

## MEDICAL GASTRONOMY: A NEW TREND FOR THE FUTURE OF THE GASTRONOMY SECTOR POST COVID-19

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### ABSTRACT

This research focuses on the specific trend triggered in the field of gastronomy by the Covid-19 pandemic, known as "Medical Gastronomy." Designed as a qualitative study, this review aims to systematically examine existing literature, understand, explain, and evaluate the concept of Medical Gastronomy. In this context, the research, conducted using content analysis methodology, provides a framework to comprehend how the Covid-19 pandemic has brought about changes in the gastronomy sector and the significance of Medical Gastronomy during this period.

**Key Words:** Covid-19 Gastronomy, Gastronomy Trends, Medical Gastronomy.

### INTRODUCTION

Many epidemics have occurred throughout human history. Developing human beings are often faced with major problems that concern or directly affect society. Although the disease affecting many regions and countries has occurred in the last 50 years, Covid-19 is one of the diseases that has spread worldwide (Ciotti et al., 2020). Pneumonia events were first reported in Wuhan, China, on December 31, 2019. A coronavirus diagnosis that has not yet been detected in humans is known on January 5. The virus, initially identified as 2019-nCoV, was later identified as Covid-19. The virus, which increased rapidly within 3 months, affected the whole world and was defined as a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) on March 12, 2020 (Budak and Korkmaz, 2020). Covid-19, which has affected the tourism sector, significantly affects social life and economy. The tourism sector has been disrupted and many businesses have had their share of this bad situation. Tourism types have been significantly affected, and gastronomy tourism, which is among the tourism types, has also felt this situation significantly (Dalahmetoglu and Avci, 2021). In Food and Beverage Businesses, we encounter staff salaries, ongoing payment transactions, fixed expenses, rental situation, economic difficulties and domestic problems arising from Covid-19 (Etyemez and Kemer, 2021). Pandemic conditions, along with the concept of "new normal" and the importance of social distance rules, have caused radical changes in lifestyles and shopping habits. These changes especially affected restaurants, and these businesses felt the need to take various initiatives to both adapt to new norms and prevent possible crises (Boyacı, 2022). Although affected by the Covid-19 process, new recipes and recipes that are

healthy and strengthen the immune system should be implemented in gastronomy businesses (Demirtaş et al., 2022). It is thought that these situations affect crisis management in the field of gastronomy, orientation to new areas and the expansion of the field of gastronomy. In this context, it is aimed to define the concept of 'medical gastronomy', which is thought to be among the gastronomy trends, to open it up and to transfer it to future studies as a pioneer. The study is a qualitative research and a literature review was conducted. The data obtained was interpreted by content analysis.

## MATERIAL AND METHOD

**Method.** This learning objective focuses on "Medical Gastronomy", a special trend in gastronomy of the Covid-19 pandemic. Designed as a qualitative research, the review study systematically examines the information found in the existing literature to ensure the Medical Gastronomy system and the purpose of evaluation and evaluation. This systematic, comprehensive research with content analysis method provides an important framework for how the Covid-19 process has caused a change in the gastronomy sector and what kind of computer Medical Gastronomy has in this period. These gastronomy trends that emerged under pandemic conditions point to significant changes in both people's expectations and people's service strategies. According to the findings of the research, processors in the gastronomy sector are provided with the management and transportation of recompilation parts in order to respond more effectively to the demands of Covid-19 in the previous period.

### Conceptual Framework

**Concept of Gastronomy.** Food has been known as one of the instant needs of people since prehistoric times, and these basic features continue to be traced in various written sources. However, the fact that each society has its own unique cuisine depends on various factors such as geography, climatic conditions, wars, trade and migration (Özdemir and Altın, 2019). Gastronomy can be basically developed as "the science and art of eating delicious food". This discipline covers a wide range of topics, including the explosion of not only the act of eating, but also humans and their consumption. It is not only the moment in which the food and drink consumed is determined, but is also inherent in this action. Gastronomy has a comprehensive scheme that includes not only the science of food and beverage but also a formula of art and culture (Öney, 2016). Gastronomy tourism is a type of tourism carried out in order to obtain new food and electronic experiences. The convenience of traditional foods, rapid technological developments and the risk of loss of cultural values have revealed the necessity of transferring these values to future generations. Cultural values such as local foodstuffs, their presentations, special day celebrations and presentations in ceremonies have gained great importance worldwide.. In recent years, tourism activities focused on preserving and sustaining cultural values have contributed to the spread of gastronomy tourism (Küçükkömürler, Şırvan, and Sezgin 2018). Gastronomy trends are based on dynamics that change every day, and these changes are driven by factors such as the search for innovation, the desire to obtain higher levels of gastronomic experiences, healthy nutrition and general fitness goals. In today's globalized world, the desire to try food and beverages with different flavors, tastes and aesthetic features that emerge under the influence of various factors is increasing. In this context, eating and drinking activities for individuals have become not only acts of nutrition, but also symbols that play an important role in social interactions. However, the increase in health-related problems directs individuals to eat healthy and adopt healthy lifestyles. For some individuals, there is a tendency to turn to different and unique nutritional preferences in order to adapt to these trends. This situation increases awareness of healthy living and nutrition both among individuals and throughout society (Özdemir, 2020). The widespread use of social media and a number of other factors make food trends frequently changing. Individuals' fast consumption habits, combined with their rapidly changing gastronomic demands, constantly lead to the emergence of new trends in the field of gastronomy. Cuisines have been shaped by rules that have constantly evolved since the day they existed, resulting in increasing product diversity and a gastronomy sector that constantly updates itself (Kaya, Akdemir and Dülger, 2021). Gastronomy has shown significant development as a constantly evolving discipline throughout history. This evolution process has led to the emergence of various trends, and these trends have created various effects on protecting human health, improving the dining experience, preserving cultural values and nutrition.

Today, the gastronomic field includes not only delicious food, but also important factors such as sustainable nutrition, emphasis on local ingredients, integration of technological innovations and highlighting cultural diversity. This dynamic process provides the opportunity to evaluate gastronomy from a broader perspective and develop new approaches for various purposes (Erdal and Şen, 2022). Economic, social, environmental and technological changes

in the gastronomy sector have led to the emergence of new trends in the food and beverage industry. Along with factors such as sustainable raw material production, organic farming, vertical farming and the use of renewable insects, science and technology-based innovations such as molecular cuisine and fusion cuisine also attract attention. Molecular gastronomy offers an approach that aims to create unique tastes using scientific principles; For example, products such as miniature apples and transparent ravioli are examples of this approach. Fusion cuisine brings together various cultures and produces unique flavors. With these innovative approaches, gastronomy experts stand out both in their companies and in the tourism sector and gain an advantage in the sector where intense competition occurs (Nalan et al., 2023).

**Medical Gastronomy.** The concept of Medical Gastronomy first brings to mind medicinal herbs. Because medicinal and aromatic plants is a term that refers to herbal materials, including fresh or dried trees, shrubs and medicinal plants, used for health support and treatment. In this context, it includes multi-purpose plants that have adapted to the culture and are often used in the production of perfumes (aromatic plants) or serve as components of versatile products such as herbal tea, shampoos, soaps, cosmetics. Many plants that are primarily related to food, such as some grains and vegetables, are not included in this definition (Kmar, 2022). Wild plants are important nutritional sources that nourish the body with their vitamins, flavonoids, antioxidants, fiber and microelements content. The importance of wild herbs for health is increasing against the nutritional problems that arise with rapid population growth. In addition, when wild herbs are evaluated medicinally, they are used for human and animal health by creating raw materials for many medicines. For this reason, it has become an inevitable necessity to include herbal dishes in menus in order to maintain a healthy diet and ensure adequate and balanced nutrition (Karaca, Yıldırım and Çakıcı, 2015). Medicinal and aromatic plants, which are one of the cornerstones of traditional culture, can be obtained both by collecting from nature and through cultural practices. These special plants have a wide range of uses such as medicine, food, spices, tea, soft drinks, paint, cosmetics and resin. With their properties such as food, spices, tea and soft drinks, these plants also constitute an important research subject that deeply affects the science of gastronomy (Oğan and Cömert, 2022).

Table 1. Some Medicinal Plants Used.

| Medicinal Plant | Latin Name               | Important Components  | Areas of Use  |
|-----------------|--------------------------|---|---|
| Valerian        | Valeriana officinalis L. | Essential Oil Monoterpenes Sesquiterpenes<br>Alkaloids Flavonoids Lignans         | Sleep Disorders Stress<br>Calming Anti-Spasmodic  |
| Shahter         | Fumaria officinalis L.   | Fumaric Acid<br>Alkaloids<br>Tannins  | Undercover<br>Eczema<br>Psoriasis<br>Gallbladder Disorders<br>Hypertension<br>Gout Rheumatism<br>Sore Throat<br>Stomach Disorders   |
| Nettle          | Urtica dioica L.         | Amines<br>Flavonoids<br>Lignans<br>Organic Acids<br>Sterols<br>Lectins<br>Tannins | Muscle aches<br>Joint pains<br>Symptoms diseases<br>Prostate<br>Allergic disorders Asthma<br>Bronchitis<br>Ulcer<br>Cancer<br>Eczema<br>Hemorrhoids<br>Rheumatism<br>Bowel<br>Inflammations |
| Lemon Balm      | Melissa officinalis L.   | Essential Oils<br>Rosmarinic Acid<br>Caffeic Acid<br>Glycosides<br>Flavonoids     | Cold<br>Cough<br>Bronchitis<br>Asthma<br>Stomach Disorders  |
| Sorrel          | Romex acetasa L          | Okzalikasıit  | Removal Of Toxins<br>Cancer<br>Burn<br>Skin Diseases  |

Source: (Özer vd., 2020 akt; Özdemir, 2021).

The science of gastronomy includes all kinds of subjects related to food and beverage. The inclusion of medicinal and aromatic plants in gastronomy reveals an important research situation. Medicinal plants, which are widely used in industrial areas, are at a level that should not be ignored in our country in terms of their location, climate and physical properties (Acıbuca et al., 2018 cited; Oğan and Cömert, 2022). The consumption of wild herbs in the kitchen is not specific to rural or summer resort areas, but is spread throughout the country and is of critical importance for individual and community health. These plants can provide many benefits to human health thanks to the valuable minerals they contain. Regularly transferring this important information to younger generations plays a critical role both in terms of health and the sustainability of possible gastronomy tourism activities (Karadağ, Çağla and Özer, 2022). As a matter of fact, there is a museum in Hatay. Antakya Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Museum was established in Hatay in 2012 and aims to introduce medicinal and aromatic plants specific to the Hatay region. It has the distinction of being Turkey's first Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Museum. The museum building is an ancient Antakya house built in the 19th century and has two floors. 280 medicinal and aromatic plants are exhibited in glass jars in the museum. Among these plants, there are examples such as yarrow, lemon balm, foxberry, hartlap, marshmallow rose, wormwood, gossamer root, blackgrass, redbud leaf and immortelle (Hatay 2022, cited; Çekal, Doğan and Aktürk, 2022). Regarding spices, although Turkish and foreign citizens generally find the use of spices beneficial, Turkish citizens find the use of spices in high doses more harmful. Significant differences emerge in terms of spice consumption habits, supply methods and preferences. In addition, it was determined that Turkish citizens consumed various spices more frequently during the pandemic period, and especially preferred spices associated with coronavirus (Keleş, 2023).

During the Ottoman Period, its rich cultural heritage provided a combination in the fields of gastronomy and medicine. While the palace cuisine stood out with carefully selected ingredients and original recipes, the Ottoman medical tradition also developed greatly in the same period. Ottoman hospitals were important centers where herbal medicines and other natural methods were used to treat patients. The foods served on the palace tables were not only delicious, they were selected and used for health purposes. These foods are believed to have special health benefits. The experience of the Ottoman palace in the fields of gastronomy and medicine provides both a rich culinary culture and an understanding of the effects on health (Bozacı, 2021).

If we look at today, the interest and interest in health tourism has increased significantly in the last few years and has become a very lucrative source of income for many companies. Health tourism is no longer a 'new' phenomenon; The sector developed throughout the first two decades of this century. The variety of services offered, the destinations offering these services and the volume of healthcare travelers have increased significantly; This indicates, at least superficially, a market that is here to stay (Pagan and Horsfall, 2020). Gastronomy is the more common field of restaurateurs and food and beverage writers. While the medical orientation addresses the dietary habits of the population as a whole, the world of gastronomy consciously claims that they largely fail to take into account the culinary preferences of the majority in matters of good taste. However, common to both fields is a division between those who are professionals and experts in fine dining, on the one hand, and the public, the majority of the population, on the other (Murcott, 1993).

Healthy and healing foods have a long history in Asian cultures. Eastern culture has long believed that food and medicine come from the same source and cure diseases, leading to a healthier life (Shi J, et al., cited; Oktay and Ekinci, 2019). Although healthcare personnel inform their patients and the public about healthy nutrition, some problems arise in practice. It is known that many modern diseases are caused by errors in nutrition. When chefs work together with nutrition and dietetics experts, the suggested recipes, taking into account the correct cooking technique and creativity, result in not only a delicious product but also a healthy and nutritious product. It is recommended that this situation be defined as 'Medical Gastronomy' (Kalra et al., 2023).

As a matter of fact, traditional medicine is widely used in the treatment of diseases, just like modern medicine. Medicinal plants are a practice used in traditional medicine. However, when we go more specifically, it is known that medicinal and aromatic plants, as well as gastronomic products, are used for healing purposes (Sahin, 2021). The reasons for the emergence of this new concept are the increasing rates of obesity and overweight due to unbalanced nutrition; resources provided by multiple organizations have become useless; because making nutritional principles easily accessible and applicable does not work for the general population. Therefore, a nutritional intervention based on nutritional principles in a practical manner is needed to improve health parameters; As a result, hands-on culinary nutrition support programs focus on developing kitchen confidence and nutrition-conscious, healthy and sustainable eating behavior (de Tomas, 2021).

Although the concept of 'diet' directed towards diabetic and obese individuals is suggested as a primitive and primary solution to prevent diseases, it is evoked in the human mind as an ineffective and restrictive solution. Input from gastronomy experts argues that healthy foods can become more attractive to society. Gastronomy also includes

sociocultural fields of food science. Therefore, medical gastronomy may have greater acceptability as a tool for public health intervention (Kalra et al., 2023). While conventional foods and beverages are considered healing for traditional medicine, it is not uncommon for them to be evaluated from a gastronomic perspective. Studies that can be carried out in different countries will be effective in creating a common culture for the world. It is important to transfer this information to future generations. At the same time, it is thought that the impact of gastronomic studies on health practices will be investigated and new and effective treatment methods will be developed. One of the most important contributions of social sciences to medicine is that they play an important role in eliminating and obtaining information about diseases seen in society (Sahin, 2021). Chronic patients and their relatives can be given culinary training by gastronomy experts. After patients are diagnosed by the physician, nutrition plans are prepared by dietitians and can be put into practice with guidance from gastronomy specialists. By emphasizing the importance of multidisciplinary work with the Ministry of Health and Hospitals, applied culinary medicine training should be planned for patients and their relatives, and gastronomy experts should be assigned to raise awareness (Mutlu and Doğan, 2021).

Table 2. Example foods and recommendations for Medical Gastronomy resources.

| Health Status                  | Recommended Foods  | Recommended Nutritional Supplements   |
|--------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| Hypertension                   | Low sodium foods, green leafy vegetables                   | Omega-3 fatty acids, structure        |
| Diabetes                       | Whole grain products, vegetables, low glycemic index foods | Chromium, omega-3 fatty acids         |
| Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) | Fiber foods, probiotics, consuming balanced meals          | Peppermint oil, probiotic supplements |
| High Cholesterol               | Omega-3 fatty acids, oats, legumes                         | Red rice extract, plant sterols       |
| Obesity                        | Protein-rich foods, vegetables, fiber foods                | Coenzyme Q10, Green tea extract       |

Source: It was prepared by the researcher after the scans.

## RESULTS

This research examined the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on tourism and especially the gastronomy sector in depth and discussed the concept of "Medical Gastronomy", a new emerging gastronomy trend. Extraordinary situations caused by the pandemic have required the tourism sector to develop an urgent and effective crisis management strategy. In this process, gastronomy businesses have also had to develop new recipes and prescriptions that support healthy nutrition and strengthen the immune system. The concept of "Medical Gastronomy" aims to strengthen the link between nutrition and gastronomy by emphasizing healthy and healing foods. Medical Gastronomy can be defined as a delicious and aesthetic combination of healthy nutrition and medical treatments. This discipline offers an advanced approach to understanding the effects of nutrients on health and supporting treatment processes using gastronomic experience. Research in this field, which examines how nutrients affect both biologically and emotionally, has the potential to improve the quality of life of patients by enriching nutritional practice in the medical world. It includes the use of gastronomic products for healing purposes as well as traditional medicine. It has been emphasized that this concept can play an effective role in the fight against modern diseases, especially problems such as obesity and unbalanced nutrition.

Additionally, it has been stated that "Medical Gastronomy" can be considered as a part of Health Tourism. Health tourism is attracting increasing interest and demand, and the diversification of gastronomic services in this field can open a new source of income for the sector. It emphasizes the importance of gastronomy businesses finding flexible and innovative solutions in times of crisis and encouraging health-conscious eating behaviors through the integration of medical and gastronomic information. The concept of "Medical Gastronomy" may gain an important place among future gastronomy trends and may inspire studies in this field. This study contributes to our understanding of the effects of the pandemic on the gastronomy sector and to focus on "Medical Gastronomy", a potential concept that can shape future tourism and gastronomy trends. In this direction; Creating a common working environment in nutrition, health and gastronomy; Using the term 'medical gastronomy' together with the cooking technique among the healing elements; More studies should be done on what role "Medical Gastronomy" can play in health tourism. This focuses on how gastronomic services can be integrated into health tourism packages and how tourists can access gastronomic experiences that support healthy eating habits.

## CONCLUSION

- Creating a concept map to understand Medical Gastronomy by creating sub-codes.
- The importance of understanding how the concept of Medical Gastronomy is perceived and adopted in society and assessing the future popularity and impact of this trend.
- It is important to focus on more concrete and applicable dimensions of the concept of Medical Gastronomy to better understand the preparation of health-beneficial nutrients and their integration into medical treatment processes. It is thought that practical applications need to be examined in depth.
- It is thought that all of these situations, together with the concept of 'Medical Gastronomy', will directly affect gastronomy tourism and that people will pay more attention to the health aspect in the coming years.

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