

Article

Analysis of the Relationship between Tourism and Food Culture

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Academic Editor: Ian Patterson

Received: 7 February 2016; Accepted: 25 April 2016; Published: 27 April 2016

Abstract: In recent years, gastronomy has established itself as one of the key elements for the enhancement, sustainable and consolidation of tourist destinations. The aim of this paper is to contribute to the advancement of knowledge on gastronomic tourism in European countries, specifically in the analysis of the relationship between gastronomy, culture and tourism as the research focuses on the city of Córdoba, Spain. The methodology of this research involved conducting surveys with foreign travelers who were lunching or dining at various restaurants in the historic area, and these facilities were characterized by having in their gastronomic menus major typical culinary products of the city using the concept of *tapas*, *i.e.*, the presentation of gastronomy through small portions of food. The results of the study indicate that the healthy component of the gastronomy represents the main dimension. Based on the detected dimensions, three types of international visitors are established (healthy-cultural tourist, cultural tourist and generic tourist) which are considered valid and useful for segmenting the market. This highlights the importance given to gastronomy by tourists as part of the cultural identity of a place and the satisfaction achieved through the gastronomy of the city of Córdoba.

Keywords: gastronomy; tapas; culture; tourism; sustainable

1. Introduction

Food tourism studies have emerged in recent decades, focusing on food destination, food tourists and hygiene issues, using both qualitative and quantitative analyses [1]. Gastronomic tourists experience a complete sensory experience, especially in terms of flavor, suggesting, according to Cohen and Avieli [2], that through food, tourists receive a greater engagement with the environment where the visit takes place, far from the role of simple observer traditionally associated with tourist visits. In addition, gastronomy is part of the cultural, social, environmental, sustainable and economic history of nations and their people. This is because it reflects a certain lifestyle of the different geographical areas, strengthening traditions in rural areas and modernity in urban areas, as it is something rooted in their own culture and tradition [3], although this implies a constant need for innovation in products and services to provide greater value and thus achieve greater competitiveness in a given location in relation to other destinations [4]. Therefore, local and regional food could give added value to the destination and contribute in this way to the competitiveness of the geographic area [5], and, in this sense, many researchers highlight that each country/region/city should promote food as a central attraction to tourists [6] as dining out and trying national and local cuisines are pleasant activities for most tourists [6,7]. In fact, gastronomy involves a transfer of knowledge and information about the people, culture, traditions and identity of the visited place [8].

Spanish cuisine is known internationally for various aspects such as its innovative nature or the quality of the raw material used. In addition, perhaps one of the most recognizable aspects of this

gastronomy is the presentation made of the culinary product through the *tapa* concept which refers to a type of food presentation in small amounts, and it is usually shared among several people even using the same dish. *Tapas* are widely known throughout Spain, although in some regions they are known by another name, *pintxos*, for example, and they allow you to taste a small proportion of the typical gastronomic product of the area along with a drink. In certain geographical areas, the *tapas* that accompany the drink do not even involve an extra cost for the consumer. This small portion of food allows diners to try different types of culinary specialities and thus obtain a wide gastronomic experience. Thus, the typical culinary presentation that takes place in the city of Córdoba, based on the concept of “*tapas*” is one of the most valid options if you want to try many different dishes while sharing food with the rest of diners at a table, achieving in this way greater socialization.

Tapas respond to one of the oldest traditions of Andalusia (and Spain), and today they are established both as heirs of the culinary tradition of this area and as an avant-garde trend by experimenting with new flavors in the cuisine. This allows an exportable model to other countries and, for this reason, in different cities around the world establishments are opening based on the concept of *tapas*.

The aim of this paper is to attempt to answer several questions among which is whether *tapas* can be a tourism resource in a particular city (since it represents a way to experiment with the local cuisine), if *tapas* are a way to better understand the culture of a city or if *tapas* influence the experience of foreign tourists. To this end, this research presents an analysis of the assessments made by foreign travelers regarding different aspects of the concept of *tapas* through a cluster analysis. To achieve this goal, the paper is structured after this introduction in a second paragraph where a literature review is made; a third section that refers to the description of the geographical area; a fourth paragraph where the research methodology is presented; and a fifth paragraph where the results of this research are shown. The paper ends with the conclusions and references used.

2. Literature Review

The academic literature has analyzed gastronomic tourism in different works. Among them, we highlight the work of Hjalager and Richards [9], which brings together a series of articles by leading experts at the time; the work of Boniface [10]; the contributions of Long [11], which includes articles where the identity of gastronomic tourism is addressed; research by Cohen and Avieli [2], the two works coordinated by Professor Hall which analyzes both gastronomy [12] and wine [13] and the contributions of Croce and Perri [14]. In addition, gastronomic tourism is approached by scientific literature in different parts of the world, highlighting especially places located in Asia. This continent is leading the trend in this segment, mainly due to the different conceptions that exist with Western cuisine. Thus, the importance of gastronomic tourism in Hong [15,16], and other Asian countries [2] or in Turkey [17] is analyzed. In addition, in Western countries, various investigations have been conducted focusing on Argentina [18], Canada [19], Chile [20], Croatia [21], Finland [22], Portugal [23] or Spain [24]. On the other hand, studies that have focused on the analysis of a particular type of food are different, as they identify a particular area, although it is known internationally, as it occurs with pizza, sushi or *tapas*. For example, we find religious food [25], Chinese food [26], Indian food [27] or goulash [28].

Henderson presents three research lines around the relationship between tourism and gastronomy [29]: food as a tourism product, the marketing of food to tourists, and food tourism as an instrument of destination and general development. Meanwhile, Tikkanen notes that gastronomy establishes a synergy with tourism through four different aspects: as an attraction, which means that the destination can use this item to promote this place; as a component of the product, where it delves into the design of dining (or oenological) routes; as experience, addressing the existence of one or more locations where gastronomy takes on a different level and becomes a claim in itself, an example of this being the cuisine made by the great masters; and as a cultural phenomenon, premised on the existence of different food festivals [22]. This implies that this type of tourism would have a greater or lesser degree of development according to the level of connection that the cuisine has with the culture of the place where it is settled [30], as the cuisine plays a role in satisfying of the tourist experience

and as part of the cultural heritage of the destination [8]. Therefore, this type of tourism reinforces the importance of local ingredients, learning and appreciation of their own consumption, and the importance of culinary resources.

The promotion of a destination through its own gastronomy is carried out by presenting a clear differentiation from its culinary resources, which must have a cuisine that is recognizable by travelers and have a varied and large number of establishments where travelers can enjoy this cuisine. Enright and Newton [31], in their research on Hong Kong, show how the cuisine is the second most important element of attraction, second only to public safety and, as a way of example, even in front of certain tourist attractions. Furthermore, if we consider its relative competitiveness, the cuisine becomes the most important attraction, even surpassing public safety. In short, these authors conclude that the cuisine, public safety, nightlife and visual appeal are the four essential elements for the competitiveness of a destination, if we consider both the relative competitiveness and the importance of the tourist attractions.

As for the segmentation of tourists according to their nationality, distinguishing between domestic and international visitors, there are different studies related to the food and beverage tourism that analyze visitor segmentation in order to perform different exploratory studies. Thus, Alonso *et al.* [32] present the results of an investigation to determine the sociodemographic profiles of wine tourists in New Zealand segmented by nationality. In addition, in the field of food tourism, Nam and Lee [6] present a study on the satisfaction of international visitors in traditional Korean restaurants and Horng *et al.* [33] focus on the analysis of the perception of brand equity in international tourists. On the other hand, there are different studies that focus on the analysis of the perceptions and motivations of foreigners with respect to the gastronomy of a particular place. Thus, we include those of Ghana [34], Croatia [21], Korea [6], Laos [35] and Hong Kong [36].

3. Description of the Geographical Area

The city of Córdoba is located in southern Spain, in the region of Andalusia. Its population is approximately 325,000 inhabitants and its economy is mainly based on the tertiary sector, emphasizing tourism therein. In 1984, the Mosque-Cathedral of the city was declared a World Heritage Site and subsequently in 1994, so was its Historic Center. Moreover, the Fiesta of the Patios was declared an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2012. Today, the city is one of the major benchmarks of cultural tourism both in Spain and elsewhere in Europe, and it is a meeting point for thousands of travelers who arrive to the city each year attracted by its rich culture, heritage and gastronomy. Focusing on the gastronomy of the city of Córdoba, this is typically based on the Arab cultural heritage, a civilization which flourished for many decades in the city, and whose cuisine is based on both literary and archaeological sources, and it is based primarily on the use of local primary products that are in the geographical area. Within this local raw material, olive oil stands out, because let us recall that the city of Córdoba is located in the geographical area of Andalusia holding the world's largest production of this type of oil. This implies that most of the typical dishes of the city have this product as basis, which is essential in the Mediterranean Diet (declared Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2010), with multiple functions in each dish: gives flavor, color and aroma; modifies the textures; transmits heat; integrates food; personalizes and identifies a dish and is compatible with all flavors. Let us recall that olive oil is part of the Mediterranean culture itself and, in fact, according to Namdar *et al.* [37], there is evidence of the use of olive oil in Israel in the fifth and sixth millennia BC because they have found traces of olive oil in vessels found in archaeological excavations. With olive oil as a basis, traditional dishes of the Córdoba gastronomy excel such as *salmorejo* (a cold cream made of tomatoes, garlic, bread and olive oil), *flamenquín* (slices of rolled meat in breadcrumbs), and Córdoba Pie (a puff pastry tart made with a pumpkin filling). In addition, olive oil enables tourists visiting this geographic area to also learn more about this cultural heritage through the development of oleotourism. On the other hand, the Córdoba cuisine also differs, as we have indicated above, by presenting its culinary specialities through *tapas* and due to its distinctive culinary establishments. These culinary establishments, called "*tabernas*" (taverns) are catering establishments located in old stately homes and decorated with typical motifs of the Andalusian culture, historically becoming

meeting and socialization places of residents and subsequently becoming restaurants. Thus, in these places, there is a synergy between the cultural and historical heritage of the city and the cuisine based on this identity. These taverns are mainly located in the historic area of the city, which enables tourists who are visiting its historical heritage entering into these establishments and learning, through their other senses (which obviously enriches the experience of visitors), of the gastronomic cultural heritage and the new culinary delights of this city.

4. Methodology

The methodology used in this research was based on conducting fieldwork to determine the valuation of foreign tourists visiting the city of Córdoba on the gastronomy of the city presented through the concept of *tapas*. The surveys were conducted in the establishments selected on two premises: places usually visited by tourists and the selection of dishes and of its cuisine representing the actual gastronomy of the city. The questionnaire was handed to the tourists once they had finished their lunch or dinner. For this reason, talks had been held with the heads of the establishments requesting permission to enter the premises. During the meeting, it was said that the interviewers would seek to avoid any interference with their customer service work.

The survey used in this research is based on various previous works [8,16,17,38,39] and responds to four aspects: socio-demographic characteristics of tourists, satisfaction of the trip, perception and relationship between culture and gastronomy.

Surveys were conducted between the months of April and August 2014. The questionnaire was distributed in four languages (English, French, German and Spanish) using the method of back-translation. Participants completed the survey with complete independence, although the interviewers were present in case they had some kind of difficulty in filling it in. The survey was completely anonymous. Previously, a pre-test of 20 surveys was conducted to detect possible deviations and errors. The total number of questionnaires obtained was 446. A stratification was performed according to the percentages of foreign tourists visiting the city of Córdoba in 2013 and according to data from the NSI (National Statistics Institute) (2015) [40]. Among the tourists surveyed, we can highlight those from France (21.5%), Germany (12.1%), the United Kingdom (12.1%), and the United States (9.2%). A convenience sampling was used, this being commonly used in this type of research where respondents are available to be interviewed in a specific space and time [41].

The items used in the survey are intended to respond to the indicators and measurements proposed for conducting the analysis of the tourist demand [42]. The survey included a 22-item questionnaire, and permits evaluating the motivation or reason of the trip, the socio-economic profile, the knowledge of the typical dishes and the perception of the culinary aspects of the city in order to determine their satisfaction. Thus, a combination of technical issues were used through a Likert 5-point scale to judge the perception, yes/no answers and both open and closed questions, where surveyed tourists were able to make their comments about this gastronomic experience. The total number of tourists who stayed in hotels in the city of Córdoba in 2013 amounted to 364,365 [40], which is considered as the total study population. The research sampling error was 4.64%. Table 1 shows the technical specifications of the research.

Table 1. Technical details of the research.

Number of foreign tourists (2013)	364,365 people
Sample	446 surveys
Sampling error	+/- 4.64%
Performance period	April–August 2014
Procedure	Convenience sampling
Sample Control	Implementation and monitoring of fieldwork by the authors of the research

Source: Own elaboration.

The data collected were organized, tabulated and analyzed using the SPSS 19.0 program (IBM Corporation, Armonk, NY, USA). Data processing was performed through the use of univariate and bivariate statistical tools. Basically, the data, results and conclusions presented in this article refer to the essential attributes that intervene in tasting *tapas* as a culinary resource, the segmentation of the international tourists from these attributes and the satisfaction that they report from the gastronomic point of view. To do this, different statistical techniques were used: the factorial analysis, the cluster analysis, the variance analysis (ANOVA with multiple *post hoc* comparisons) and finally, the chi-square test derived from the contingency tables between variables.

5. Results of the Investigation and Discussion

The aim of this study is to establish different groups of foreign tourists visiting the city of Córdoba, in their evaluation of several explanatory factors of *tapas* as a way of experiencing the typical gastronomy of the city. These explanatory factors are indicated in Table 2. Foreign tourists surveyed had to assess these explanatory factors using a Likert 5-point scale, 1 being completely disagreeing; 5 being completely agreeing.

Table 2. Explanatory factors regarding the concept of *tapas*.

Explanatory Factor	Denomination
<i>Tapas</i> are an element of socialization	socialization
<i>Tapas</i> allow to taste different dishes prepared with unique culinary arts	tasting
<i>Tapas</i> use fresh culinary ingredients	ingredients
<i>Tapas</i> are easily digestible food	digestion
<i>Tapas</i> are a hygienic form of eating	hygiene
<i>Tapas</i> have a good quality/price ratio	quality/price
The presentation of <i>tapas</i> is attractive	presentation
<i>Tapas</i> are a healthy culinary product	healthy
<i>Tapas</i> combine tradition and gastronomic innovation	combination
<i>Tapas</i> are a reflection of the culture of Córdoba	culture

According to these factors, a cluster analysis was performed based on 20 iterations to establish three groups of foreign tourists according to their preferences with respect to *tapas*. Thus, the first cluster has 178 cases, the second 98 and the third 84 cases. The total number of valid cases was 360 while the number of lost cases was 86.

In the first place, a factorial analysis is conducted on the scale of attributes to identify a small number of explanatory factors, obtaining two different dimensions of the attributes referring to *tapas* (Table 3). Although the interest resides in the factorial scores that are derived from these components as a tool to establish the strength of the motivations of each visitor, it is essential to characterize each of the two extracted factors. The first factor is called healthy and represents an attribute related to the appreciation of the local gastronomy due to its greater use of fresh and nutritive ingredients in relation to other types of food. The ingredients used for preparing the *tapas* come from the local agricultural producers, and this implies that the environmental damage is minimized, since there is no transfer of the raw materials from some geographic areas to others. In addition, their use guarantees the maintenance and improvement of the ecological processes. Cronbach's alpha coefficient (0.86) reveals, for the different items that comprise this motivation dimension, that it represents a reliable subscale. The importance of this factor alone explains 50.27% of the total variance of the motivation matrix. The second factor extracted, called cultural, represents an attribute that finds the more traditional and identitarian meaning of the place where the foods and typical dishes are produced. In addition, it forms part of the social and cultural heritage of the towns, because it reflects a certain style of life of the different geographical areas since gastronomy is something rooted in the culture and local tradition itself [12]. This reinforces the authenticity of the local community, a key aspect for the sustainable development of the region. Cronbach's alpha coefficient (0.79) for this subscale also reveals

a good internal consistency. This factor would explain 12.39% of the total variance of the motivation matrix. In addition, the value of the measure of sampling adequacy of Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) is =0.89 and the Bartlett’s test of sphericity is 1713.53 with a significance level equal to 0.000. Both results indicate that it is appropriate to perform the factorial analysis. For the extraction of factors, the principal components method was used with Varimax rotation, assigning the items that correspond to each factor.

Table 3. Results of factor analysis and reliability on selection attributes.

Items	Factor Loading		Factor
	1	2	
hygiene	0.81		healthy
healthy	0.80		
digestion	0.78		
ingredients	0.70		
presentation	0.68		
quality/price	0.61		
socialization		0.83	cultural
tasting		0.83	
culture		0.65	
combination		0.58	
Eigen value	5.03	1.24	
% of variance explained	50.27	12.39	
Cronbach’s alpha	0.86	0.79	
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin = 0.89			
Bartlett test of sphericity = 1713.53; $p = 0.000$			
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis; Rotation Method: Varimax			

Source: Own elaboration.

The study of the attributes referring to *tapas* provides bases for establishing segmentation of the international tourists that visit the city of Córdoba. For such a purpose, an analysis is made of non-hierarchical clusters with the factorial scores of the two factors analyzed (healthy and cultural). Under the criterion of maximizing the variance between types and minimizing the variance within each type, the best solution that meets the criteria is that of establishing three clusters. The characterization of the clusters from the means of the attribute variables are shown in Table 4. The ANOVA F-statistic shows that the compared means are not equal, but it does not consider where the detected differences are found. In order to know which mean differs from another, a contrast called multiple *post hoc* comparisons or *a posteriori* comparisons were used. With the aim of making these comparisons, it cannot be assumed that the population variances are equal—the critical level associated with the Levene statistic is less than 0.05 in all the cases, rejecting the equality of variances.

Table 4 shows the evaluation of the explanatory factors for each of the different membership clusters.

In addition, the cases of homoscedasticity and normality have to be fulfilled in the ANOVA F-statistic. Given that it is not possible to assume that the population variances are equal, the Brown–Forsythe and the Welch statistics were used as an alternative to the ANOVA F-statistic (Table S1). Since the critical level associated with both statistics is less than 0.05, the hypothesis of equality of means can be rejected, and it can be concluded that the averages of the variables of the three compared clusters are not equal. For the contrast of the significant differences between the different means, the Games–Howell test was conducted. As for the equality stress tests of means, they are set out in Table S1.

Table 4. Level of satisfaction with the visit to the city of Córdoba.

Items	Cluster			ANOVA		Levene Statistic (Significance)	
	1 "cultural" (n = 178)	2 "healthy-cultural" (n = 98)	3 "generic" (n = 84)	F	Sig.	Levene	Sig.
	Mean	Mean	Mean				
hygiene	3.76(*)	4.74(*)	2.77(*)	157.361	<0.01	6.916	<0.01
healthy	3.66(*)	4.80(*)	2.54(*)	233.971	<0.01	22.396	<0.01
digestion	3.62(*)	4.71(*)	2.87(*)	137.011	<0.01	12.045	<0.01
ingredients	4.06(*)	4.87(*)	2.83(*)	231.909	<0.01	13.137	<0.01
presentation	4.00(*)	4.83(*)	3.17(*)	155.185	<0.01	6.752	<0.01
quality/price	4.27(*)	4.73(*)	3.27(*)	117.322	<0.01	9.244	<0.01
socialization	3.90(*)	4.59(*)	3.39(*)	43.240	<0.01	4.141	<0.01
tasting	4.05(*)	4.76(*)	3.32(*)	90.849	<0.01	11.921	<0.01
culture	4.12(*)	4.89(*)	3.18(*)	163.140	<0.01	21.034	<0.01
combination	3.92(*)	4.84(*)	2.89(*)	184.772	<0.01	7.760	<0.01

(*) The values in bold represent significant differences with at least two of the means of the three clusters in ANOVA post-hoc analysis. Source: Own elaboration.

In accordance with Table 4, the first of the clusters presents significant values in some variables, achieving an acceptable score in these items: socialization, tasting, culture and combination. Therefore, it is called cultural tourist, related to the second factor. It is the most numerous cluster with 178 visitors; that is, 49.44% of those surveyed. The second of the clusters presents very significant values in all the attribute variables, achieving a very good score in these items: healthy, ingredients, presentation, culture and combination. In this case, it is called healthy-cultural tourist, related to the first factor as well as with the second. It represents the intermediate cluster in number of visitors (98), which signifies 27.22% of the surveyed. The third of the clusters is comprised of 84 visitors (23.33%), being less numerous and the one with the lowest score of all the variables, especially as regards hygiene, healthy, digestion, ingredients. In this case, it is not related to either of the two factors obtained in the factorial analysis. This cluster can be called generic tourist and its relation to the local gastronomy (represented through *tapas*) is merely biological.

In addition, the concept of sustainability is reinforced. In cluster 2, the element of the cultural heritage (4.89) and the locally produced agricultural products used (4.87) obtain a higher score, delving into the relationship existing between gastronomy, tourism and sustainable development. Furthermore, cluster 1 presents significant results in both items: culture (4.12) and ingredients (4.06), although less conclusive with respect to cluster 2.

Once the three groups of tourists are established and their relationship with the gastronomy of the city of Córdoba through the presentation of *tapas*, three more items are selected: overall rating of *tapas*, satisfied food and gastronomic expectation, all related to the satisfaction of the gastronomic experience during the visit to the city. This is analyzed in Table 5, measured on a Likert 5-point scale, 1 being very dissatisfied and 5 being very satisfied.

Having established the tourist groups, it is fundamental to analyze the relations that these clusters may have with the satisfaction of the visit (Table 5). The results show a positive valuation of the gastronomic experience by two of the three segments or tourist groups identified. Overall, the valuations are very high in the second cluster, indicative of the great relevance of the healthy and cultural dimensions, for which reason the gastronomic satisfaction or experience of the visit seems to increase as these dimensions are increased. The significant mean of the second cluster reveals that the cultural dimension alone is also a significant variable, highlighting that the desire to know a culture through its typical gastronomy is also an important source of satisfaction with the destination visited. The third cluster seems to indicate that those visitors who show reasons other than the identified dimensions value to a lesser degree their culinary experience in the city of Córdoba.

Table 5. Level of satisfaction with the visit to the city of Córdoba.

Items	Cluster			ANOVA		Levene Statistic (Significance)	
	1 "cultural" (n = 178)	2 "healthy-cultural" (n = 98)	3 "generic" (n = 84)				
	Mean	Mean	Mean	F	Sig.	Levene	Sig.
Overall rating of tapas	3.99(*)	4.95(*)	3.21(*)	333.989	<0.01	24.447	<0.01
Satisfied food	4.24(*)	4.71(*)	3.64(*)	65.370	<0.01	8.389	<0.01
Gastronomic expectations	4.11(*)	4.68(*)	3.40(*)	84.450	<0.01	13.727	<0.01

(*) The values in bold represent significant differences with at least two of the means of the three clusters in ANOVA post-hoc analysis. Source: Own elaboration.

The tests of robustness on the means of the satisfaction variable show that the averages of the variables of overall rating of *tapas*, satisfied food and gastronomic expectations in the three compared clusters are not equal. Table S2 shows the equality stress test of means.

Moreover, it is possible to determine the particularities of the identified clusters, by tabulating and crossing them with external variables (socio-demographic data). The variables used are gender, age, education, employment and income (Table 6). The results of Pearson's chi-square test indicate that there are statistically significant differences ($p < 0.05$) between the groups when it deals with the following characteristics: age and employment. With respect to the distribution by sex of those surveyed, clusters 1 and 2 contain a greater male representation compared to the female, while, in cluster 3, the proportion is inverted. As for age, cluster 1 contains the higher percentage of tourists situated between 30 and 49 years of age (54.80%), while cluster 3 presents the highest values in the extreme segments: from 16 to 30 years (28.90%) and 60 years and older (16.90%).

Table 6. Socio-demographic characteristics of three clusters of tourists visiting Córdoba.

Socio-Demographic Characteristics	1 "cultural" (n = 178)	2 "healthy-cultural" (n = 98)	3 "generic" (n = 84)	Total (%)	Statistics
Gender	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	Chi2 = 5.569; $p = 0.473$
Male	53.67	56.12	43.37	52.00	
Female	46.30	43.90	56.60	48.00	
Age	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	Chi2 = 20.041; $p = 0.010$
Under 30 years	22.60	26.80	28.90	25.20	
30–39 years old	30.50	19.60	20.50	25.20	
40–49 years old	24.30	19.60	9.60	19.60	
50–59 years old	14.10	24.70	24.10	19.30	
60 years old or more	8.50	9.30	16.90	10.60	
Education	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	Chi2 = 5.646; $p = 0.227$
Primary education	3.40	1.00	1.20	2.20	
Secondary education	17.10	26.80	19.00	20.20	
University education	79.50	72.20	79.80	77.60	
Employment	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	Chi2 = 21.025; $p = 0.021$
Employee	14.60	25.00	113.40	17.10	
Civil Servant	52.60	43.50	35.40	46.10	
Self-employed	15.20	13.00	14.60	14.50	
Student	7.00	8.70	18.30	10.10	
Retired	8.80	9.80	17.10	11.00	
Income	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	Chi2 = 7.466; $p = 0.487$
Under €700	11.70	12.00	17.60	13.10	
From €700 to €1000	9.40	4.30	5.40	7.10	
From €1001 to €1500	14.00	14.10	16.20	14.50	
From €1501 to €2500	33.30	29.30	23.00	30.00	
Over €2500	31.60	40.20	37.80	35.30	

Source: Own elaboration.

On the other hand, the educational level of those surveyed particularly stands out: in cluster 2, 72.20% state they have a university degree, while those that have a secondary education are 26.80%. In the professional category, it is important to point out that, in cluster 2, the figures of civil servant (43.50%) and employee (25.00%) are predominant. In the economic section, for the three clusters, there is an elevated concentration (over 60.00%) in the two higher intervals defined for the salary level (more than €1501). Specifically, cluster 2 presents the highest results—over €2500 (40.20%). In short, the results are a reliable reflection of the high purchasing power that characterizes the foreign tourist demand that visits Córdoba, providing a unique opportunity to generate income and employment for the region.

6. Conclusions

Tourists visiting a particular cultural destination, in addition to participating in the knowledge of their heritage, want to increase their sensory experience mainly through gastronomy. In this sense, gastronomy and its relation to tourism has become a key aspect in the analysis of tourist destinations, especially those related to culture and heritage.

The city of Córdoba has traditionally been an important cultural destination due to the importance of its historical heritage. In order to complete the tourist experience, in recent years, the typical regional gastronomy has been reinforced, offering tourists the typical culinary dishes of the city. However, in addition, these specialities are being introduced through a concept that defines the Spanish cuisine in general and that of the region of Andalusia especially—*tapas*.

The heterogeneity in the preferences of the consumers make it necessary to go into depth in the knowledge of the reasons that may impact the processes of choice in order to try the local gastronomy. The analysis made has identified two different factors or attributes: healthy and cultural. Based on them, three types of visitors were established—cultural tourist, healthy-cultural tourist and generic tourist that are considered as valid and of use for segmenting the market. The cultural tourist is the most numerous (49.44%) and gets the highest scores on the items related to the cultural dimension (tasting and culture). Next, the healthy-cultural tourist is the most important from the point of view of this research. It groups the second collective of travelers (27.22%) and presents the highest values in all the items, both in the healthy dimension as in that of culture. It closely reflects the use of fresh culinary ingredients and how *tapas* reflect part of the culture of the city of Córdoba.

The results obtained, as regards the degree of satisfaction with the gastronomy are, in general, high. However, there are significant differences between the identified tourist segments, being clearly linked to the analyzed dimensions. The highest degree of satisfaction, by far, corresponds to the tourists interested in the healthy and cultural aspects of the local gastronomy through *tapas*. The satisfaction goes down slightly, although it remains high in those tourists who are concentrated on the cultural aspect.

The main results of this research, conducted through a cluster analysis indicate that the main characteristics that define *tapas* are highly valued, in general, by all the groups analyzed, thus reinforcing the importance of the gastronomy of the place, and its presentation, as part of the experience in a particular destination.

This paper contributes to the concept of sustainability, as one of its main conclusions is that the potentiation of local gastronomy as a tourist product involves strengthening local economies, a close relationship between local agriculture and tourism, clearly enhancing the environment in two different ways: increasing the level of both organic production and local distribution. In the same way, it is necessary to guarantee respect for tradition and the values that make up the authenticity of the host community. In fact, the use of the local and seasonal agricultural products (more respectful of the environment) and the cultural heritage associated with the concept of *tapas* of the city of Córdoba are considered some very valued elements. Definitely, market segmentation is the way through which these preferences (with respect to *tapas*) of tourists can be included to allow the development of

an appropriate marketing strategy and to ensure the continuous growth and sustainability of the local gastronomy.

The main limitations of this research are the time period in which it is conducted, which makes us believe that it would be desirable to extend the investigation to tourism arriving to the city during all months of the year.

As the main future line of research, we recommend strengthening research to see if tourists visiting the city of Córdoba and consuming its gastronomy also consume food products of this area later in their home towns.

Supplementary Materials: The following are available online at www.mdpi.com/2071-1050/8/5/418/s1, Table S1: Equality stress tests of means, Table S2: Equality stress tests of means.

Acknowledgments: The authors thank typical taverns and restaurant of Cordoba that have participated in this research as well as the city council of Córdoba.

Author Contributions: The research method was proposed and conducted by Francisco Javier Jiménez-Beltrán. The structure of the research project was discussed between Francisco González Santa Cruz, Tomás López-Guzmán and Francisco Javier Jiménez-Beltrán. The paper has been written by Francisco Javier Jiménez-Beltrán and Tomás López-Guzmán.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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