliminating the need for wholesalers and intermediaries, the trade at farmers' markets means fairer remuneration for small producers, and supports small, family-run businesses;
- Cultural and social, because the encounter between producers and consumers spreads knowledge of an area's **typical** products and improves the eating habits of the population, promoting the consumption of fresh, seasonal products that are minimally processed. Furthermore, trade at local markets reduces the distance between city and countryside, and between the citizens themselves, promoting interaction among inhabitants.

However, there is no lack in criticism from those who do not agree with farmers' markets and their basic principles, such as the reduction of **food miles**. We can divide the main criticisms into two groups:

Environmental and sanitation, because the certification of eco-friendly sustainability standards (such as those governing the use of pesticides) and those regarding health, is often informal. What's more, there are people who question the supposed impact reduction provided by local **supply chains**, insofar as smaller producers have less production efficiency and a greater on-site use of vehicles;

Economic, with the reality of this model's universal application questioned for several reasons. Whilst large industrial food producers are able to make economies of scale, maximising their output and minimising production costs, small local producers generally require more manpower and resources per unit. Despite the absence of intermediaries, this often leads to higher prices than those found in industrial food production. For these reasons, the critics of the short **supply chain** main-

tain that the model is neither capable of satisfying the growing demand for food worldwide, nor able to offer food at prices that are accessible for the entire population.

5. IN SEARCH OF TYPICAL PRODUCTS: FOOD TOURISM

Until now we have discussed how, over recent years, the growing sensibility towards the origins of foods and their distinguishing qualities traced back to their area of production have led the push towards new forms of production, distribution and consumption, from European quality schemes to markets featuring local products.

However, buying products that are local, with labels that certify their origin and quality, is not the only way of experiencing an area's typical food and wine offerings.

Knowledge of local food culture is considered an increasingly important element, especially for those who travel. The discovery of local delicacies and the artisanship that revolves around food production is now the prerogative of more and more tourists, and can even play a major part in choosing a particular travel destination.

In other words, a holiday is increasingly viewed as an experience that unites the pleasure of experiencing new places with that of discovering local traditional flavours and products. We do not travel just to come into contact with the architecture, the works of art, the landscapes and the people of a particular place. Food can be the keystone that renders a destination unique, and enters fully into the forms of 'cultural tourism', sometimes becoming its deciding factor.

Increasingly, we hear people talk of 'food tourism' or 'wine tourism'.

This trend has pushed travellers to be more knowledgeable and demanding about their food experiences whilst travelling, choosing, for example, to inform themselves on the local food scene through websites, specialist blogs, guides or those familiar with local food, such as restaurants, wine producers, breweries, cheesemongers and delis.

At the same time, a significant effort is being made by producers, restaurateurs, shop owners and – on a collective level – by trade associations and tourist boards, to enhance the tourist offering in order to meet these new demands by travellers.

This has happened in various ways. One example is the small businesses, such as wine and cheese producers, who have introduced tasting areas, shops and guided tours for visitors. Another is those farms that have been converted into *agriturismi*, farming structures that offer spaces to sleep and stay. Food tours have sprung up in many historic town centres, with themed sections and dedicated guides. Similarly, in rural areas devoted to specific production, itineraries and cycle paths have been created, connecting natural attractions with local artisans and farmers, which have also become a point of attraction.

One widespread example of these itineraries are the 'wine routes' – there are more than two hundred throughout Europe –

connecting the wine producers of a particular area and allowing visitors to visit the area, stopping in the various wineries to explore the vineyards and taste the produce on site.

In the most successful cases, projects to re-launch certain rural areas devoted to agricultural as tourist destinations, has led to the creation of effective 'districts' of food and wine tourism, creating jobs and safeguarding isolated or mountainous areas with little interest for the more traditional flows of tourism.

This re-evaluation of areas through food has, sometimes, led to 'the invention of traditions', leading to the resurrection or invention of new festivals, popular celebrations and food rituals with an eye on marketing to tourists.

FOCUS 2

Two Different Examples of Food Destinations



Fig. 6. The "Route des Grands Crus", Discovering the wine 'climats' of Burgundy.

The 'Route des Grand Crus' is the oldest French wine route, opened in 1937, and 60 kilometres long, passing 33 villages in the Côte d'Or province of the Bourgogne-Franche-Comté department. Along the route it is possible to admire the extraordinary wine-growing landscapes of the Côte d'Or and taste the wine in thousands of wineries along the way. The main road unravels into a labyrinth of detours leading to

the 'climats', the small parcels of land used for growing vines, often marked out by stone walls and occupied by vineyards, wineries and splendid medieval castles. The main route intersects a network of alternative routes for bike tourism or trekking. In 2015, Burgundy's wine 'terroir' was inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage list, which protects the 1,463 climats present throughout the area. The demarcation of the different climats dates back to the Middle Ages, and they are the best possible example of a typical wine-growing landscape. By integrating unique chemical, physical and climatic characteristics with the savoir-faire of local viticulture specialists, the subdivision of each 'climat' allows for the creation of wines that each have their own nuances, and as such are each identified with a different sub-denomination of PDO.



Fig. 7. The Street Food Markets of Palermo.

Palermo is the capital of Sicily, a region of southern Italy and the largest island in the Mediterranean. The city's historic centre, whose monuments have recently been inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage list, and which has been shaped by the occupation by and integration of many different populations over thousands of years, still has extensive and colourful markets influenced by Arab cultures. Sicilian gastronomy is one of the most impressive. Thanks to its favourable climate and its position, halfway between Italy and North Africa, the island has accumulated an extraordinary variety of ingredients and dishes. In the markets and the city's streets, it is normal to find stalls and street traders selling street food of all kinds, which can be traced back to different geographic and cultural or-

igins, or to the religious festivals that take place during the year. Once prepared and consumed exclusively by men and eaten on foot, street food has become an attraction from tourists from all continents and is also consumed in small restaurants. One example is 'panelle', chickpea fritters similar to other variants, all Latin in origin and eaten as far away as Provence. Other **typical** dishes are offal-based ones, such as ox's spleen sandwiches, a food that is believed to have its roots in the large Jewish community that resided in one of the areas of the old town during the Middle Ages.

6. FROM TERRITORY TO TERROIR

The emphasis on the concepts of **typical food** and of food origins has led, as we have seen, to an enrichment of the concept of *territory*. When it comes to food and wine, *territory* is now starting to include not just physical aspects, but human and social ones too. From this perspective, the territory's physical composition can be considered the result of a transformation that has taken place after centuries of it being in contact with humans.

We can see this change in meaning in many objects with which we come into daily contact, such as packaging, food marketing, tourism marketing and food texts such as guides and recipe books, not to mention the European regulations governing production that we looked at in part 3 (PDO, PGI and TSG). In this instance, rather than a starting condition, territory becomes an after-effect that can be perceived in the food's particular organoleptic traits and, above all, through the difference between one food and another.

For this reason, in the worlds of food and, in particular, wine, we find a neologism, derived from the French, being used to indicate place of origin: '**terroir**'. The use of the term in French, rather than it being translated, aims to emphasise those aspects of the word 'territory' or 'place' that are not strictly physical.

Indeed, according to a definition provided by UNESCO: "A **Terroir** is a geographical limited area where a human community generates and accumulates along its history a set of cultural distinctive features, knowledge and practices based on a system of interactions between biophysical and human factors. The combination of techniques involved in production reveals originality, confers typicity and leads to a reputation for goods originating from this geographical area, and therefore for its inhabitants. The **terroirs** are living and innovating spaces that cannot be reduced only to tradition." In conclusion, at the basis of the concept of **typical food** is the idea that a food product (much like a landscape or space) carries the distinctive, identifying mark of this unique interaction between community and environment, or rather, between human and non-human factors.

If, however, territory, when it comes to food and wine, is a space in constant evolution, this reasoning leads us to question the very meaning of the word 'tradition'. Whilst tradition is generally understood as a thread that leads us back to the past and our roots, its meaning as far as food and wine are concerned, increasingly leads us to view tradition as a process of continual transformation, rather than the mere conservation of the past. Enacting tradition is, in this sense, a work of adaptation rather than a resistance to change.