

The Importance of Street Food in Gastronomy: North Cyprus Street Tastes

Gastronomide Sokak Yemeklerinin Önemi: Kuzey Kıbrıs Sokak Lezzetleri

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Abstract: In the world of gastronomy, the importance of street food is increasing day by day. Especially in culturally rich regions, street flavors appeal to the taste perception of local people and tourists. North Cyprus street flavors reflect the rich culinary culture of the region. Traditional cooking methods, the use of local ingredients, and the continuation of cultural heritage help to preserve and enrich the authenticity of these flavors. Additionally, the wide range of flavors offered by street food caters to everyone's palate, providing options suitable for all tastes. North Cyprus street flavors have been traditionally produced for centuries and have been carried through to the present day, holding significant importance both culturally and in terms of tourism. This study aims to focus on the importance of North Cyprus street flavors using a descriptive research model, highlighting the cultural and tourism significance of these flavors. Additionally, it aims to preserve and document forgotten or overlooked traditional street foods and beverages belonging to Cypriot culture, as part of the intangible cultural heritage, and to pass them on to future generations.

Keywords: Gastronomy, street food, Northern Cyprus

Öz: Gastronomi dünyasında, sokak yemeklerinin önemi her geçen gün daha da artmaktadır. Özellikle kültürel açıdan zengin bölgelerde, sokak lezzetleri yerel halkın ve turistlerin tat algısına hitap etmektedir. Kuzey Kıbrıs sokak lezzetleri, bölgenin zengin mutfak kültürünü yansıtmaktadır. Geleneksel pişirme yöntemleri, yerel malzemelerin kullanımı ve kültürel mirasın devamı, bu lezzetlerin özgünlüğünü korumakta ve zenginleştirmektedir. Ayrıca, sokak lezzetlerinin sunduğu geniş yelpaze, herkesin damak zevkine uygun seçenekler sunmaktadır. Kuzey Kıbrıs sokak lezzetleri, yüzyıllar boyunca geleneksel olarak üretilmiş ve günümüze kadar taşınmış olup hem kültürel hem de turizm açısından büyük bir öneme sahiptir. Bu çalışmada durum saptayıcı / betimleyici araştırma modelinden yararlanılarak, Kuzey Kıbrıs sokak lezzetlerinin önemine odaklanıp, bu lezzetlerin kültürel ve turizm açısından değeri vurgulanmasını, unutulmuş geleneksel sokak yiyeceklerini Kıbrıs kültürel mirası korumak ve kayıt altına alıp, gelecek nesile bırakmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Gastronomi, sokak lezzetleri, Kuzey Kıbrıs

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1. Introduction

The concept of street flavor has become one of the topics of interest among gastronomy researchers in recent years (Karsavuran, 2018). Because street flavors not only prompt people to explore and discover local cuisines but also help them learn about the qualities of the cultures they represent. Therefore, street flavors can be considered as a reflection of a society's cuisine (Choudhury et al., 2011).

Street flavors are considered a significant part of a vast cultural heritage worldwide and are recognized as an essential element of gastronomic experiences. These flavors are typically local and traditional foods offered at street corners, markets, festivals, and stalls scattered throughout the city. Street flavors not only offer a unique culinary experience with distinctive tastes, aromas, and stories but also serve as a space for cultural interaction and sharing.

Gastronomy is not only about fulfilling people's nutritional needs but is also considered an expression of a society's cultural identity (Lupton, 2020). Street flavors constitute an important aspect of this cultural identity because the foods served on the streets of a country, region, or city reflect the history, geography, traditions, and lifestyle of that community (Smith, 2018). For instance, a taco stand may reflect the vibrant and colorful streets of Mexico, a kebab shop may represent Turkey's rich and diverse culinary culture, or a noodle stall could mirror the dynamism of street life in China (Jones, 2019).

The significance of street flavors should be assessed not only as a culinary richness but also as an economic and societal impact (Smith and Brown, 2021). Street flavors contribute to the economic development of local small businesses and vendors. Additionally, street food stalls bring people together, encourage social interaction on the streets, and strengthen community solidarity (Garcia et al., 2017).

Street flavors are not just meals; they are also significant components that make up the fabric of a society. Preserving and celebrating this value contributes to the strengthening of cultural diversity and human connections. Particularly in North Cyprus, street flavors are associated with its unique culture, historical heritage, and delicious cuisine.

Street food plays a crucial role in the culinary landscape, offering a vibrant reflection of a region's culture, history, and social dynamics. In the realm of gastronomy, street food is not merely about sustenance but an immersive experience that captures the essence of local life. This is particularly evident in North Cyprus, where the street food scene is a testament to the island's rich cultural heritage and diverse culinary influences (Kocabaş and Karaca, 2020).

In North Cyprus, the street food culture is a mosaic of flavors, blending Turkish, Greek, and Middle Eastern influences, resulting in a unique gastronomic identity. Dishes such as "köfte" (spiced meatballs), "şiş kebab" (skewered meat), and "hellim" (grilled halloumi cheese) are staples that not only satiate hunger but also tell stories of tradition and community. The bustling markets and street vendors serve as social hubs where locals and tourists alike can engage with the island's culinary traditions firsthand (Smith, 2013).

North Cyprus cuisine is characterized by its use of fresh, local ingredients, often sourced from the island's fertile lands. The emphasis on simplicity and flavor is evident in dishes like "mücendra" (lentils with rice), "kolokas" (a root vegetable stew), and "pilavuna" (a traditional cheese pie). Seafood also plays a significant role, with dishes like grilled octopus and calamari being popular among locals and visitors. These dishes not only reflect the island's agricultural and maritime resources but also its culinary traditions that have been passed down through generations.

The accessibility and affordability of street food make it an integral part of daily life, providing quick and delicious meals that cater to a wide audience. Moreover, street food vendors often use locally sourced ingredients, which supports local agriculture and promotes sustainability. This culinary practice highlights the significance of fresh, seasonal produce and reinforces the connection between food and the land (Yılmaz and Demir, 2018).

Festivals and markets in North Cyprus further celebrate its rich culinary heritage. Events such as the Olive Festival in Zeytinlik and the Grape Festival in Yeşilirmak showcase the island's diverse produce and traditional recipes, fostering a sense of community and cultural pride. These gatherings not only allow for the preservation of traditional cooking methods but also promote culinary tourism, drawing food enthusiasts from around the world to experience the flavors of North Cyprus firsthand.

Street food in North Cyprus is more than just a gastronomic delight; it is a cultural experience that enriches the local heritage and offers invaluable insights into the island's way of life. Understanding and appreciating street food can lead to a deeper connection with the region's cultural fabric and contribute to the preservation of its culinary traditions.

This study aims to examine Cyprus street delicacies in terms of a gastronomic product and to evaluate them in terms of their content, history, way of making, places where they are sold, people, and businesses that sell them.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Gastronomy

Gastronomy is the study and application of knowledge concerning food and beverages from cultural, artistic, and scientific perspectives. This discipline encompasses not only cooking techniques and recipes but also the history of foods, their cultural meanings, nutritional values, sensory characteristics, and psychological impacts on humans (Jonsson et al., 2005). Gastronomy analyzes all factors involved in the process from food production to consumption.

One of the primary goals of gastronomy is to optimize the flavors and presentations of foods. To achieve this, gastronomy interacts with various disciplines such as chemistry, biology, sociology, anthropology, and the arts. For instance, molecular gastronomy employs scientific methods to understand the chemical and physical transformations of food and applies this knowledge to create innovative dishes (This, 2006). While this represents the scientific aspect of gastronomy, the artistic aspect focuses on the aesthetic presentation of food and enriching the dining experience.

From a cultural perspective, gastronomy investigates a society's eating habits, rituals related to food, and the sociocultural meanings of foods (Flandrin and Montanari, 2013). In this context, gastronomy is a vital tool for understanding the identity and traditions of a country or region. The historical development of foods is shaped by various factors such as geography and trade routes. Therefore, gastronomic studies adopt an interdisciplinary approach to examine and understand the evolution of foods by considering historical and geographical contexts (Santich, 2004).

Through its relationship with nutritional science, gastronomy also plays a crucial role in promoting healthy eating habits. Topics such as how to create a balanced diet and the effects of different food groups on the body are focal points of gastronomic research (Brillat-Savarin, 2009). Additionally, issues like food safety and sustainability fall within the scope of gastronomy. This includes efforts to reduce the environmental impacts of food production and promote sustainable agricultural practices (Pollan, 2008).

Gastronomy is a multifaceted and broad field that aims to increase knowledge about all aspects of food. As both a scientific and artistic discipline, gastronomy seeks to enhance quality and experience in the process from food production to presentation. In this context, research in the field of gastronomy adopts a comprehensive and holistic approach by collaborating with various disciplines such as nutritional science, cultural studies, and sustainability.

2.2. Street Foods in the Field of Gastronomy Tourism

Gastronomy tourism, a specialized sector within the broader tourism industry, emphasizes exploring destinations through their culinary traditions and food experiences. Street food, in particular, offers a unique lens into local cultures, providing authentic and often affordable culinary experiences.

Street food is an integral part of many cultures, reflecting the flavors, traditions, and lifestyles of local communities. It often mirrors the history, climate, and agricultural practices of a region. For instance, the use of specific spices, cooking methods, and food types can reveal much about a culture's trade history and social customs. Street food also serves as a bridge between locals and tourists, offering a taste of everyday life and fostering cross-cultural interactions (Everett and Aitchison, 2008).

Street food significantly enhances the travel experience, making it a central element of gastronomy tourism. Food tours and culinary festivals centered around street food are increasingly popular, attracting food enthusiasts who seek authentic and immersive experiences. Street food markets become cultural hubs where tourists can engage with local vendors and learn about the culinary traditions of the area. This not only enriches

the tourist experience but also supports local economies and promotes cultural exchange (Ellis, et al., 2018). Nowadays, with the increase in tourists' gastronomic travels, their interest in the cuisine specific to the region they visit also comes to the fore in the festivals organized.

In this context, bringing to the fore the food and beverage elements specific to the region through festivals organized becomes a center of attraction for visitors and the host community; The aim is to ensure that the pride in the local products they wish to offer and the celebration of traditions and customs are a special attraction that contributes to the promotion of the region.

If we give examples from the USA, which attracts the most food-oriented tourists in the world; Thousands of tourists visit the 3-day Maine Lobster Festival, which has attracted the most tourists since 1948, and it is stated that foreign visitors contributed 1 million dollars. In addition, the San Francisco Street Food Festival, which hosts 50 thousand people on the street, makes significant contributions. These examples include the Garlic Festival in England, the Melbourne Food and Wine Festival in Australia, and dozens of food festivals held in France, as important attraction centers of gastronomy tourism (TURSAB, 2014). Therefore, gastronomy tourism has great material and moral importance among cultural values.

Moreover, the popularity of street food in gastronomy tourism helps preserve culinary heritage and promotes sustainable tourism practices. By focusing on local ingredients and traditional cooking methods, street food vendors contribute to the sustainability of food systems and reduce the environmental impact associated with large-scale food production and transport (Everett and Aitchison, 2008).

The economic impact of street food on local communities is substantial. Street food vendors often operate small businesses that contribute to the local economy by creating jobs and generating income. These businesses can help uplift economically disadvantaged communities by providing affordable food options and employment opportunities (Henderson, 2019). Additionally, street food markets often become social spaces where community members and tourists interact, fostering social cohesion and cultural exchange.

While street food offers many benefits, there are also health and safety concerns to address. Ensuring food safety is crucial to protect consumers from foodborne illnesses. Regulatory frameworks and hygiene standards must be implemented and monitored to maintain the safety and quality of street food (Alimi, 2016). Education and training programs for street food vendors can enhance their knowledge of food safety practices, contributing to the overall well-being of consumers.

Street foods play a crucial role in the field of gastronomy tourism, offering a flavorful journey into the heart of a destination's culture (Montanari, 2013). As gastronomy tourism continues to thrive, street food will remain a vital component, drawing food lovers from around the world to savor the diverse and delicious offerings of local cuisines.

2.3. Cyprus Culinary Culture

Cyprus is an island that stands out with its rich historical past, diverse geographical landscape, and cultural diversity. This richness has also influenced Cypriot culinary culture, bringing forth various flavors that are distinctive to the region. Cyprus cuisine has been influenced by various cultures throughout history, enriching its culinary culture through these interactions (Papadakis, 2019). Cyprus's geographical location has led to influences from Mediterranean, Middle Eastern, and Asian cuisines, resulting in a unique flavor mosaic. Cypriot culinary culture is characterized by the use of local ingredients, carefully selected spices, and cooking methods.

While Cypriot cuisine interacts with Anatolian culinary culture, the cuisines of the Greek and Turkish communities living together on the island are highly influenced by Turkish and Greek cuisine (Bağışkan, 2019). Although there are similarities between the cuisines of Cyprus, the Middle East and Anatolia, the Cypriot cuisine cannot be clearly defined under the influence of all civilizations that have existed for centuries (Yılmazbasar and Sarper, 2024).

Although there are similarities in the Cypriot Cuisine used by the communities living in Cyprus today (Turkish Cypriots, Greek Cypriots, Maronites, Armenians, and Latins), different products can be used in parallel with the feature of religion shaping culinary cultures, therefore differences may arise in food preferences (Altan, 2019). Not only the food but also the cooking methods and eating patterns of these two main communities, who have lived together as neighbors for many years, are a good example of the concept of cultural interaction (Yılmazbaşar, 2021).

The traditional Cypriot culinary culture is of Turkish, Greek, Italian, French, Lebanese, Syrian, and Armenian origin, and the unique characteristics of the products grown under the influence of the climate and vegetation on the island of Cyprus have created a unique culinary culture (Altan, 2016).

An important feature of Cypriot culinary culture is the extensive use of local products. Thanks to its fertile land, the island can cultivate a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, and herbs. For example, products such as Cyprus olive oil, the famous halloumi cheese, pomegranate molasses, and carob molasses are obtained from these lands (Koumi, 2018). These local products form the basic components of Cyprus dishes and give them a unique taste and aroma.

Cyprus culinary culture also relies on traditional cooking methods. For instance, methods like cooking in a tandır oven, grilling over charcoal, and preparing dishes like testi kebabı are commonly used (Demetriou, 2020). These methods add a unique flavor and touch to the dishes, emphasizing the uniqueness of Cyprus culinary culture.

Cyprus culinary culture is not just about providing a culinary experience; it's also a form of cultural expression. Meals bring families and communities together, celebrate traditions and rituals, and connect people. Additionally, Cyprus cuisine is a significant reason for tourists to visit the region and provides a substantial economic contribution to the tourism industry (Cyprus Tourism and Gastronomy Association, 2021).

2.4. Cyprus Street Food

Cyprus is one of the favored destinations for culinary tourism with its rich cultural heritage and unique cuisine. Street flavors, particularly, are an essential element reflecting Cyprus's cultural heritage and gastronomic diversity. The value of Cypriot street flavors in culinary tourism and their contributions to the local economy and tourism industry are significant.

Culinary tourism is a type of tourism in which travelers visit a country or region specifically to experience its food and beverage culture (Hall, 2019). This type of tourism has become popular for exploring local cuisines, tasting local products, and experiencing unique dishes crafted by local chefs. Cyprus has developed its own unique culinary culture throughout history, influenced by various cultures over time (Papadakis, 2017). Therefore, Cypriot street flavors are a reflection of this rich heritage and offer an attractive gastronomic experience for tourists.

The interest in these tours, which are called tasting tours, wine tours, local food tours, and street food tours, is increasing day by day, and some countries and destinations in the world where these tours take place are called gastronomy tourism centers. Examples of these countries are France, Spain, Asia, and South America (Akay and Güneren Özdemir, 2019).

North Cyprus street flavors are not only about providing a culinary experience but are also recognized as an expression of local culture. These flavors reflect the region's history, geography, and cultural characteristics (Üstündağ, 2018). North Cyprus street flavors also serve as important carriers of cultural heritage for the local population.

Additionally, among the prominent flavors, "kebab" is a commonly encountered taste on the streets of North Cyprus. Kebab is known for being prepared by grilling meat or served in the form of "döner," which involves meat cooked on a vertical rotisserie (Akgün, 2020; Christofi, 2020). One of the most prominent examples of North Cyprus street flavors is "hellim/halloumi" which is commonly found in traditional Cypriot markets and street stalls. Halloumi, a type of cheese specific to Cyprus, is typically consumed by grilling or used in various dishes (Ünal, 2017; Ioannou, 2018). Halloumi cheese is typically grilled and is known as a popular snack among tourists.

Cyprus street flavors not only provide a culinary experience but also contribute to the local economy. The preparation and sale of food at street stalls serve as a significant source of income for many local artisans and businesses. Additionally, the popularity of street flavors enhances tourists' interest in Cyprus, revitalizing the tourism industry (Kountouris and Farmaki, 2019; Northern Cyprus Tourism Agency, 2021).

3. Method

The study has utilized a descriptive research model, which is commonly used in qualitative research methods, to provide the researcher with a comprehensive understanding of a specific topic. Typically, this model is implemented using qualitative data collection techniques such as observation, and archival research. According to Yıldırım and Şimşek (2013), document review includes the analysis of written and visual materials containing information about the phenomena targeted to be investigated. Document review; In qualitative research, it can be used as a stand-alone data collection tool or in combination with other data collection methods (Karadağ, 2014).

3.1. Purpose of the research

In this section, our goal is to identify and document the street foods that have been part of Cyprus's gastronomic culture for centuries, ensuring they are recorded and passed down to future generations to prevent them from being forgotten. Additionally, our research aims to document the production methods of these street foods and gather information about their production in Cyprus's gastronomic culture.

3.2. Data Collection Tool and Sampling

The information gathered in the research was obtained from observations of street food sales in North Cyprus and through the review of written scientific sources. This study is a comprehensive research conducted across all of North Cyprus.

4. Results and Discussion

The findings obtained from the research include information about forgotten or overlooked traditional street foods and beverages in Cyprus, as well as details about their production methods and techniques.

Street food plays a significant role in the dining culture of Cyprus, offering a glimpse into the island's unique cuisine. Traditional Cypriot street foods, along with their local names and preparation methods, are quite popular.

- Nor böreği: The dough is kneaded and then rolled out into a thin sheet. A spoonful of filling is placed intermittently on one half of the sheet, and then the other half is folded over to cover the filling. It is cut into pieces using a coffee saucer or a cutting tool and fried in hot oil. It is typically sold at festivals and fairs.
- Golifa: Prepared from boiled wheat, boiled almonds, pomegranate seeds, sesame seeds, and anise (cumin) seeds. It is a traditional delicacy that is both natural and easy to make, consumed as a sweet or as a snack. Cypriot Turks make golifa for the prosperity and abundance of the New Year. It is typically sold at festivals.
- Pilavuna: A pastry consumed particularly during breakfast in Cyprus. It is filled with halloumi cheese, eggs, raisins, mint, and mastic (gum Arabic). Known for its sweet and sour taste. It is sold on street stalls or mobile carts, either on three-wheeled carts or bicycles with front baskets, pushed along.
- Rose syrup: A beverage that mirrors the local soda-drinking tradition in Anatolian coffeehouses, also prevalent in Cyprus. It is made by adding half a measure of sugar to one measure of water, then adding rose essence or rose water, and consumed cold. It is typically sold at festivals.
- Katmer (Gatmer): Also known as "sini gatmeri." It is prepared by rolling out a thin sheet of dough in the shape of yufka (phyllo dough), spreading clotted cream on it, adding cinnamon, and sprinkling crushed almonds inside the dough. It is typically sold on street stalls or mobile carts.
- Hellimli (Bulla): One of the foods that use Cyprus's most famous food item, halloumi. It can be likened more to a cake than a pastry. It contains halloumi along with lightly roasted onions, and it is sprinkled with sesame seeds and carob seeds on top. The one with olives is also called "zeytinli." It is sold on street stalls or mobile carts.

- Babutsa: The fruit of a cactus plant, is sold packaged in supermarkets. It can also be purchased from vendors waiting along village roadsides. Additionally, in Turkey, it is known as "dikenli incir."
- Walnut Paste: Fresh walnuts are soaked in water for 6-7 days after peeling their shells to remove bitterness. Then, they are boiled with cloves and almonds. This dessert, exclusive to Cyprus, is served with Turkish coffee or cold water. Its preparation is quite laborious. Despite its appearance resembling fig jam, its taste is much more refined. It is typically sold at festivals.
- Şamişi: A mixture of semolina, milk, and mastic (gum Arabic) is placed inside yufka (phyllo dough) and fried. It is then served with flower water and powdered sugar sprinkled on top. It is sold on street stalls or mobile carts, especially at fairs, and is considered a must-have item.
- Paluze: Made from grape juice, it is a delicious type of pudding similar in taste to grape molasses. While it may vary in taste across different regions, in Cyprus, it is known as grape pudding. It is made from red grapes and topped with almonds. It is typically sold at festivals and fairs.
- Gullurikya: A dessert unique to Cypriot cuisine, it is a type of sweet with a fairly simple preparation. The dough, made from wheat flour, water, and a small amount of salt, is cooked in grape molasses. The most crucial aspect of its preparation is the use of carob molasses, also known as Harnup molasses. It is typically sold at festivals and fairs.
- Samarella: A Cypriot meze obtained by drying goat meat, generously seasoned with salt and oregano, among pine leaves during the summer months. Pine leaves not only impart a wonderful aroma to the meat but also protect it from insects during the drying process. This delicacy, which involves a labor-intensive preparation, is typically consumed at drinking sessions. It is often sold at festivals.
- Çakıstez: A green olive specific to Cyprus. After being cracked and soaked in water, the olives are marinated with thyme, garlic, and lemon. What gives it its distinctive flavor is the addition of golyandro (coriander) seeds. After marination, it is served with extra virgin olive oil (early harvest olive oil) and coriander seeds. It is typically sold at festivals.
- Ayrelli: Ayrelli is a wild variety of asparagus, particularly obtained from villagers holding bunches of ayrelli along village roadsides. Additionally, one of the most famous activities of Cypriots is gathering ayrelli.
- Kabak Böreği (Gabak Bittası): A recipe commonly made and loved in Cypriot Turkish cuisine. Kabak böreği is typically prepared with thinly sliced zucchinis and wrapped in yufka (phyllo dough) or baklava dough. It is then fried or baked. It is typically sold at festivals and on mobile carts.
- Bomba Tatlısı (Tulumba Tatlısı): Also known as Tulumba dessert, it is a syrupy dessert. Typically sold throughout the day at various fixed locations across the city.
- Sütli Börek: A syrupy dessert made with phyllo dough, milk, semolina, and sugar. Sold on street stalls or mobile carts.
- Gayık Basta: A small pastry made with pastry dough, almonds, sugar, and breadcrumbs. It is typically sold on mobile dessert carts.
- Sesame Halva (Bastelli): A dessert made by boiling sesame seeds, honey, syrup, or molasses until it reaches a caramel-like consistency, then allowing it to cool. It is typically sold at regional fairs and festivals.
- Sulu Mahallebi: Firstly, a pudding is made by mixing starch with water. The pudding is poured into small shallow bowls and left to cool. It is then served with rose syrup, sugar, and cold water poured over the top. It is typically sold on mobile dessert carts and at regional festivals.

- Pamuk Şeker: A confectionery made by pouring powdered sugar mixed with food coloring into a special device powered by propane gas, which rapidly spins and heats the mixture, transforming the sugar into a cotton-like shape. It is typically sold at festivals.
- Elma Şekeri (Elmalı Şeker): A treat made from apple, sugar, and red food coloring. Elma Şekeri is usually sold on bicycles in the streets.
- Bulgur Köftesi: A dish made from bulgur, minced meat, onions, parsley, and spices, usually served with lemon squeezed on top. It is typically sold from bicycles with front baskets or mobile trays at festivals.
- Kabak Çekirdeği (Pasadembo): A snack made by salting and roasting sweet pumpkin seeds, sold in folded paper packaging shaped like a funnel. It is mainly sold at sports events.
- Sandviç (Sandüyük): A sandwich made with bread or sandwich bread, filled with halloumi cheese, canned beef (bolibif), sliced chicken meat, tomatoes, mayonnaise, pickles (bikla), and various pickled vegetables. It is typically sold at a fixed location throughout the city all day.
- Tahınlı (Tahınnı): A dessert made with phyllo dough, tahini, and sugar. It is usually sold from bicycles with front baskets.
- Çörek (Çöreg): A type of bread made by covering fermented dough with sesame seeds, carob seeds (garacocco), and aniseed before baking. It is sold from mobile carts or bicycles with front baskets.

Street flavors in Northern Cyprus are regarded as a significant reflection of local culture and culinary heritage. However, it is also important to compare these flavors with street foods from other regions internationally. In this context, it is essential to explore the similarities, differences, and significant points of discussion between street flavors discussed in various foreign articles and those of Northern Cyprus.

Firstly, in the international comparison of street flavors in Northern Cyprus, similarities and differences with street foods from other Mediterranean countries are notable. For example, meat-based dishes such as "souvlaki" and "gyro," commonly found among Greece's street flavors, are also widely consumed in Northern Cyprus. Additionally, the unique Cypriot cheese, "halloumi," sets Northern Cyprus' street flavors apart from those of other Mediterranean countries (Öztürk, 2018).

Furthermore, when compared to street flavors from Middle Eastern countries, similarities and differences emerge in Northern Cyprus' street flavors. For instance, "falafel" and "shawarma," commonly found among Lebanon's street flavors, are also popular in Northern Cyprus. However, there are differences between Northern Cyprus' street flavors and Middle Eastern cuisine; for example, noticeable distinctions can be observed in the use of spices and cooking methods (Demetriou, 2021).

An important point of discussion arising from these comparisons is the impact of Northern Cyprus' street flavors on the tourism industry. Foreign articles often mention that street flavors in other countries serve as significant attractions for tourists and make substantial contributions to tourism revenues. In this context, it is suggested that more effective strategies should be developed for promoting and marketing Northern Cyprus' street flavors and strengthening infrastructure to enable tourists to experience these flavors (Hall, 2019; Smith and Gössling, 2020).

Therefore, the international comparison of street flavors in Northern Cyprus highlights the significance and uniqueness of these flavors. Compared to street flavors from other countries, Northern Cyprus' distinct flavors and cultural heritage have the potential to make significant contributions to the tourism industry. Therefore, it is essential for local governments and tourism authorities to take a more active role in promoting and developing street flavors.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Street food has become a significant aspect of food culture and serves as an important attraction for the tourism industry due to its affordability, easy accessibility, deliciousness, variety, and cultural characteristics. Since street food is prepared quickly and generally consumed on the go, it offers more opportunities for

interpersonal communication and social interaction. Consuming street food in this manner allows tourists to discover local flavors and the food culture of the region. It also provides opportunities to interact with local people, observe the regional culture, and fully experience the local way of life. Therefore, street food plays a crucial role in the development of tourism in a region.

Northern Cyprus street flavors hold a significant place in the gastronomy world. These flavors are not just meals but also a form of cultural expression. While Northern Cyprus street flavors occupy an important place in the daily lives of local people, they also offer an attractive gastronomic experience for tourists.

When it comes to gastronomic tourism products; It consists of a food and beverage product specific to a region, facilities or events where these products are offered, and visits (tours) to the places where these products are produced (Nesterchuk et al., 2021). As can be understood from this definition, street delicacies should be seen as a tourism product.

The Northern Cyprus street flavors examined in this article reflect the region's rich culinary culture. Traditional cooking methods, the use of local ingredients, and the continuation of cultural heritage help preserve and enrich the authenticity of these flavors. Additionally, the wide range of street flavors offered caters to everyone's palate, providing options suitable for all tastes.

An important component of Northern Cyprus street flavors is their contribution to the local economy. The food sold at street stalls serves as a significant source of income for many small businesses and artisans. Additionally, the popularity of street flavors enhances tourist interest in the region and brings vibrancy to the tourism industry.

Street delicacies, which are served almost all over the world, create a unique economic structure. For example, it is known that people in Latin America today spend approximately 30% of their budget on street food (FAO, 2011; Badrie et al., 2013; Sezgin and Şanlıer, 2016).

Therefore, it is important for local authorities to support and encourage street flavors. More effective strategies should be developed for the promotion and marketing of street flavors. Promotional events should be organized to facilitate tourists' and locals' access to street flavors, and street food stalls should be given more space in tourist areas.

In many countries in Asia and Africa, street food is considered an important tourist attraction (Gupta and Sajnani, 2020). In addition, festivals and events dedicated to street food in countries such as China, Thailand, and Taiwan lead to thousands of tourists coming to these countries to experience the said delicacies (Jeaheng et al., 2023). On the other hand, interest in street food is increasing day by day in North America and Europe (Potapov et al., 2022).

Ensuring compliance with hygiene standards and conducting regular quality control is important. Knowing that street flavors are reliable and healthy increases consumer confidence and ensures the sustainability of the sector.

Preserving the traditional recipes and cooking methods of street flavors and passing them on to future generations is important. To ensure the continuity of cultural heritage, it is essential to encourage the local community to preserve and support these traditions.

The contributions of street flavors to the tourism industry should be evaluated, and this potential should be utilized more effectively. Gastronomic tours should be organized to allow tourists to experience street flavors, and collaborations with local restaurants should be increased.

Northern Cyprus street flavors are an important element reflecting the region's rich cultural heritage and culinary culture. Preserving, supporting, and promoting these flavors will not only contribute to the local economy but also significantly enhance the development of tourism.

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İnternet Kaynakları

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