6th UNWTO World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism

Gastronomy Tourism: Promoting Rural Tourism and Regional Development

Concertgebouw, Bruges, Belgium

31 October - 2 November 2021

Preliminary Programme

Background and objectives:

▪ Destinations today are very aware of the significance of gastronomy tourism as numbers of tourists prefer to buy and consume local food, while at the same time they are also inclined to observe and participate in its production process.

▪ For some destinations, the development of gastronomy tourism may represent valuable opportunities in contrasting the issues related with economic instability, especially in the less favoured and marginal rural areas as gastronomy tourism has potential to boost decent living standards, social and economic integration, personal fulfilment, and social development.

▪ This type of tourism in rural areas has been associated with numerous benefits, among which the increase farm incomes, greater social vitality, territorial regeneration activities, and protection of traditional activities.

▪ Gastronomy tourism adds vitality to rural communities, connected via marketplaces, festivals, stories, recipes and memories. It supports small, local food producers and strengthens their position in the market, as opposed to international and industrial food producers.

▪ The 6th UNWTO World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism will focus on the role of Gastronomy Tourism in Promoting Rural Tourism and Regional Development, closely aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

▪ Topics related to the role of gastronomy tourism in enhancing reputation of destination, empowering local community, as well as strategies that can be used by farmers and small scale rural food producers in using their culinary heritage to directly and indirectly promote tourism and thereby make a positive economic contribution at the local and regional level will be discussed throughout the event.

▪ The Forum presents a unique opportunity for experts from across the growing field of gastronomy tourism to share new ideas and best practices and place the two sectors at the centre of plans for recovery in post covid-19 times.
Sunday, 31 October 2021

19:00 – 22:00 Welcome dinner, hosted by Visit Flanders and City of Bruges (by invitation only)
Organized at former Three-Michelin-Star restaurant De Karmeliet in the historical centre of Bruges. It is now home of the Flanders Culinary Arts Centre, where international students take their culinary skills to a higher level.

Monday, 1 November 2021

10:30 – 11:15 Welcome Coffee & Registration

11:30 – 12:00 Opening Ceremony

12:00 – 12:30 Setting the Scene: Gastronomy Tourism and Rural Development
Keynote Speech and Food for thought: A conversation between a chef, a local producer and a destination

12:30 – 12:40 Speech by Governor of Nara Prefectural Government

12:45 – 14:00 Lunch, hosted by the Nara Prefectural Government, host of the 7th UNWTO World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism (2022)

14.15 – 15.15 Special Session on African Gastronomy Tourism

15:15 – 15:30 Insights from a Chef: Gastronomy and Talent Development

15:30 – 16:00 Coffee Break

16:00 – 16:15 Insights from a Chef: Resilience and Innovation

16:15 – 17:00 Scaling up for the SDGs: UNWTO food tourism pitch challenge
Following a brief presentation by UNWTO providing insight on how the entrepreneurial ecosystem and its key stakeholders can collaborate to achieve the SDGs while ensuring revenue, scale and sustainability in tourism and food industries; selected finalists from the UNWTO Global SDG Startup Competition will pitch their ideas to the audience, showcasing their gastronomy and tourism-based solutions in policy, in practice, in communities – but moreover, in sustainable action. A jury will deliberate and select the winner of the challenge to be announced at the end of the session.
17:00 – 17:30 Wrap-up

20:30 – 22:30 Discover Bruges by Night
A guided walk to discover the illuminated highlights of the city of Bruges including a drink at the local’s favourite cafés.

Tuesday, 2 November 2021

09:00 – 10:00 Masterclasses on Gastronomy Tourism and Rural Development

➢ Theme 1: Making gastronomy tourism an ally in environmental sustainability in rural areas
The Masterclass will focus on the aspects of environmental sustainability of the development of gastronomy tourism in rural areas.

➢ Theme 2: Culinary Craftsmanship – How gastronomy tourism can empower local communities and bring a new awareness about culinary traditions.
Gastronomy tourism shortens the food supply chain by decreasing the distance between production and consumption areas. The availability of locally produced food and drinks at the destinations also helps tourists co-creating their experiences while at a destination and raise awareness of ecological, social, economic and cultural aspects. This Masterclass session will discuss the role of gastronomy tourism to boost decent living standards, social and economic integration, personal fulfilment, and social development which therefore empowers local communities.

➢ Theme 3: Culinary innovation – culinary centres as drivers for innovation and development
It is crucial to promote collaboration among local actors including universities, SMEs, multinational enterprises, research and development institutions as each of them provide valuable insight for the gastronomy tourism sector. An adequate innovation ecosystem, with the support of particular technologies, is therefore deemed important to facilitate participatory approaches aimed at discovering innovation and business opportunities. This Masterclass session will discuss the importance of culinary centres as drivers for innovation and development.

10:00 – 10:20 Coffee Break

10:20 – 11:20 Masterclasses on Gastronomy Tourism and Rural Development
- Theme 1: Making gastronomy tourism an ally in environmental sustainability in rural areas
- Theme 2: Culinary Craftsmanship – How gastronomy tourism can empower local communities and bring a new awareness about culinary traditions
- Theme 3: Culinary innovation – culinary centres as drivers for innovation and development

11:30 – 12:15 Outside the box: Learning from Others
Keynote Speech and Presentations of best-case studies related to the role of gastronomy tourism in promoting rural tourism and regional development
12.15 – 12.30  Closing Remarks

12:30 – 16:30  Culinary Experiences including lunch
The culinary experiences at various locations in and around Bruges (for live participants) and in Flanders (for online participants) demonstrate the best of Flanders as a culinary destination. Visit the passionate craftsmen from farmers to brewers and explore the rich Flemish culinary heritage.

17:30 – 20:30  Bruges Unplugged
The closing event takes place at Brewery De Halve Maan, an authentic family brewery in the heart of Bruges. For both online and live audiences the evening consists of a tour of the brewery and a talk show with inspirational guests discussing topics such as local products and talent development in the gastronomy sector.

20:30 – 21:30  Closing drinks