



Traditional gastronomy in Alto Guadalquivir: Origin of contemporary recipes in cordovan cuisine

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ABSTRACT

The different UNESCO recognitions in the field of gastronomy have made it possible to make visible at the international level the values that cuisine, its uses and customs bring to society, to culture and to the conservation of the natural and cultural heritage of a territory. In the area known as Mancomunidad del Alto Guadalquivir in Córdoba, Spain, there are eight towns whose backbone is the river, and they all treasure a culinary tradition that is the basis of some recipes that form the identity of Córdoba's gastronomy, transmitted from generation to generation. The synergy in the actions of institutions and businesses has resulted in a study of traditional recipes, describing how they are prepared and what ingredients are used. Thanks to several women's associations, the female cooks provided the recipes and have been recognized as guardians of the gastronomic knowledge of the towns in terms of culture and gastronomy and their work in favor of the preservation of traditional cuisine, and therefore of the biocultural memory of Córdoba. In this work, we reflect on the recipes collected, their link with avant-garde cordovan gastronomy and the role of institutions, while analyzing the different discourses built around these people and how they are linked to the territory.

1. Introduction

UNESCO formal recognition of "traditional Spanish cuisine" as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2010 distinguishes the importance of Spanish cuisine as part of the country's culture and identity and highlights its diversity and its ability to evolve and adapt to changes over time (Anton Martín et al., 2021). The inclusion of cuisine in UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage declaration underlines its cultural importance and culinary legacy (Romagnoli, 2019). This recognition of "traditional Spanish cuisine" has turned traditional cooks into public figures recognized as living guardians of ancestral culinary knowledge and as agents capable of working on different cultural levels (Sammells, 2016), sharing their knowledge and techniques through recipe books with the new generations, and thus allowing the preservation of tradition. The management of traditional cuisine by institutions is an important issue today, since it is a fundamental part of the intangible heritage of a community, and its preservation and promotion are essential to maintain its cultural identity.

Cultural heritage, including culinary heritage, is a social arrangement that is shaped and recognized through empowered instances (Oliveira et al., 2020). Institutions have recognized the importance of

preserving and promoting their culinary traditions, including traditional cooks, by working to identify, value and support their work as curators of fundamental knowledge that links gastronomy to cultural heritage (Marek and Wiśniewska, 2021). In this light, and following Hernández-Rojas (2021), the institutional actions undertaken seek to promote and preserve culinary diversity, in order to ensure that traditional cuisine remains an integral part of the culture. Numerous initiatives by public administrations have made it possible to disseminate the importance of Spanish gastronomy and culinary traditions. Some of these actions have been developed by the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food in collaboration with other agents such as the Royal Academy of Gastronomy, different universities, professional gastronomic associations or Provincial Councils (e.g., Provincial Council of Córdoba), etc. For instance, culinary festivals have been organized, there are associations of cooks and chefs working to promote and preserve traditional Spanish cuisine, and many restaurants and tourist establishments offer typical and local dishes or recipe books. One of the key examples with the greatest national impact is "Ruta de la Tapa" ("Route of the 'Tapa'"), whose objective is to promote and disseminate the gastronomic culture of the different regions of Spain, including their traditional cuisine. Córdoba has already celebrated its fourteenth

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edition of “Ruta de la Tapa”, which allows residents and tourists to enjoy a wide range of traditional recipes served in different establishments, involving the movement between the participating enclaves mixing cultural and gastronomic itineraries.

Andalusian cuisine has a specific mention within the context of Spanish cuisine due to its importance and uniqueness, being known for its great variety of dishes, the use of fresh and quality ingredients, and for being considered one of the most influential regions in Spanish cuisine (Ayora-Díaz, 2022). As you can see in the Fig. 1, Mancomunidad del Alto Guadalquivir¹ is located in the province of Córdoba, in the autonomous community of Andalusia, and is formed by the following towns: Villafranca de Córdoba, El Carpio, Bujalance, Cañete de las Torres, Villa del Río, Cardena, Montoro, Pedro Abad and Adamuz.

This Mancomunidad, that is, community of towns has played a crucial role in the management of traditional cuisine in the region and has adopted various strategies to preserve and promote its culinary heritage, including the publication of recipe books. This is a key strategy in the management of traditional cuisine, as it makes it possible to document recipes and culinary techniques and ensure their preservation for future generations, the integration of old recipes in establishments aimed at young people (e.g., hostels) and the digitization of recipes for online preservation. The publication of recipe books can influence the management of traditional cuisine in a number of ways (Kilburn-Toppin, 2021), allowing recipes and culinary techniques to be accessible to a wider audience, which can increase interest in traditional cuisine and promote its preservation (Fan, 2022). Recipe books can also be used as an educational tool to transmit culinary knowledge to the youth population and encourage the continuity of traditional culinary practices (Miseres, 2022). Furthermore, recipe books can serve as a source of information for researchers and experts, which can contribute to a better understanding of traditional cuisine and its evolution over time (Cui et al., 2023). Eventually, recipe books can be used as a tourism

promotion tool, attracting visitors interested in traditional cuisine and increasing the visibility of the region and its culinary heritage (Fan, 2022).

Sustainable tourism and traditional cuisine can be closely related, as both focus on preserving the local culture and environment. Sustainable tourism refers to a type of tourism that is sensitive to the social, economic, and environmental impacts of tourism activities. This means it aims at minimizing negative impacts and maximizing positive benefits for the local community and the environment. In this sense, promoting local gastronomy and traditional cuisine can be a way to foster sustainable tourism, as it can attract tourists interested in experiencing local culture and food. Both concepts revolve around preserving the local culture and environment: encouraging traditional cuisine can be a way to promote sustainable tourism and, in turn, sustainable tourism can help preserve local gastronomy and culinary culture. Therefore, traditional cuisine is closely linked to these policies at the local, regional, and national levels, and the idea is that the actions carried out by the institutions contribute to the formation of food heritage and are therefore linked to the candidacy granted by UNESCO. Leal and Medina (2018), in their introduction to gastronomy and tourism in Ibero-America, already made us reflect on gastronomic tourism in Latin America and its future prospects linked to heritage. Traditional cuisine is thus considered an important part of Spain’s food culture and is given a key role as a representative of living cultural knowledge, authenticity, and typicality of food. Mancomunidad del Alto Guadalquivir has created a recipe book of the traditional cuisine of its area. This article tries to find the role and experiences of the cooks of the Mancomunidad del Alto Guadalquivir in the promotion and they had of traditional cooking, as well as the impact of traditional cooking in the development of modern gastronomy. Nevertheless, what is the role of female cooks in this network? And, even more: how has the vision of traditional cuisine influenced today’s cuisine? This article focuses on examining the perception of the traditional female cooks of the Mancomunidad del Alto Guadalquivir de Córdoba of the traditional recipe book, which is received and used by those who participate in it, as well as how these women see their own participation in this process in relation to the representation of local gastronomic cultures and its potential as a tourist resource. This has been carried out through oral interviews collected through the non-profit association CIC-Batá, showing their opinions and reactions to the opportunities that the patrimonialization of cuisine has given them and how the traditional cuisine of Córdoba has influenced their development and recognition of modern gastronomy.

2. Gastronomy as a differentiating element for sustainable and responsible tourism

In 2017, during the European Year of Sustainable Tourism, the non-profit organization CIC-Batá launched the project “Ciudadanas-os turistas responsables” (in English: “Responsible fe/male citizen-tourists”) in the territory of Mancomunidad del Alto Guadalquivir. The purpose of this project was to promote a sustainable and responsible development model based on tourism, with a local and global approach, through various initiatives to raise awareness, provide information and educate citizens. To achieve this objective, the project sought to identify and highlight initiatives and experiences committed to the principles of responsible tourism and sustainability from different approaches such as the protection of cultural diversity, environmental protection, the fight against climate change, gender equity, human rights, etc. These experiences and initiatives related to tourism in Mancomunidad del Alto Guadalquivir have made it possible to relate behaviors and attitudes at the local level with changes and transformations at the global level, linking with the strategies and actions related to tourism with the 2030 Agenda for the compliance with the Sustainable Development Goals. This project was funded by the Andalusian Agency for International Development Cooperation.

This project has contributed to aligning the development of tourism



Fig. 1. Map of the Mancomunidad del Alto Guadalquivir in the European Union, Spain and Andalusia.

¹ Association of municipalities legally linked in a territory with a common organization.

projects in Mancomunidad del Alto Guadalquivir with the strategies and objectives of national and international organizations, namely: United Nations, World Tourism Organization, Spanish Center for Responsible Tourism (CETR) and European Alliance for Responsible Tourism and Hospitality, among others. All these promote responsible and sustainable tourism taking as references the Resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (GCET), the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1999), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), or the Berlin Declaration on Tourism (2017) in particular its reference to the gender approach. Moreover, the Andalusian Development Cooperation Plan 2015–2018 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were also taken into account.

The involvement of citizens, institutions and companies has enabled a transfer of knowledge that has boosted the scope of the project, while allowing all those involved to benefit from this joint work strategy and this exchange of knowledge along the lines of the SDG 17, and specifically goal 17.17 (“Encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships”).

3. Traditional cuisine

Traditional cuisine is a term used to describe the culinary practices and recipes passed down from generation to generation within a community (Kuhnlein et al., 2006). These culinary practices reflect the culture, history, and social, political, and economic influences of an era, and are considered a fundamental part of a community’s intangible heritage (Dixon and Isaacs, 2013). In fact, it is more than just a way of preparing food – it is an expression of a community’s cultural identity. Recipes and culinary techniques are passed down through time and can be seen as a way of preserving and transmitting the culture and history of a community to future generations (Palmer et al., 2010).

Traditional cuisine is closely related to the cultural identity of a community, since it is a way of expressing and maintaining the traditions and customs of an era (De Solier, 2005). For instance, festivities and celebrations are often marked by typical dishes that are essential for the continuation of the cultural identity of a community (Bogueva et al., 2021). In addition, traditional cuisine can be seen as a form of resistance against cultural homogenization, as it allows a community to maintain its own identity and preserve its cultural roots (Saranraj et al., 2019). This is done through the transmission of recipes, techniques, and culinary practices from generation to generation, which means that traditional cuisine can be seen as a means of preserving the collective memory of a community. Moreover, it can be influenced by external factors, such as globalization, migration, and mix of cultures (Nemeth et al., 2019). However, even in this context, traditional cuisine can be seen as a means of maintaining cultural identity and cohesion of a community (Feldman and Wunderlich, 2022).

4. Córdoba, location of Mancomunidad del Alto Guadalquivir and recipes derived from the study

Córdoba, a city with an outstanding tangible and intangible heritage, was founded more than 2000 years ago. The origin of Córdoba is still under debate, although it is common to cite its foundation in the Roman Empire (Pérez-Luque, 2021). However, the hypothesis of a previous atomized network of settlements dating back to the 4th millennium B.C. is also being considered. Over the centuries, the city has experienced different cultures and peoples, from the first inhabitants, Romans, Arabs, Visigoths, and Jews, which, having been superimposed on each other, have contributed their different cultures and left their cultural imprint, which can still be seen today in the form of recipes. In this way, the importance of tangible heritage but also of intangible heritage (i.e., gastronomy) can be understood, and the traditional gastronomy of a

territory attracts, preserves, and reflects past cultures (Esparza Huamanchumo et al., 2022; Hernández-Rojas and Huete Alcocer, 2021).

The territory called Mancomunidad del Alto Guadalquivir is located in the eastern part of the province of Córdoba, 50 km from the capital, in the center of the region of Andalusia and well communicated with the rest of the Spanish territory. It has an area of 1,300 square kilometers, with a total of 44,157 inhabitants distributed among the 8 towns that form it: Adamuz, Bujalance, Cañete de las Torres, El Carpio, Montoro, Pedro Abad, Villa del Río and Villafranca de Córdoba. Just as Córdoba, the capital of the province, was established around the Guadalquivir River, this community of towns followed the same logic, developing along the course of the river and its tributaries called Yeguas and Arenoso. This territory has an important cultural heritage that is manifested through its festivities, craftwork, and gastronomy (Muñoz-Benito and Navajas-Romero, 2022). Regarding economic activities, this is an agricultural territory with a special presence of olive groves and fruit and vegetable products; it is also a suitable area for hunting and fishing, mushrooms, and other wild products, which define its rich gastronomy.

The territory of the Mancomunidad in which the study of traditional recipes has been carried out is organized into three areas that are structured according to their orography. First, the Sierra area (mountains) is formed by two towns (Adamuz and Montoro); it is located in the foothills of Sierra Morena and includes part of the protected natural area of Cardeña-Montoro Natural Park. Second, the Vega area (meadow) is formed by four towns (Villa del Río, Pedro Abad, El Carpio and Villafranca); it is distributed along the Guadalquivir River and concentrates approximately 70% of the population of Mancomunidad del Alto Guadalquivir. Third, the Campiña area (countryside) is formed by two towns (Bujalance and Cañete de las Torres) and its main crops are olive trees. This research explored the recipe books of two towns: Pedro Abad and El Carpio. Both towns were founded as towns bordering the Guadalquivir River, serving as a storehouse of raw materials for the capital of Córdoba.

5. Institutions and recipe books

The preservation and transmission of traditional cuisine is essential to keep alive the culinary cultures and traditions of a society (Batat, 2022). Food is a fundamental aspect of cultural identity and can provide a sense of belonging and community (Torri et al., 2020). Traditional cuisine reflects a society’s history and culture, and its preservation helps to maintain a connection to the past and to transmit cultural values and traditions to future generations (Wijaya, 2019). Likewise, to understand a type of cuisine, it is essential to understand the environment (Conde et al., 2022). Furthermore, traditional cuisine is an art form and skill that has been transferred from generation to generation over the centuries (Batat et al., 2019). Through practice and tradition, cooks have developed unique culinary techniques and skills that are essential to the production of traditional dishes (Aworth, 2022). The preservation of these skills and techniques is essential to ensure the continuity of the culinary tradition and its legacy. However, as societies evolve and change, traditional cuisine is in danger of disappearing. Globalization and cultural homogenization have led to the loss of many culinary traditions, and it is essential to take measures to preserve them (Mobolade et al., 2019). One way to do this is through the documentation of recipes and culinary techniques. Documentation makes information accessible to future generations and helps ensure the continuity of the culinary tradition (Kanter and Gittelsohn, 2020). Recipe documentation is also important because it allows cooks and chefs to experiment and improve traditional recipes (Caporaso, 2021). By having access to written documentation of techniques and ingredients, cooks can modify recipes to create new and exciting dishes, while at the same time maintaining the integrity of the culinary tradition (Christensen and Stuart, 2019). Additionally, documentation of recipes and culinary techniques can also be used to preserve the memory of former cooks and chefs, and to recognize their contribution to culinary culture (Pedret-Massanet et al.,

2023). Documentation allows people to learn about ancient culinary methods and the importance of culinary tradition in society.

Recipe management is a critical aspect for preserving and transmitting culinary traditions (Nosi and Zanni, 2004). Institutions play a key role in collecting, documenting, and preserving recipe books, and ensuring that this information is accessible for future generations (Ramazanova et al., 2022). One of the main ways in which institutions manage recipe books is through the creation of culinary archives and libraries (Nosi and Zanni, 2004). These archives contain a wide variety of recipes and culinary techniques, as well as information on the history of food and culinary culture. The archives are maintained and organized by experts and are available to the public. In addition to archives, institutions can also manage recipe books through educational and research programs. For example, they may offer cooking courses that teach traditional culinary skills and techniques, or fund research on traditional cuisine and its traditions (Kirářová and Hamarneh, 2017). These programs help ensure that information is accessible and that the culinary tradition is kept alive. Another way institutions manage recipe books is through the preservation of culinary traditions at risk of disappearing. This may include documenting recipes and culinary techniques at risk, as well as promoting and supporting cooks and chefs practicing traditional cuisine (Ramazanova et al., 2022).

The implementation of the project “Ciudadanas/os turistas responsables” (“Responsible female citizen-tourists”) provided the necessary resources for technicians to contact women’s groups to involve them in responsible tourism models and to make them reflect on their role in the preservation of intangible heritage. Beyond the recipes, the meetings held with these groups made it possible to identify trails, paths, bird-watching sites, traditions, and other elements that could form part of the distinctive features of the territory for people interested in more sustainable tourism. The recipes were accompanied by short stories that explained the origin of the ingredients or the time of the year in which the recipe was prepared, often in response to the availability or not of certain products, climatic conditions, or the need to reuse products.

6. The role of the institutions to preserve the biocultural memory of Mancomunidad del Alto Guadalquivir

Mancomunidad del Alto Guadalquivir is a community of towns that aims to promote the economic, social, and cultural development of the Alto Guadalquivir region in Andalusia, Spain. Traditional cuisine is an important part of the culture and heritage of this region, and the Mancomunidad has worked to preserve it through the compilation and publication of traditional recipes. Women from various associations participated in the preparation of the recipe books; in particular, APEMU and AIXA led the project, as you can see in Fig. 2. The former, APEMU, has among its main objectives the promotion of equal opportunities for women, the improvement of public safety, the promotion of women’s cultural and social training, the raising of society’s awareness regarding women’s problems and the promotion of education, encouraging the development of cultural activities. The latter, AIXA, has as objectives the formation of a homogeneous group to include women and men to fight for equality in an effective way, to prevent and help in problems of drug addiction and unwanted adolescent pregnancies, to fight against gender violence, to carry out cultural and recreational excursions, and training activities. The work of compiling the recipes was carried out collaboratively by the women of both groups. The profile of these women is elderly, and they belong to different economic profiles, since some of these women were owners of successful food businesses and had a good economic position, while others had limited or unpaid income outside the home. However, they all have traditional culinary knowledge and skills passed down from generation to generation, as well as an emotional connection to local food and culture. In any case, it could be inferred that these women have significant in-depth knowledge of traditional cooking and its role in local culture. Furthermore, it is likely that your participation in the creation of the recipe book



Fig. 2. Women from the two associations gathered for the collection of recipes. Source: CIC-Batá.

is motivated by your love and commitment to the preservation of traditional cuisine and the promotion of sustainable tourism in the region, rather than direct financial gain.

The term biocultural memory refers to the complexity of the process of human beings in the adequate appropriation of the particularity of their immediate habitat (Toledo and Bassols, 2008). The main motivation of these women was the collective concern to preserve the memory of their ancestors and the belief that if they did not carry out this work and leave a written record of these recipes, they would be forgotten and new generations might not know them, thus losing part of the biocultural memory of the area.

For a week, the women met to agree on the recipes, asking the elders to elaborate on the details of preparation or the traditions surrounding the preparation of the dishes, such as the Lenten period, Holy Week, holidays, or other specific celebrations. Institutional support was essential for this activity, so they had the support of project technicians who are members of the NGO leading the project, Grupo de Desarrollo Rural Sierra Morena Cordobesa. This NGO is a non-profit organization that promotes sustainable development through the coordination and participation of all socioeconomic agents, and whose objectives include the conservation of the cultural heritage. For the digitization of the outcomes of the project, they had the support of the Guadalinfo center in Pedro Abad, an Andalusian public network of digital competence centers, co-financed by the Regional Government of Andalusia and the 8 Andalusian provincial councils, managed by the Fernando de los Ríos Consortium.

As part of the project activities, some of the recipes were included in the restaurant of the Fuente Agria hostel in Villafranca de Córdoba, as well as in dissemination activities such as the workshop on “salmorejo cordobés” (a typical Cordovan dish) with the participation of chef Matías Vega Ortiz. In this workshop, the recipe of “salmorejo cordobés” was elaborated in a traditional way, using the mortar, with the aim of spreading the knowledge of this recipe with all its traditional products, cultural values, and health-related aspects, as you can see in Fig. 3. Chef Matías Vega was National Award of the Federation of Spanish Gastronomic Associations (Federación de Cofradías Gastronómicas Españolas – FECOES) in 2017.

The Mancomunidad has worked to promote these recipes and traditional cuisine through gastronomic events and tastings, which have contributed to the dissemination and preservation of the culinary culture of the region. The recipe books found after the various interviews refer to two towns, Pedro Abad and El Carpio. More specifically, the 14 recipes were: “ajo de vinagreras,” “patatas con fideos,” “judías con pichones,” “cazuela de habas,” “ropa vieja,” “sopa de gato,” “potaje

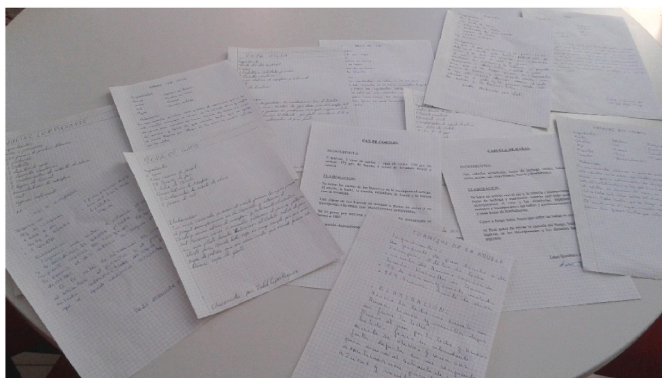


Fig. 3. Compilation of recipes. Source: CIC-Batá.

cuaresma,” “torrijas ligeras,” “bizcocho ligero de boda,” “sopa de maimones,” “ajo,” “pan de cortijo,” “torrijas de la abuela,” “gachas,” “arroz con leche,” “dulce de pan,” and “rosco de naranja”. The traditional recipes that were identified as being from the entire area of Córdoba were “salmorejo,” “ajoblanco,” “pestiños,” “gazpacho” or kidneys.

Among these recipes, there are some that deserve to be highlighted due to their uniqueness and attachment to the territory. “Ajo de vinagreras” is a recipe of humble origin that was mainly based on two raw materials: (i) the leftover bread from the previous day and (ii) the so-called “vinagreras,” a type of vegetable substitute for spinach or chard, which is abundant in the area. In general, the main raw materials of the recipes are based on products found in the territory: garlic, olive oil and all types of vegetables from the garden depending on the season: onion, red bell pepper, green bell pepper, pumpkin, or broad beans. As for the broad beans, the recipe “cazuela de habas” stands out, where “habas” (broad beans) themselves, with onion, garlic, mint and artichoke, are watered and cooked with a wine from Montilla or Moriles, towns located 50 km away from where this recipe is traditionally prepared.

Another of the recipes to be highlighted is “judías con pichones,” although “judías” (beans) could easily be replaced by chickpeas, also grown in this area. Depending on whether the season was favorable or unfavorable, chickpeas or beans were used. As for meat, the so-called “pichón” (pigeon) is used because it is easy to obtain, being the offspring of the stock dove. But this dish is also traditional in hunting season, so in the area you can find chickpea stew with game birds (i.e., partridge, wood pigeons, turtledoves, quails) (Hernández-Rojas, 2022). Nowadays it is easy to find the evolution and origin of the dish with pigeon in Michelin star restaurants, as would be the case of Paco Morales and the restaurant Noor (two Michelin stars) called “Pichón asado y reposado con espinacas salteadas, bechamel de oveja mazapán y café melocotón labneh y caviar” (“Roasted and settled pigeon with sautéed spinach, bechamel sheep marzipan and coffee, peach labneh and caviar”), an evolution of the stew towards the so-called haute cuisine.

Regarding the recipe found called “ropa vieja”, this is a national recipe, which is nothing more than the use of the previous day’s stew. In the case found in the Upper Guadalquivir area, the vegetables added are mainly those grown in the area, specifically garlic (more than the usual amount) together with the olive oil used in all the recipes, given the olive grove of the area, and tomato. This elaboration is unique with respect to the rest of the national territory. The traditional evolution of “ropa vieja” in Jaén is called “andrajo” and also has an avant-garde version in the restaurant Bagá, a Michelin star, as well as in some periods of the year in the restaurant El Bohío, of the Michelin star chef Pepe Rodríguez, located in the town of Illescas.

As aforementioned, the traditional recipes that were identified as being from the entire area of Córdoba were “salmorejo,” “ajoblanco,” “pestiños,” “gazpacho” or kidneys. “Salmorejo” and “gazpacho” are dishes that make use of the settled bread (from the day before), and their

most common ingredients are tomato, bread, garlic, olive oil and salt. Before the use of tomato, brought from America, it was made as “mazamorra”, which is basically the same but without tomato (Rueda García, 2014). It has been a humble dish of shepherds and peasants to make the most of the bread. In this sense, the ingredients are local and produced in the surrounding orchards of the towns where the study was conducted.

Lamb kidneys and products from the so-called “casquería” (offal) is an antecedent of the Jewish culture that populated the territory (Zafra, 2019) until their expulsion in 1492. The Jewish culture has gained importance during the last years (Gaizutyte-Filipaviciene, 2020), finding numerous studies related to the diaspora (e.g., Li et al., 2019), emphasizing gastronomy linked to the territory. Basically, according to Medina’s (2017) studies, this points to how local societies have come to identify themselves and, even today, to define themselves patrimonially through the food and dishes they select, cook and eat.

7. Conclusions

Traditional cuisine in any region has become a mirror of its raw materials and elaborations, but it also serves as an export element for avant-garde gastronomic restaurants. According to the study supported by the Andalusian Public Administration, the discourses and actions that are currently shaping the gastronomic heritage of Córdoba are currently being constructed. But this construction of food heritage, beyond its devotion to popular cuisines and traditional knowledge (expressed by older people as the repository of such knowledge), is also focused on achieving gastronomic standards that contribute to improving Córdoba’s position as a global cultural and economic agent. In this way, the recipes of the past prepared and preserved by the old housewives are intimately linked to tourism policies at all levels (local, regional, and national), as well as to the construction of a country image that is expressed in a practical way through its representation, both inside and outside Córdoba. Throughout this research, starting mainly from the case of the search for preserved traditional recipes, we have proposed a reflection on how the recipes assume a leading role in relation to traditional cuisine, and how the recipes are still prepared in traditional restaurants of Córdoba or at an avant-garde level in the evolution of the recipe itself.

This article highlights the importance of traditional cuisine in promoting sustainable tourism and the capacity of local gastronomic culture. Through the analysis of recipe books from the Alto Guadalquivir, it is demonstrated how the promotion of local gastronomy can attract tourists interested in experiencing the local culture and food, while at the same time minimizing the negative impacts of tourism. In addition, the importance of the participation of women cooks in the creation and promotion of recipe books is highlighted, and how their role has influenced the promotion and development of the local gastronomic culture. It is recognized that these women belong to a low socioeconomic profile, but that their culinary knowledge and skills are highly valued in the creation of recipe books and the promotion of local cuisine. Ultimately, this culinary and conceptual analysis seeks to foster a greater understanding and appreciation of local cuisine, its relevance in creating a unique cultural and gastronomic identity, and its importance as a valuable tourism resource.

This study has also shown the importance of governance and tourism development models agreed with the population, which allows us to learn about the uses and customs of the people who live in the territory. These models also allow their use as an original and attractive tourist resource for those people seeking forms of tourism away from mass tourism that have a high cultural component, are respectful with the local culture and support sustainable development. The practical implications of this research could be several. Firstly, it could help to better understand the role of female cooks in promoting and preserving traditional cuisine, which could lead to a greater appreciation and recognition of their work. This could have a positive impact on

promoting sustainable tourism and preserving local culture. Furthermore, by exploring how traditional cuisine has influenced modern gastronomy, this research could help inspire new ways to innovate and develop local gastronomy in a sustainable way, which could benefit both the local community and tourists interested in the cuisine. authentic dining experience. Finally, this research could be used as a basis for the development of policies and programs aimed at promoting local gastronomy and sustainable tourism in the Mancomunidad del Alto Guadalquivir de Córdoba region and in other similar regions.

Declaration of competing interest

We disclose there is not any actual or potential conflict of interest including any financial, personal or other relationships with other people or organizations within three years of beginning the submitted work that could inappropriately influence, or be perceived to influence our work.

Data availability

The project data is available on the web: <http://www.cicbata.org/sites/default/files/Como%20seguir%20Mancomunidad.pdf>.

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