

7th UNWTO World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism

Gastronomy Tourism for People and Planet: Innovate, Empower and Preserve

12 – 15 December 2022, Nara, Japan

Concept Note

1. BACKGROUND

COVID-19 has caused a massive fall of global tourism, with the sector facing an unprecedented crisis. In 2020 and 2021, international tourist arrivals were down more than 70%. Yet, UNWTO data for 2022 points to a better-than-expected recovery as an increasing number of countries removes or eases travel restrictions and pent up demand for travel is materialized.

- The pandemic also had a significant impact on the tourism value chain, both directly and indirectly. In the analysis of the policies supporting tourism recovery UNWTO has made clear the priority that should be awarded to businesses, particularly to small and medium enterprises, as well as to communities for whom tourism is an important lifeline.
- Most importantly, tourism recovery efforts shall also respond to changing trends, particularly those related to digitalization, the relationship between travelers and hosts, inclusion and the imperatives of climate change and the transition to a more sustainable model of tourism development, where communities and visitors from around the world meet in harmony and enrich each other.
- The 6th UNWTO World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism, held in Bruges, Belgium, from October 31 to November 2, 2021, under the theme "Gastronomy Tourism: Promoting Rural Tourism and Regional Development", focused on the contribution of gastronomy tourism to social and economic integration. It highlighted the untapped potential of gastronomy tourism for job creation, regional cohesion and sustainable development. The sharing of good practices and new ideas on gastronomy tourism provided a great ground to advance innovation for the recovery.

- As a next step in advancing efforts for global tourism recovery and transformation, the 7th UNWTO World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism to be held in Nara, Japan, will continue to put the spotlight on the role of gastronomy tourism as a platform for promoting sustainable social development, empowering women, creating opportunities for the younger generations, and nurturing future talents. The forum will also discuss the power of gastronomy tourism in enriching the experiences of travelers and tourists, while creating connections with local residents, their culture, history, nature, and heritage.

2. OBJECTIVES AND TOPICS

- Gastronomy is an integral part of the experience of local life and livelihoods, building on the history, culture, traditions, identity, economy, and community of people and places worldwide. Gastronomy tourism also has the potential to enrich the tourist experience and establish connections with local communities.
- The overall trends in tourism and the values of tourists are changing accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Travelers venturing out once more to seek for more meaningful and responsible engagement with local communities and cultures than ever before.
- Under this context, the power of gastronomy to a memorable travel experience and the development of host destinations has opened new opportunities. To that end, the 7th UNWTO World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism, organized with the Basque Culinary Centre (BCC), in Nara will focus on the role of gastronomy tourism in:
 - (1) Promoting women empowerment and young talents
 - (2) Advancing cultural exchange and authenticity: connecting to the roots, respecting nature and culture, and promoting health and wellbeing
 - (3) Enhancing the value for destinations and food producers
 - (4) Destination branding and development through gastronomy tourism
 - (5) Supporting a Global Roadmap on Food Waste Reduction in Tourism
- Nara, the host city of the 7th World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism, is one of the birthplaces of Japan's diverse cuisine spanning more than 1,000 years and a deep connection with history and culture which are preserved until today. The Forum, creates an excellent opportunity for all stakeholders to meet and discuss the power of gastronomy tourism, with emphasis on:
 - its contribution to health and wellbeing,
 - its ability to nurture future talent and development of the tourism sector,
 - its contribution to regional development, as well as inclusion and sustainability.

- A unique platform to come once again together and pave the way for the future of tourism and gastronomy, the 7th World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism offers an opportunity to translate the history, the culture, the traditions, and the commitment to sustainability that people have inherited in many parts of Japan and Nara into hopes, wishes, ideas, and action.

3. PARTICIPANTS

- The 7th World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism will bring together professionals in the areas of gastronomy and tourism from Japan and abroad, including:
 - Top chefs and inspiring examples from the world of tourism and gastronomy
 - Ministries of Tourism and National Tourism Organizations from UNWTO Member States
 - UNWTO Affiliate Members
 - International and Regional Organizations
 - Regional and Local Destination Management Organizations
 - Travel and gastronomy associations, travel agencies, accommodation/transportation companies, service providers
 - Organizations related to gastronomy tourism, agritourism, and ecotourism
 - Academic institutions (universities, research facilities) in the areas of tourism and gastronomy