

Bringing local food products into tourism through museums: Balıkesir cheeses museum proposal

Yerel gıda ürünlerinin müze aracılığı ile turizme kazandırılması: Balıkesir peynirleri müze önerisi

Gönderim Tarihi / Received: 26.02.2025

Gülhan YALIN¹

Kabul Tarihi / Accepted: 24.09.2025

Doi: [10.31795/baunsobed.1647434](https://doi.org/10.31795/baunsobed.1647434)

ABSTRACT: The aim of the study is to scientifically examine the proposal to open a cheese-themed gastronomy museum in Balıkesir in order to introduce local products of Balıkesir to tourism through the museum. In this context, the cheeses, which are the gastronomic value elements of Balıkesir province, and the use of the cheese museum as a touristic attractive element in terms of ensuring the sustainability of cheeses and the contribution of the province to tourism activities were tried to be determined. In addition, the importance of opening a cheese museum as well as suggestions regarding the content of the museum were also included in the study. While creating the content proposal, it was tried to be determined according to the characteristic features of the province by examining the similar museum examples in the world in detail. Since no previous study has been found in the literature on the cheese museum proposal, it is thought to be important in terms of creating awareness with this original study and being a new focus of attention that can attract visitors to the region.

Keywords: Local food, Cheese museum, Balıkesir

ÖZ: Turizmde çekicilik unsuru olarak görülen gastronomi müzeleri, 20. yüzyılın sonlarında bireylerin göstermiş oldukları ilgi ile önemli bir konuma gelmiştir. Hiçbir kâr amacı gütmeyen bu müzeler, özellikle toplumların kültürel değerlerinin tanınması ve bununla beraber bölgenin sahip olduğu turizm değerine de katkı sağlamaktadır. Çalışmanın amacı, Balıkesir'in yerel ürünlerinin müze aracılığıyla turizme kazandırılması hususunda Balıkesir'de peynir temalı gastronomi müzesinin açılması önerisini bilimsel çerçevede ele almaktır. Bu bağlamda, Balıkesir ilinin gastronomik değer unsuru peynirleri ve peynirlerin sürdürülebilirliğinin sağlanması açısından peynir müzesinin turistik çekicilik unsuru olarak kullanımı ve ilin turizm faaliyetlerine olan katkısı belirlenmeye çalışılmıştır. Ayrıca çalışmada peynir müzesi açılmasının öneminin yanı sıra müze içeriği ile ilgili önerilere de yer verilmiştir. İçerik önerisi oluşturulurken özellikle dünyada yer alan benzer müze örnekleri detaylı incelenerek ilin karakteristik özelliklerine göre belirlenmeye çalışılmıştır. Alan yazında daha önce peynir müze önerisi kapsamında herhangi bir çalışmaya rastlanılmadığından özgün olan çalışma ile farkındalık yaratma hususunda bölgeye ziyaretçi çekebilecek yeni bir ilgi odağı olması açısından önemli olduğu düşünülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yerel gıda, Peynir müzesi, Balıkesir

¹ Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Balıkesir Üniversitesi/Turizm Fakültesi/Gastronomi ve Mutfak Sanatları Bölümü/Gastronomi ve Mutfak Sanatları Anabilim Dalı, gulhan.yalin@balikesir.edu.tr, <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1967-0496>

GENİŞLETİLMİŞ ÖZET

Literatür taraması

Farklı kültürel değerleri bir araya getiren gastronomi terimi turizm de önemli bir konuma ulaşmıştır (Ağcakaya ve Can, 2019). Özellikle kültürel boyut altında yer alan yeme içme olgusuna olan talebin artması onu turistik bir çekicilik unsuru haline getirmektedir. Bu durum, karşımıza gastronomi turizmi olarak ifade edilen bir turizm çeşidi ortaya çıkmaktadır (Mankan, 2017). Gastronomi turizmi kavramına yönelik literatürde birçok tanım olması ile en genel anlamda, bir hedef doğrultusunda belirli bir destinasyona yapılan turizm etkinliği olarak tanımlanmaktadır (Ağcakaya ve Can, 2019). Bir başka deyişle, bireylerin motivasyon kaynağı olarak özel bir yemek ya da mutfak kültürünü tanımak ve deneyimlemek üzere yapılan ziyaretlere denilmektedir (Yüncü, 2010). Ziyaretçilerin destinasyonları tercih etme sebeplerinde bölgelerin sahip olduğu turistik çekicilik unsurları önem arz etmektedir. Bu unsurlar, destinasyonların sunmuş olduğu konaklama imkanları, ulaşım, doğal güzellikleri ve imaj olarak ifade edilmektedir (Yeşilyurt ve Arıca, 2018). Özellikle bireylerin seyahat motivasyonlarını etkileyen gastronomi olgusu farklı turizm çeşitlerine olan talebi arttırmıştır (Gök ve Şalvarcı, 2021). Bu bağlamda müzeler, destinasyonlar için birer çekicilik unsuru haline gelmektedir. Uluslararası Müzeler Birliği (ICOM) müzeleri, 5 farklı sınıflandırmada ele almaktadır. Bu sınıflandırmalar ise, koleksiyonları sergileme biçimlerine, koleksiyonlara, idari birime, hitap ettikleri bölgeye ve hitap ettikleri hedef kitleye göredir (Kervankıran, 2014). Gastronomi turizmine artan talep ile gastronomi müzelerinin de sayısının ciddi oranda arttığı görülmektedir. Gastronomi müzeleri, bölge mutfak kültürünün tanıtılması ve deneyimlenmesi noktasında en önemli araçtır (Yılmaz ve Şenel, 2014). Kültür turizmi bağlamında Türkiye’de kurulan ilk mutfak müzesi Emine Göğüş Mutfak Müzesidir (Türkiye Kültür Portalı, 2025). Dünyadaki gastronomi müzeleri ele alındığında ise, turistik çekicilik unsuru olarak görülen 150’den fazla müze olduğu bilgisi olan çalışmalar bulunmaktadır (Mankan, 2017) ve bu müzelerin çoğunluğu gelişmiş ülkelerde yer almaktadır (Akyürek ve Erdem, 2019). Söz konusu müzeler, ülkelerin mutfak yapıları, kullanılan ekipmanlar ve mutfak kültürünü yansıtan kıyafetler gibi birçok gastronomik unsuru bünyesinde barındırmaktadır. Peynirin bünyesinde bulunan mineraller, vitaminler ve proteinler sayesinde onu zengin bir besin ögesi haline getirmektedir. Farklı metotlarla işlenebilen peynir, uzun süre muhafaza edilebilen bir ürün çeşididir. Günümüzde pek çok peynir çeşidi üretilmektedir. Türk Gıda Kodeksi (TGK) Peynir Tebliği’ne göre peynir, üretim yöntemine ve kullanılan maddeye göre sınıflandırmalar içermektedir (Türk Gıda Kodeksi Peynir Tebliği, 2024). Balıkesir ili doğal kültürel ve tarihi açıdan önemli turizm destinasyonları arasındadır ve birçok alternatif turizm çeşidine olanak sağlayabildiği gibi gastronomi turizmi açısından da önemli bir potansiyele sahiptir. Özellikle kendine özgü peynir çeşitleri ile önemli bir destinasyondur. Bu doğrultuda çalışmada gastronomik açıdan zengin değerlere sahip Balıkesir iline peynir müzesi kurulum önerisi oluşturulmuştur. Balıkesir iline kurulacak peynir müzesi ile gastronomi turizminden artan oranda pay elde edilmesi mümkün olabilecektir.

Yöntem

Çalışmanın evrenini peynir çeşitliliği ve zenginliği açısından Balıkesir ili ve ilçeleri oluşturmaktadır. Balıkesir ilinin gastronomik değer unsuru peynirleri ve peynirlerin sürdürülebilirliğinin sağlanması açısından peynir müzesinin turistik çekicilik unsuru olarak kullanımı ve ilin turizm faaliyetlerine olan katkısı belirlenmeye çalışılmıştır. Çalışmada, Baycar (2022), Yerel Ürünlerin Müze Aracılığıyla Turizme Kazandırılması: Siirt Arıcılık Müze Önerisi isimli çalışmasında kullanılan yöntem bu çalışmaya uyarlanarak kullanılmış ve bu doğrultuda aşamalı olarak peynir müze önerisi derlemesi yapılmıştır. İlk aşama olarak, ulusal ve uluslararası gastronomi müzelerinin web sayfaları ve literatürde ilgili kaynak taraması yapılmıştır. İkinci aşamada Balıkesir peynir üretiminde kullanılan ekipmanlar ve malzemeler araştırılmıştır. Bu ekipmanların özellikleri ve kullanımları hakkında bilgiler yazılı kaynaklardan derlenmiştir. Dünyada ve Türkiye’de bulunan peynir müze örnekleri incelenerek çıkarımlarda bulunulmuştur. Bu çıkarımlarda Balıkesir ilini yansıtacak özellikte olması dikkate alınmıştır. Çalışmanın son aşamasında ise, peynirler ile ilgili Balıkesir iline özgü yerel nitelikteki gıdaların markalaştırma ve pazarlanması hususunda bir müze önerisi taslağı geliştirilmiştir.

Bulgular ve tartışma

"Türkiye'yi doyuran il" olma özelliğini taşıyan Balıkesir ili, sahip olduğu birçok turizm çeşidinin yanı sıra gastronomi turizmi ile de güçlü bir rekabet potansiyeline sahiptir. Özellikle ilin 750 bin ton süt

üretimi ve yılda 90 bin ton peynir üretimi gerçekleştirildiği bilinmektedir. Çalışmanın ilk aşaması, Dünyada ve Türkiye’de yer alan benzer müzeler ile ilgili çıkarımlar oluşturmaktır. Çalışmanın ikinci aşaması peynir müzelerinde yer alan öğeleri, Balıkesir peynirlerini ilin yerel özelliklerine özgü bir konseptte uyarlamaktadır. Bu bağlamda Balıkesir peynir müzesi konseptine uygun olarak görsel unsurların eklenmesi önerisi getirilmiştir. Yöreye özgü peynirlerin sergileneceği alanlara peynir maketlerinin ve üretim süreçlerini gösteren objelerin aynı zamanda peynir yapımında kullanılan ekipmanların da dahil edilmesi deneyimi pekiştiren bir unsur olacağı ön görülmektedir. Çalışmanın son aşamasında ise, Balıkesir peynirleri müzesi için bir müze taslağının geliştirilmesidir. Balıkesir peynir müzesi, altı kapalı kısım ve bir bahçe olacak şekilde tasarlanmıştır.

Sonuç ve öneriler

Gastronomi müzeleri, yerel gıda ürünlerinin ve yemeklerin veya içeceklerin turizm faaliyeti ile birleşmesi sonucunda şekillenen gastronomik kimlik unsurlarıdır (Hjalager ve Richards, 2002). Bu doğrultuda, önerilen Balıkesir peynir müzesi ilin gastronomik kimliğinde bir unsur olarak yer alacağı çıkarımında bulunulabilir. Bunun yanı sıra gastronomi müzeleri, destinasyonların imajında ve pazarlanması hususunda önemli bir araç olduğu bilinmektedir. Kurulduğu ilin turizm hareketlerine doğrudan etki ettiği ve yerli ve yabancı turist sayısında artış sağladığı yapılan literatür taraması sonucunda saptanmıştır. Müzeler aracılığıyla yerel gıda ürünlerin ve mutfak kültürlerin tanıtım faaliyetleri ve markalaşması sağlanmış olmaktadır. Somut olmayan kültürel miras açısından önem taşıyan gastronomi müzeleri, yerel ürünlere ait kültürün sürdürülebilirlik ve gastronomik değer oluşturma açısından çok önemli kuruluşlardır. Balıkesir’de kurulacak bir peynir müzesi önerisi ile

- Peynir çeşitlerinin tanıtımı ve markalaşması
- Bölge ekonomine turizm gelirinin eklenmesi
- Sürdürülebilirlik ve gelecek nesillere aktarılması
- Yerel halka ek bir rekreatif faaliyet alanının sunulması gibi pek çok fayda sağlayacağı düşünülmektedir.

Introduction

The concept of nutrition, which forms the basis of physiological needs, is defined as a phenomenon that provides information about the social and cultural values of societies as well as the survival of individuals (Quan & Wang, 2004). The food and beverage phenomenon, which has been shaped by the nutritional culture of societies throughout the historical process, also enables the formation of culinary cultures (Düzgün & Özkaya, 2015). The term gastronomy, which brings together different cultural values, has reached an important position in tourism (Ağcakaya & Can, 2019). In particular, the increasing demand for the concept of eating and drinking, which falls under the cultural dimension, makes it a touristic attraction element. This situation creates a type of tourism called gastronomy tourism (Mankan, 2017). Although there are many definitions in the literature regarding the concept of gastronomy tourism, it is most generally defined as a tourism activity carried out in a specific destination in line with a goal (Ağcakaya & Can, 2019). In other words, it refers to visits made to get to know and experience a special food or culinary culture as a source of motivation for individuals (Yüncü, 2010). In individuals' journey to experience culinary cultures, gastronomic experience is important in terms of obtaining accurate information about regional cuisine, creating satisfaction and sustainability (Gheorghe, Tudorache, & Nistoreanu, 2014). In this context, gastronomy museums are seen as an integral part of gastronomy tourism. In general, museums are constantly increasing their functions with different concepts, contents and designs in line with current developments (Chepurda & Tomiuk, 2020). In addition, museums are established for many different functions such as awareness creation, local identity and branding (Rounds, 2006, Riza et al., 2012). Gastronomy museums are structures that introduce local foods and culinary culture, offer the opportunity to experience them, and allow the sale of foods (Kim et al., 2020). In addition, these museums are an important tool for creating a gastronomic identity, branding the province, and sustainability of products (Ağcakaya & Can, 2019). Balıkesir province is among the important tourism destinations in terms of natural, cultural and historical aspects and it has an important potential in terms of gastronomy tourism as well as providing opportunities for many alternative tourism types. It is an important destination especially with its unique cheese varieties. In this direction, a cheese museum establishment proposal was created in the study for Balıkesir province, which has rich gastronomic values. With the cheese museum to be established in Balıkesir province, it was ensured that a share of gastronomy tourism was obtained.

Literature review

Gastronomy museums

The touristic attractiveness of the regions is important in the reasons why visitors prefer destinations. These elements are expressed as the accommodation opportunities, transportation, natural beauties and image offered by the destinations (Yeşilyurt & Arıca, 2018). In particular, the gastronomy phenomenon, which affects the travel motivations of individuals, has increased the demand for different types of tourism (Gök & Şalvarcı, 2021). In this context, museums are becoming an attractive element for destinations. The term museum, derived from the Greek word "Mouseion" (Köse Doğan, 2018), has an important role in the continuity of cultures and their transfer to future generations as a bridge from the past to the present (Akyürek & Erdem, 2019).

The International Federation of Museums (ICOM) classifies museums in 5 different ways. These classifications are based on the way they exhibit collections, collections, administrative units, the region they address and the target audience they address (Kervankıran, 2014). With the increasing demand for gastronomy tourism, it is seen that the number of gastronomy museums has increased significantly. Gastronomy museums are the most important tool for introducing and experiencing regional culinary culture (Yılmaz & Şenel, 2014).

The promotion of regional culinary cultures, the display of traditional kitchen equipment and the use of production methods through oral, written and visual narratives provided by gastronomy museums are also important in terms of protecting intangible cultural heritage (Şahinoğlu, 2015). In this context, it can be said that gastronomy museums were established to revitalize tourism activities in the region, to create a gastronomic identity and to raise awareness in terms of destination marketing. While there are more than 150 gastronomy-themed museums in the world, it is known that the number and quality of museums in Turkey are insufficient (Mankan, 2017). As can be understood from Article 26 of the Law

on the Protection of Cultural and Natural Assets No. 2863, the number of museums in Turkey, including structures that have not yet been accepted as museums, exceeds 30. However, the existing museums in Turkey are expressed as insufficient in terms of content (Mankan, 2017, Sandıkçı et al., 2019, Can & Ağcakaya, 2019, Ceyhun Sezgin & Akbiyuk, 2021, Demirci, 2021). In this direction, many museum suggestions have been developed in the literature regarding the inadequacy of museums.

The first culinary museum established in Turkey in the context of cultural tourism is the Emine Göğüş Culinary Museum (Turkey Culture Portal, 2024). In line with the increasing demand, the number of gastronomy museums increases every year, and we see museums that focus on either a single product (coffee, chocolate, etc.) or the entire culinary culture (Sandıkçı, et al., 2019). It is thought that through gastronomy museums, the region contributes both socially and economically and to the sustainability of tourism activities in the region (Çavuş, et al., 2018).

When gastronomy museums in the world are considered, although it is not clear that there are more than 150 museums that are considered touristic attractions, there are studies that have been conducted (Mankan, 2017) and the majority of these museums are located in developed countries (Akyürek & Erdem, 2019). These museums contain many gastronomic elements such as the kitchen structures of the countries, the equipment used and the clothes that reflect the culinary culture.

Table 1: Gastronomy museums in the world

<i>Countries</i>	<i>Museums</i>	<i>Theme</i>
<i>USA</i>	Southern Food & Beverage Museum	Culinary culture
<i>Egypt</i>	Agricultural and Cotton Museum	Agricultural-plant-cotton
<i>Netherlands</i>	Amsterdam Cheese Museum	Cheese
<i>Japan</i>	Shin-Yokohama Ramen Museum	Ramen (noodles)
<i>France</i>	Chocolate Museum	Chocolate
<i>USD</i>	American Museum of Baking	Biography of baking
<i>USD</i>	The Beer Can Museum	Beer can
<i>Poland</i>	Bochnia Salt Mine	Salt mine
<i>England</i>	Bramah Tea & Coffee Museum	Tea & Coffee
<i>England</i>	Cadbury World Museum	Chocolate
<i>Chinese</i>	China National Tea Museum	Tea
<i>USD</i>	Vidalia Onion Museum	Onion
<i>Belgium</i>	Choco-Story	Chocolate and books about chocolate
<i>Canada</i>	Chocolate Museum	Chocolate
<i>England/Spain</i>	Cider museum	Cider
<i>USD</i>	Museum Coca-Cola	Cola and cola can
<i>USD</i>	Napa-Copia Museum	Wine
<i>Cyprus</i>	The Cyprus Wine Museum	Wine
<i>Germany</i>	European Bread Museum	Bread
<i>Peru</i>	The Frietmuseum	Everything about Potatoes
<i>Germany</i>	Deutsches Salzmuseum	Salt
<i>Poland</i>	The Gingerbread Museum	Flour production-bread
<i>India</i>	The Goa Chitra Museum	Farm equipment and culinary culture
<i>USD</i>	Culinary Arts Museum	Everything about the kitchen
<i>Italy</i>	Museo dell'Olivo	Olive and olive oil
<i>Greece</i>	Museum of Greek Gastronomy	Greek gastronomy
<i>Czech Republic</i>	Gastronomy Museum	Dining and modern kitchen
<i>Switzerland</i>	Swiss Gastronomy Museum	Food and drink Culture
<i>USD</i>	Bully Hill Üzümlü Vineyards	Wine
<i>Germany</i>	European Asparagus	Asparagus

	Museum	
Ireland	Butter Museum,	Butter
Italy	Museum of Prosciutto di Parma	Culinary Culture
Belgium	The World Carrot Museum	Carrot
Poland	Poznan Croissant Museum	Pastries
Brazil	Brazil's Coffee Palace	Coffee
Russia	Russian Vodka Museum	Vodka
Greece	Barbayannis Ouzo Museum	Ouzo
Italy	Olive Oil Museum	Olive and olive oil
Portugal	Bread Museum	Bread
South Korea	Museum Kimchikan	Kimchi
England	Kitchen Museum	Kitchen

Source: (Akyürek, S., & Erdem, B., 2019)

As seen in Table 1, gastronomy museums are mostly located in developed countries. There is a greater variety of products in the museums in Greece, Italy, Switzerland and the Czech Republic. In this context, when the themes of gastronomy museums in the world are examined, we can say that they reflect the culinary cultures of the countries. It can be said that gastronomy museums in Turkey, just like museums around the world, reflect regional gastronomic identities, exhibit culinary cultures and are a tool for the sustainability and promotion of cultural values.

Table 2: Gastronomy museums in Turkey

<i>Province Located</i>	<i>Museums</i>	<i>Themes</i>
Tekirdağ	Mürefte Feyzi Kutman Wine Museum	Wine
Kars	Zavot Cheese Museum	Cheese
Gaziantep	Emine Gögüs Culinary Museum	Local Cuisine Culture
Ankara	Atatürk Orman Çiftliği Wine Museum	Wine, Pickle, Vinegar
Şanlıurfa	Hacıbanlar House Culinary Museum	Local Cuisine Culture
Çanakkale	Adatepe Olive Oil Museum	Olive Oil, Soap
Erzurum	Historical Erzurum Houses Restaurant Museum	Local Cuisine Culture
İstanbul	Culinary Arts Academy Gastronomy Museum	Kitchen Equipment
İstanbul	Turkish Taste Museum	Local Cuisine Culture
Aydın	Museum of Olive and Olive Oil History	Olives and Olive Oil
Aydın	Oleatrium Olive and Olive Oil History Museum	Olive and Olive Oil
Balıkesir	Edremit Evren Ertür Historical Olive Oil Tools Museum	Olive Oil,
Aydın	Çine Beekeeping Museum	Beekeeping
Muğla	Special Mugla Beekeeping Museum	Beekeeping
Hatay	Antakya Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Museum	Medicinal and Aromatic Plants and Spices
Hatay	Antakya Culinary Museum	Local Cuisine Culture
İzmir	Köstem Olive Oil Museum	Olive Oil,
Kahramanmaraş	Thematic Kitchen Museum	Local Cuisine Culture
Kahramanmaraş	Ice Cream Museum	Ice Cream
Malatya	Wheat Museum	Cereals and Cereal Products
Gaziantep	Baklava Museum	Baklava
Gaziantep	Udma Cheese Museum	Cheese
İstanbul	Chocolate Museum	Chocolate
Bursa	Knife Museum	Knife
Antalya	Special Yoruk Museum	Culinary Culture
Muğla	Marmaris Honey House Museum	Honey

Source: (Mankan, 2017; Akyürek & Erdem, 2019; Sandıkçı, Mutlu & Mutlu, 2019; Demirci, 2021)

When Table 2 is examined, it is seen that there are a total of 26 gastronomy-themed museums located in 17 provinces. When we consider the distribution of themes, we can say that the most gastronomy museums are regional culinary culture-themed. In this context, it is possible to say that the demand for gastronomy museums is increasing and the diversity and number of museums in Turkey are increasing in the same direction. It is known that gastronomy museums are important tools in transferring and marketing the values of destinations.

Cheeses

If we talk about the history of cheese, we can say that it is at least as old as the history of milk. When we consider the historical process, it is known that the oldest sources regarding the processing of milk date back to Mesopotamian lands (Ünsal, 1997). Especially as a result of the excavations, cheese figures were encountered in the paintings on the temple walls. The concept of cheese is defined as a product formed by the separation and processing of water as a result of the coagulation of fatty skim milk, cream and proteolytic enzymes known as rennet (Bisig & Everett, 2021). The purpose of fermentation, especially during the cheese production phase, is not to damage the basic components in the milk (Gürsoy & Budak, 2019).

The minerals, vitamins and proteins found in cheese make it a rich nutritional element. Cheese, which can be processed with different methods, is a product type that can be preserved for a long time. Today, many types of cheese are produced. According to the Turkish Food Codex (TGC) Cheese Communiqué, cheese includes classifications according to the production method and the substance used (Turkish Food Codex Cheese Communiqué, 2024). The diversity of local cheeses by province in Turkey is shown in Figure 1 (Hastaoğlu et al., 2021).

Figure 1: Local cheese map in Turkey



Source: (Hastaoğlu et al., 2021).

Anatolia, which has hosted different civilizations, is in a position where traditional flavors come together. In addition to having its own unique structure, each local cheese also provides information about the culture and eating habits of societies. The diversity and richness of local cheeses in Turkey can be seen in almost every region. The reasons for this diversity include factors such as natural vegetation, climate, animal species and number (Ataseven, 2021). In Turkey, the most preferred cheeses made from cow's milk are white cheese, tulum cheese, kashar cheese and local cheeses (Saygılı et al., 2020).

Balıkesir province, which has the distinction of being "the province that feeds Turkey", has a strong competitive potential with its gastronomy tourism as well as its many tourism types. It ranks second in Turkey with its milk production of 750 thousand tons. In almost all districts such as Manyas, Savaştepe, Ayvalık, Havran, especially in Balıkesir Center, 90 thousand tons of cheese are produced annually. Sepet cheese and curd made in Edremit, Burhaniye, Ayvalık and İvrindi, especially Kirli Hanım cheese in Ayvalık district, Kelle and Manyas cheese in Gönen, Manyas and Bandırma districts, and Goat

cheese in Sındırgı, Kepsut and Dursunbey districts are the cheese varieties specific to the province (Balıkesir Governorship, 2024).

Table 3: Balıkesir districts cheese types

Districts	Cheeses
Altıeylül	Yakupköy Buffalo Cheese
	Yakupköy Cream Curd
Karesi	Sheep Cheese
	White Cheese
Balya	Bengiler Brine Village Cheese
Ayvalık	Cunda Kelle Basket Cheese
	Cunda Brine Tin Brynza
	Cunda Cream Curd
	Cunda Kirli Hanım Cheese
	Cunda Saganaki
Edremit	Basket Head Cheese
	Sheep Basket Cheese
	Hacıhasanlar Fresh Herb Sheep Cheese
Burhaniye	Mihaliç Cheese
	Basket Cheese
Havran	Herb Head Cheese
	Ala Maya Cheese
Gönen	Mihaliç Cheese
	Goat Village Cheese
	Yoruk Cheese
	Fresh Circassian Cheese with Çınarlı
İvrindi	Head Cheese
Bandırma	Mihaliç Cheese
	Head Cheese
Erdek	Mihaliç Cheese
	Paşalimanı Island Head Cheese
Susurluk	Circassian Cheese
	Fresh Head Cheese
Manyas	Mihaliç Cheese
	Black Style Circassian Cheese

	Manyas Cheese
	Torba Cheese
	Peppered Cheese Curd
Savaştepe	Mihaliç Cheese
Sındırgı	Aktaş Village Cheese
	Alakır Sheep Cheese
	Eğridere Woolen Overalls Cheese
Kepsut	Brine Goat Cheese
	Bükdere Moldy Leather Katık Cheese
Bigadiç	Çeribaşı Brine Goat Cheese
	Çeribaşı Goat Cream Curd
	Turfullar Brine Sheep Cheese
	Plain Fried Cheese
Dursunbey	Goat Torba Cheese
	Brine Village Cheese
Gömeç	Basket Tulum Cheese
	Yoruk Head Cheese
	Yoruk Basma Cheese
Marmara	Topağaç Cow Cheese with Yogurt
	Goat Cheese

Source: Prepared by the author.

As seen in Table 3, the variety of cheese produced in Balıkesir districts is quite high. This variety is due to the environmental structure, climate and the high number of cattle and sheep. Balıkesir province has an industrialized production management in cheese production. The region is dominated by a variety of cheeses made from sheep, cow and goat milk. Mihaliç, also known as head cheese, which is frequently consumed in the region, is quite famous and Manyas head cheese, İvrindi head cheese and Savaştepe Mihaliç head cheese are cheeses with geographical indication. Head cheese has a particularly hard, porous and low-salt structure (Durlu & Gün, 2008). Another type of cheese, basket cheese, is also among the traditional cheeses of the province. The baskets used while shaping the cheese give the cheeses unique visuals and generally have a low-salt and very porous structure (Bal Onur & Aksoy Biber, 2019). Kirli Hanım cheese, an important cheese type produced in Ayvalık district, is the dried form of curd cheese. It is called Kirli Hanım cheese when the white outer part of the curd becomes moldy 20 days after it is made and the inside remains white. The story of the emergence of this cheese is that it emerged as a method developed by the local people to evaluate milk when it was difficult to preserve cheese in the old days. This moldy structure also gave the cheese a unique aroma and taste (Hastaoğlu, et al., 2021). It is seen that cheese diversity gained a new dimension with the tulum technique and tin brine with the Yoruks living in the region.

Methodology

The universe of the study consists of Balıkesir province and its districts in terms of cheese diversity and richness. In order to ensure the sustainability of the cheeses and the gastronomic value elements of Balıkesir province, the use of the cheese museum as a touristic attraction element and its contribution to the tourism activities of the province were tried to be determined. In the study, the method used in the study titled Baycar (2022); Bringing Local Products to Tourism through Museums: Siirt Beekeeping Museum Proposal was adapted to this study and a cheese museum proposal was compiled in this direction. As the first stage, the web pages of national and international gastronomy museums and the relevant source scan in the literature were conducted. In the second stage, the equipment and materials used in Balıkesir cheese production were investigated. Information about the features and uses of these equipment was compiled from written sources. Cheese museum examples in the world and in Turkey were examined and inferences were made. In these inferences, it was taken into account that they would reflect Balıkesir province. In the last stage of the study, a museum proposal draft was developed regarding the branding and marketing of local foods specific to Balıkesir province regarding cheeses. In his study titled “Approaches in contemporary museum understanding and elements affecting museum formation”, Okan (2018); expressed the elements affecting museum formation as education, virtuality, architecture, curator, business, technical equipment features, imitation objects and psychology. Considering these elements, a draft Balıkesir cheese museum proposal was developed

Findings and discussion

Balıkesir province, which has the distinction of being "the province that feeds Turkey", has a strong competitive potential with its gastronomy tourism as well as its many tourism types. It ranks second in Turkey with 750 thousand tons of milk production and 90 thousand tons of cheese are produced annually. The first stage of the study is to create inferences about similar museums in the world and in Turkey.

Table 4: Cheese museums in the world

Countries	Museums	Themes
Holland	Amsterdam Cheese Museum	Cheese

Source: (Akyürek, S., & Erdem, B., 2019).

As seen in Table 4, the cheese museum in the Netherlands is important because it is the only cheese museum in the world. In addition to learning about the history of cheese making, the Amsterdam Cheese Museum also offers visitors the opportunity to try cheese for free. The museum was founded by two entrepreneurs named Henk and Edwin, who are experts in cheese. It is known that the history of the cheese that has become the symbol of the city of Amsterdam dates back 600 years. Dutch cheeses, which are among the best cheeses in the world, can be taken anywhere in a vacuum after visiting the museum, and you can also wear traditional clothes and slice the cheese. You can taste traditional cheeses at the entrance to the museum, and you can get detailed information about the history and production of the famous Gouda cheese on the first floor of the museum. It is also possible to see the world's most expensive cheese slicer equipment in the museum. Museum visiting hours are between 09:00-21:00 (Amsterdam Cheese Museum, 2024).

Table 5: Cheese museum in Turkey

Provinces	Museums	Themes
Kars	Zavot Cheese Museum	Cheese
Gaziantep	Udma Cheese Museum	Cheese

Source: Prepared by the author.

As seen in Table 5, Kars Zavot Cheese Museum, established in Boğatepe village in 2005, is important not only because it is located on the 18th cheese route in the world, but also because it is the first and only museum. The most important reason for establishing the museum in Boğatepe village is that it is the only village where Kars gruyere cheese is produced. It has the theme of Turkey's first eco-museum, which transfers the cultural values of the village from the past to the present, contributes to the

sustainability of the region and provides information about dairy production methods (Doğan, 2015). The meaning of the word Zavot is the name of the type of cow whose milk is used in the region. The building where the first Kars gruyere was made is a dairy farm that was restored with the support of the United Nations Development Program (UNPD) and turned into a museum (Mankan, 2017). Established to prevent the loss of local flavors in Kars, this museum aims to record cheese types, preserve production methods, provide information about the cheese culture of Kars province and contribute to its national and international promotion. There are more than 30 types of cheese in the museum and the production stages and equipment used are exhibited. There are thousands of representative gruyere cheeses at the entrance of the museum and cheese making is demonstrated in action. In addition, the names and photographs of medicinal herbs grown in the region are also displayed in a section of the museum (Kars Cheese Museum, 2024).

Gaziantep Udma Cheese Museum is a museum restaurant that was opened as a result of the restoration of an old bathhouse in Şahinbey district. It was opened specifically to introduce Antep cheese to the world. The name Udma means “putting milk to sleep” in old Turkish and it was deemed appropriate to give its name to the museum since it is the word used in cheese making. The museum contains information about the historical process of cheese and also sells cheese varieties from different provinces. The museum also offers the opportunity to experience the tools and equipment used in cheese making, production processes and cheese varieties. This place, which is a cheese museum and restaurant, also creates opportunities to experience unique flavors in the restaurant section (Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality, 2024).

The second phase of the study adapts the elements in cheese museums, Balıkesir cheeses in a concept specific to the local characteristics of the province. In this context, it was suggested to add visual elements in accordance with the Balıkesir cheese museum concept. It is anticipated that the inclusion of cheese models and objects showing production processes as well as equipment used in cheese making in the areas where regional cheeses will be exhibited will be an element that reinforces the experience. In addition, it is an undeniable fact that the proposed museum, based on the fact that cheese museums play a role in the promotion and marketing of regional cheese varieties, will be an important promotional tool for the province of Balıkesir. In this context, it is known that similar national and international gastronomy museums have a great impact on highlighting local products (Bekar et al., 2017; Jones, 2013). In addition, Balıkesir province, which is described as the city of 50 cheeses, has the potential to be exhibited in a museum with its values and cheese diversity. Materials such as tools used in cheese production stages, slicers, containers, baskets, cloths, storage methods and tools should be included. In addition, abstract elements such as regional traditions, customs and traditions, cheese stories should also be included in the museum. It is thought that it will be important to revive all these cultural values, especially with wax sculptures, and to support them with relevant pictures and photographs. The structures that can be preferred as museums are especially important in terms of sustainability, as they are functional, cultural and spatial in order to protect the historical structures of the province (Sav, 2017). In addition, the evaluation of abandoned buildings in the province for this purpose and making them functional will also set an example in terms of tourism. The final stage of the study is the development of a museum draft for the Balıkesir cheese museum. The Balıkesir cheese museum is designed to have a closed section and a garden.

- **First section:** This is the section where the tools and equipment used in the production methods of Balıkesir cheeses will be exhibited. It is also suggested to animate the digital cheese making process in the section where milk-filled jugs, containers, baskets and endemic plants that cattle and sheep feed on, as well as cheese varieties, will be displayed.
- **Second section:** This is the part where models showing the production stages of Balıkesir cheeses, representative cheese models and objects will be located. It is recommended that information including the structure, history and varieties of cheeses be displayed on digital screens.
- **Third section:** This is the section where there are many symbols and icons related to cheeses. This is the section where souvenirs in cheese figures will be exhibited, where cheese imitation objects are located and where there are rich pictures and tables about local cheeses.

- **Fourth section:** This is the area where the museum library is located. Since education is the most basic function of museums, they are not only places where works are exhibited but also institutions that educate and inform the society (Okan, 2018). This section will include historical and current scientific, academic and online resources about cheese.
- **Fifth section:** This is the store section where cheese tasting, cheese product sales, cheese ingredients and tools such as cheese presentation plates, slicers and museum accessories are sold.
- **Sixth section:** This section is recommended to be designed with a workshop theme that allows both adults and children to be involved in the cheese making process. In this way, children will have the opportunity to experience a fun recreational activity during their museum visit.

For the museum garden, it is thought that a barn section, large and small cattle objects, how the journey from milk to cheese is carried out and this recreation activity will be experienced with a guided narration. In addition, the placement of representative cheese figures, especially in cheeses with geographical indications, in the garden is also thought to be interesting for visitors.

In addition, the aesthetic element, which is a very important element for gastronomy museums, should be considered and the aesthetics of the museum's interior and exterior equipment and architectural structure should be given importance, considering its effect on visitors (Sarı-Gök & Şalvarcı, 2021).

Another important element to consider when designing a museum proposal is that curatorial services are especially important for museums that are in the institutionalization phase (Baycar, 2022). In this context, it is among the suggestions that the museums planned to be established should have a curator at the point of institutionalization.

Results and recommendations

Gastronomy museums are gastronomic identity elements that are shaped as a result of the combination of local food products and dishes or beverages with tourism activities (Hjalager & Richards, 2002). In this direction, it can be concluded that the proposed Balıkesir cheese museum will take place as an element in the gastronomic identity of the province. In addition, gastronomy museums are known to be an important tool in the image and marketing of destinations. As a result of the literature review, it was determined that it directly affects the tourism movements of the province where it is established and increases the number of local and foreign tourists. It is estimated that the cheese museum proposed to be established within the scope of the study can directly affect the culture and economy of the province. A similar suggestion to the study was made by Çakıcı et al. (2021); who concluded that if a gastronomy museum is established in Gökçeada, it will contribute to the tourism activities of the province. Again, in the study conducted by Akyürek & Erdem (2019); they stated that the gastronomy museum, which they proposed to ensure that the deep-rooted Gümüşhane cuisine is transferred to future generations, will also contribute to the tourism of the region. In addition, there are many studies in the international literature on museum proposals. An example of this is the National Historic Jeep Museum proposal.

The gastronomy museums are the tools that integrate the agricultural and animal husbandry activities, which are among the livelihoods of Balıkesir province, with tourism. Promotion activities and branding of local food products and culinary cultures are provided through museums. Gastronomy museums, which are important in terms of intangible cultural heritage, are very important institutions in terms of sustainability of the culture of local products and creating gastronomic value. It is thought that with the proposal of a cheese museum to be established in Balıkesir,

- Promotion and branding of cheese varieties
- Addition of tourism income to the regional economy
- Sustainability and transfer to future generations
- Provision of an additional recreational activity area to the local people will provide many benefits.

References

- Ağcakaya, H. & Can, İ. I. (2019). Somut olmayan kültürel miras kapsamında mutfak kültürünün sürdürülebilirliği: Türkiye'deki gastronomi müzeleri örneği. *Gastroia: Journal of Gastronomy and Travel Research*, 3(4), 788-804.
- Akyürek, S., & Erdem, B. (2019). Gastronomy museums as sustainable hangouts in gastronomy tourism: a gastronomy museum proposal for Gümüşhane city, Turkey. *Turizam*, 23(1), 17- 33.
- Ataseven, Z.Y. (2021). Durum ve Tahmin, Süt ve Süt Ürünleri, 2021, T.C. Tarım ve Orman Bakanlığı Tarımsal Ekonomi ve Politika Geliştirme Enstitüsü, Ankara.
- Bal Onur, B. & Aksoy Biber, N. (2019). 50 peynirli şehir balıkesir. Balıkesir Tarım Ürünleri Yayınları.
- Balıkesir Valiliği (2024, November 12). Retrieved from: <http://www.balikesir.gov.tr/>.
- Baycar, A. (2022). Yerel ürünlerin müze aracılığıyla turizme kazandırılması: siirt arıcılık müze önerisi. *GSI Journals Serie A: Advancements in Tourism, Recreation and Sports Sciences (ATRSS)*, 5(2), 242-255.
- Bekar, A., Arman, M. & Sürücü, Ç. (2017). Turizmde çekicilik unsuru olarak gastronomi müzeleri: Marmaris bal evi örneği. *Akademik Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 5(42), 468- 477.
- Bisig, W., & Everett, D.W. (2021). IDF Factsheet February 2021, IDF Standing Committee on Dairy Science and Technology. Retrieved from: https://www.fil-idf.org/wpcontent/uploads/2021/02/Cheese-and-varieties_Part-I_What-is-cheese.pdf.
- Ceyhun Sezgin, C. & Akbıyık, A. (2021). Dünyadaki gastronomi müzelerinin tematik analizi. *Journal of Tourism and Gastronomy Studies*, 9(1), 153-184.
- Chepurda, H., & Tomiuk, S. I. (2020). Museum as an object of local tourism activities. *Туристичний та готельно-ресторанний бізнес в Україні: проблеми розвитку та регулювання: матеріали XI Міжнародної науково-практичної конференції*, Черкаси, 19–20 березня 2020 року: у 2-х томах. T. 2, 107-108.
- Çakıcı, S., Sırtlı, A., & Korkmaz, M. (2021). Gökçeada'ya ait gastronomik değerlerin sürdürülebilirliğinin sağlanmasına yönelik bir araştırma: gastronomi müzesi önerisi. *Gastroia: Journal of Gastronomy And Travel Research*, 5(2), 302-335. <https://doi.org/10.32958/gastoria.943674>
- Çavuş, A., Işık M. F. & Yalçın, C. (2018). Gastronomi turizmi çekiciliği açısından zigana yöresi. *Atatürk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 22, 3043-3057.
- Demirci, B. (2021). Türkiye'deki gastronomi müzelerinin web sitelerinin içerik analizi. *Türk Turizm Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 5(2), 1184-1199.
- Doğan, M. (2015). Ecomuseum, community museology, local distinctiveness, hüsamettindere village, bogatepe village, Turkey, *Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development*, 5(1), 43-60.
- Durlu Özkaya, F. & Gün İ. (2008). *Anadolu'da peynir kültürü*, ICANAS 38. Uluslararası Asya ve Kuzey Afrika Çalışmaları Kongresi, Eylül 2007, Ankara.
- Düzgün, E., & Özkaya, F. D. (2015). Mezopotamya'dan günümüze mutfak kültürü (culinary culture from mesopotamia to. *Journal of Tourism and Gastronomy Studies*, 41, 47.
- Gaziantep Belediyesi (2024, November 11). Retrieved from: <https://www.gaziantep.bel.tr/tr> .
- Gheorghe, G., Tudorache, P., & Nistoreanu, P. (2014). Gastronomic tourism, a new trend for contemporary tourism. *Cactus Tourism Journal*, 9(1), 12-21.
- Gök, H. S. & Şalvarcı, S. (2021). Türkiye'deki gastronomi temalı müzelere yönelik çevrimiçi ziyaretçi deneyimlerinin incelenmesi. *Seyahat ve Otel İşletmeciliği Dergisi*, 18(1), 120- 140.
- Gürsoy, A., & Budak, Ş.Ö. (2019). Peynir. R.E. Anlı, P. Şanlıbaba (Eds.), *Fermente gıdalar: 71 Mikrobiyoloji, Teknoloji ve Sağlık içinde* (ss. 139-162). Nobel Akademik Yayıncılık.
- Hastaoğlu, E., Erdoğan, M., & Işkın, M. (2021). Gastronomi turizmi kapsamında Türkiye peynir çeşitliliği haritası. *Atatürk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 25(3), 1084- 1109. <https://doi.org/10.53487/ataunisobil.958028>
- Hjalager, A. M., & Richards, G. (Eds.). (2002). *Tourism and Gastronomy*. Routledge
- Jones, R. (2013). A Short history of beekeeping in the Ukraine. *Bee World*, 90(1), 12-14.
- Kervankıran, İ. (2014). Dünyada değişen müze algısı ekseninde Türkiye'deki müze turizmine bakış. *Turkish Studies*, 9(11): 345-369.
- Köse Doğan, R. (2018). İki proje/iki medeniyet: Zindankale sanat galerisi ve akropol müzesi, *Asia Minor Studies*, AGP Sempozyum Özel Sayısı: 187-198.

- Mankan, E. (2017). Destinasyon pazarlamasında çekici bir faktör olarak Türkiye’ki gastronomi müzeleri örneği. *Electronic Turkish Studies*, 12(4), 641-654.
- Okan, B. (2018). Günümüz müzecilik anlayışındaki yaklaşımlar ve müze oluşumunu etkileyen unsurlar. *Tykhe Sanat ve Tasarım Dergisi*, 3(4), 215-242.
- Quan, S. & Wang, N. (2004) Toward a structural model of the tourist experience: an illüstratör from food experiences in tourism. *Tourism Management*, 5, 297–305.
- Riza, M., Doratlı, N., & Fasli, M. (2012). City branding and identity. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 35, 293-300.
- Rounds, J. (2006). Doing identity work in museums. Curator: *The Museum Journal*, 49(2), 133-150.
- Sandıkçı, M., Mutlu, A. S., & Mutlu, H. (2019). Türkiye’deki gastronomi müzelerinin turistik sunum farklılıkları açısından araştırılması. *Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi*, 12(68), 1210-1231.
- Sarı-Gök, H., & Şalvarcı, S. (2021). Türkiye’deki gastronomi temalı müzelere yönelik çevrimiçi ziyaretçi deneyimlerinin incelenmesi. *Seyahat ve Otel İşletmeciliği Dergisi*, 18(1), 120-140.
- Sav, S. (2017). *Bir yeniden kullanım önerisi olarak Lefkoşa kent müzesi*, [Yüksek Lisans Tezi], İstanbul Üniversitesi.
- Saygılı, D., Demirci H., & Samav, U. (2020). Coğrafi işaretli Türkiye peynirleri. *Aydın Gastronomy*, 4(1), 11-21. doi:10.17932/IAU.GASTRONOMY.2017.016/2020.401/gas_v04i1002.
- Şahinoğlu, Ş. (2015). *Somut olmayan kültürel miras kavramına farklı bir yaklaşım: Mutfak müzeleri*. [Yayımlanmamış Yüksek Lisans Tezi], İstanbul Üniversitesi.
- Türk Gıda Kodeksi (TGK). (2015). *Peynir Tebliği* (Tebliğ No: 2015/6), T.C. Resmi Gazete, 8 Şubat 2015, sayı, 29261.
- Türkiye Kültür Portalı (2024, November 11). Retrieved from: <https://www.kulturportali.gov.tr/turkiye/kars/gezilecekler/kars-peynir-muzesi>.
- Ünsal, A. (1997). *Süt uyuyunca “Türkiye peynirleri”*. Yapı Kredi Yayınları.
- Yüncü, H. R. (2010). *Sürdürülebilir turizm açısından gastronomi turizmi ve perşembe yaylası*. 11. Aybastı-Kabataş Kurultayı, 11, 27-34.
- Yeşilyurt, H., & Arıca, R. (2018). Mutfak müzesi ziyaretçilerinin deneyimlerinin incelenmesi: emine göğüş mutfak müzesi örneği. *Türk Turizm Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 2(1), 60-70.
- Yılmaz, H., & Şenel, P. (2014). *Turistik bir çekicilik olarak gastronomi müzeleri*, 15. Ulusal Turizm Kongresi. Ankara, 499-510.

Ethical approval

This study is among the studies that do not require ethics committee approval because it does not utilizesurveys, interviews, focus groups, observations, experiments, or interview techniques. It does not use humans or animals (including materials/data) for experimental or other scientific purposes. It is not subject to personal data protection law.

Conflict of interest

There is no potential conflict of interest in this study.

Support information / Thanks

This study is not supported or funded by any organization.