



# The Impact of Gastronomic Tourism on the Miraflores District in Lima, Peru

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## Abstract

Peru, located on the shores of the Pacific Ocean in west-central South America, has diverse climates and cultures, which have allowed it to develop a varied and exquisite cuisine. The district of Miraflores, located in the city of Lima, is the country's main tourist destination and is facing increasing gastronomic demand, impacting the residents' lifestyles. This study used a quantitative, non-experimental, longitudinal, and correlational approach to examine the effects of gastronomic establishments in Miraflores. The methodology involved identifying the number and capacity of gastronomic establishments within the gastronomic corridors of Miraflores and correlating this data with the number of homes and the resident population. Data collection included using Google Maps and on-site verification, with historical comparisons made using Google Earth. Additionally, historical data from the population censuses of Peru were utilized for trend analysis. Results showed a significant increase in the number and capacity of gastronomic venues between 2007 and 2024, alongside rises in housing and population density. However, analysis revealed that in the main central area of the district, the correlation between gastronomic activity and population growth decreased despite the increase in establishments, seats, housing, and population. This suggests that the growth in gastronomic venues does not proportionately support population growth in this area. Conclusions indicate that while gastronomic growth boosts tourism, it requires balanced urban planning to ensure sustainable living conditions for residents. Without adequate urban planning, the growth in gastronomic tourism could lead to over-saturation, negatively impacting residents' quality of life and urban sustainability.

**Keywords:** Gastronomic tourism, impact of tourism, impact of gastronomic tourism

## 1. Introduction

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) asserts that tourism is a major economic driver in today's world (Lima et al., 2012) and plays a crucial role in supporting the New Urban Agenda (UN, 2017). It serves as a means to fulfill Sustainable Development Goal No. 11, which aims to ensure that cities and human settlements are inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable (UNWTO, 2020). Furthermore, the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, formulated

by the UNWTO, highlights tourism's role in promoting mutual understanding and respect among individuals and societies.

Although UNWTO statements emphasize the developmental potential of tourism and its contributions towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal No. 11 and implementing the New Urban Agenda, various authors also caution against potential negative impacts. These include "overtourism", which can degrade urban spaces and lead to "tourism phobia", a reactionary sentiment among local populations (Huete, R., & Mantecón, 2018).

Gastronomy is a key dimension of tourism, making its analysis crucial within the tourism process framework. Notably, the culinary richness of certain regions often leads to the creation of 'gastronomic districts' in urban centers. However, this concentration of gastronomic establishments can sometimes conflict with the collective interests of local communities, who seek to protect their public spaces, social coexistence, and personal interests (Verduzco et al., 2018).

In response to tourist or gastronomic saturation, a new concept of urban tourism, known as "post-tourism", is emerging (Bertoncello, R. V., & Iuso, 2017). This approach seeks to harmonize tourist activities with those of local residents, aiming for the sustainability of both processes.

This article presents the findings of an exploratory study aimed at objectively assessing the correlation between tourist-driven gastronomy in an urban center and the local population's residency.

## **2. Theoretical framework**

Gastronomy, a crucial component of tourist activity, has evolved towards a more social and community-focused approach, significantly broadening its research scope. This development extends beyond mere food consideration to detailed analyses of how communities interact with food and their culture. It sets the stage for a broader discussion on the social roles and significance of gastronomy in contemporary society, as highlighted by the studies of Medina et al. (2023). In this context of constant change, international tourism in cities recognizes gastronomy as a key element. According to López de Heredia and Gaztelumendi (2019), this recognition highlights not only the excellence of the cuisine available but also its significance as a cultural expression of the local population. It particularly emphasizes the environment in which the cuisine is offered and the hospitality extended to visitors.

According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2017), the importance of gastronomy extends beyond mere food preparation, serving as a vital link to the cultural heritage and traditions of each society. This approach not only showcases cultural diversity but also promotes understanding and connection among different cultures. From a broader perspective, gastronomy integrates aspects of agriculture, culture, and tourism, making it a distinctive feature of tourist destinations. It enhances the development of authentic tourist experiences, a point noted by Dixit (2021). This viewpoint is further supported by Ovcharenko et al. (2021), who argue that gastronomy, accounting for a significant part of the travel budget, enables a deep immersion into local cultures. It transcends mere consumption and significantly contributes to the preservation of cultural heritage, with considerable economic impact.

The evolution of gastronomy as a component of tourism towards local culinary and cultural experiences underscores the need for effective communication and sustainable tourism policies. These are suggested by Mwangi & Mwalongo (2023) to support local producers and promote gastronomic diversity while recognizing the value of food in cultural identity and economic development. Aall and Koens (2019) discuss the balance required in international

urban tourism between economic growth and local well-being, emphasizing the need for resilient strategies to address environmental and regulatory challenges. Such strategies ensure balanced urban tourism that benefits both residents and visitors. Moreover, tourism is also seen as a 'growth machine' that stimulates housing construction in areas designated as tourist destinations (Romero-Martínez et al., 2017).

This is why Visković & Komac (2021) emphasize the challenges that tourism presents for various stakeholders, underlining the necessity to bridge knowledge gaps to devise effective tourism strategies for the future. Their findings close the theoretical framework with a call to action for future research and policy development.

On the other hand, to understand the role of urban centers that host highly demanded gastronomic establishments and aim for sustainability, it is important to recall that cities, initially "cores of storage, exchange, and concentration of authority", have gradually become home to the majority of the world's population (De Terán, 1982). In managing these urban areas, contemporary urbanism employs various planning instruments designed to promote a quality urban life. These strategies seek to correct the post-World War II policies focused on land use segregation, which led to negative repercussions such as increased vehicular traffic and air quality degradation. They also aim to restore a "sense of belonging" essential for quality urban life (Serag El Din et al., 2013).

Fainstein (2013) argues that contemporary urban planning must integrate principles of democracy, diversity, and equity. Urban expansion, driven by birthrates or migration and enhanced by improved connectivity, fosters the development of new, attractive urban centers for living and conducting activities (Krafta, 2008). In a similar vein, Pirez and Cosacov (2016) note that relocation decisions are often motivated by the desire to meet social and spatial expectations, underscoring the importance of perceptions about various urban areas, particularly sub-centralities with desirable residential attributes. However, the influx of new residents, whether permanent or temporary, into these areas can lead to conflicts with the original inhabitants, particularly in densified areas characterized by their strategic locations and diverse services (Bensús Talavera & Loayza Reyes, 2016).

The concept of urban life quality is complex and multifaceted, yet it is crucial for urban sustainability as it reflects the social dimension of cities. Effective urban planning should address the needs and desires of citizens to enhance quality of life and attract new residents (Węziak-Białowolska, 2016). Marans (2015) suggests that the quality of an environment is defined more by its significance to its occupants than by objective conditions. Furthermore, Kährlik (2016) notes that factors such as proximity to services, safety, and a sense of belonging within a neighborhood are key to drawing both permanent residents and temporary ones like tourists. Some are attracted by the cost-benefit ratio, while others value the neighbourhood's advantages. However, excessive influx can threaten both urban and tourism sustainability. Preventive actions based on periodic objective monitoring are necessary to mitigate such risks.

Given the insights presented, it becomes evident that while gastronomic tourism offers significant economic opportunities, it also poses unique challenges to urban quality of life. The influx of tourists can lead to overcrowding, strain local resources, and alter the socio-cultural fabric of urban centers. To effectively manage these impacts, urban planners and policymakers must develop and utilize specific indicators that monitor the dynamics of gastronomic tourism and alert stakeholders to any potential negative effects. Implementing strategies to balance the benefits of gastronomic tourism with the needs of the local population is imperative. Ultimately, the goal is to ensure that gastronomic tourism contributes positively to the urban environment, enhancing rather than diminishing the quality of life for both residents and visitors.

### **3. Methodology**

For this research, the district of Miraflores in Lima, Peru, was selected as the study area. Miraflores is a prime tourist destination in the city, attracting the highest number of visitors nationwide. In 2019, before the pandemic, it accounted for 48% of all tourists arriving in Peru. Historically characterized by single-family residences, Miraflores has undergone significant transformations due to increased real estate investments aimed at developing multifamily housing and other facilities. The district is administratively divided into 14 neighborhood sectors, each represented by a president before the municipal authorities. Moreover, it is guided by the District Urban Plan 2021-2025 and the District Tourism Plan 2021-2025 (Plan de Desarrollo Turístico de Miraflores 2021 - 2025, 2019).

This research focuses on the 'gastronomic corridors' identified in the Tourism Plan of Miraflores. These corridors include 'La Mar' in Neighborhood Sector #1, 'Dos de Mayo' in Neighborhood Sector #5, 'La Paz' in Neighborhood Sector #8, 'Reducto' in Neighborhood Sector #10, and the 'Huaca Pucllana' Tourist Zone in Neighborhood Sector #6.

This research is exploratory, quantitative, non-experimental, longitudinal, and correlational. It has been conducted by identifying the number and capacity of gastronomic establishments within the aforementioned gastronomic corridors. These data are correlated with the number of homes and the resident population in the neighborhood sectors to which these establishments belong.

The identification of gastronomic establishments in these urban areas was conducted using Google Maps, a commonly used tool by tourists to locate dining and drinking areas. Subsequently, on-site verification of the identified gastronomic establishments was performed. Additionally, the existence of these establishments in previous years, coinciding with the years of the population censuses of Peru (2007 and 2017), was verified by reviewing photographic records from previous years in Google Maps and examining changes in morphology using Google Earth. To determine the resident population, data from the last two population and housing censuses conducted in Peru in 2007 and 2017 were accessed through the SIGRID portal (CENEPRED, n.d.), which records georeferenced data. For the projection to the year 2024, the date of this research, a simple linear progression method was employed.

### **4. Literature Review**

In the search for effective strategies to revitalize declining urban areas, promoting local cuisine and culture has become a popular approach. This strategy leverages the allure of unique dining experiences to attract external visitors, while simultaneously sparking interest among potential residents. Quijano-Gómez (2019) describes 'gastronomic leisure' as a powerful tool in urban regeneration, capable of significantly enhancing urban spaces. However, he cautions that it also has the potential to trigger gentrification processes.

Similarly, gastronomic events serve as catalysts for change and enhancement in public spaces, fostering diversity, vibrancy, and creativity. According to Razpotnik Visković (2021) gastronomy plays a pivotal role in shaping urban environments, exerting its influence far beyond mere attraction. Furthermore, these events have been observed to facilitate integration between longstanding and new residents, thereby strengthening the social fabric of urban communities.

It is crucial to acknowledge that culinary experiences, often shared extensively on social media platforms, go beyond mere consumption and are intricately linked to the environments in which

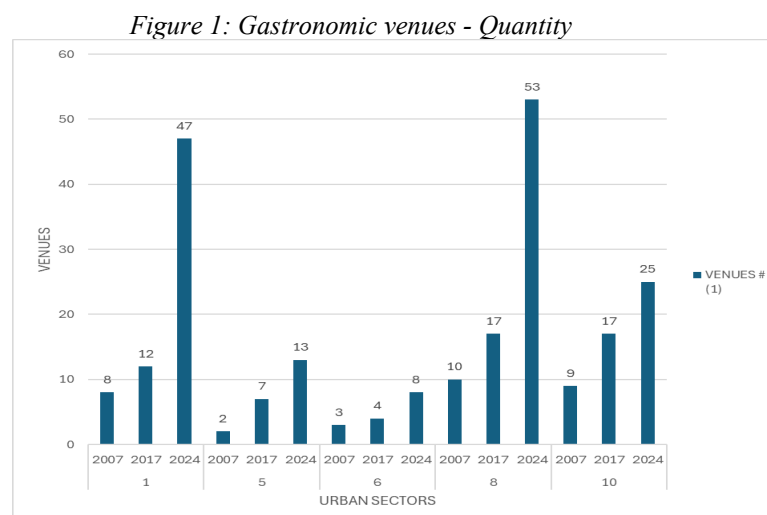
they unfold. Motoyama and Usher (2020) underscore the pivotal role of context in shaping these experiences, as it can significantly enhance the appeal of a destination.

The redistribution of restaurants within a city, as observed in Istanbul between 1977 and 2013, illustrates how economic and cultural factors can shape the urban landscape. Ayatac and Dokmeci (2017) documented a shift towards the city's periphery, indicating the impact of changing economic dynamics. Additionally, Peng et al. (2021) emphasize the direct correlation between neighborhood characteristics, resident demographics, and the concentration of gastronomic establishments. The presence of a vibrant gastronomic scene can significantly impact residential choices, as individuals seek a quality of life that aligns with their personal aspirations. According to Vlasov et al. (2021), key factors such as the quality of the urban environment, economic opportunities, social cohesion, and transportation infrastructure are crucial in assessing the overall quality of life in urban settings.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines quality of life as the individual's perception of their living situation within a cultural and value context, emphasizing the connection with personal goals, desires, and concerns. Relocating to a more favorable neighborhood can significantly enhance job opportunities and economic income (Aliprantis Francisca G-C Richter et al., 2016). Wesz (2023) advocates for a holistic approach to evaluating urban quality of life, which considers both quantifiable indicators and residents' subjective perceptions.

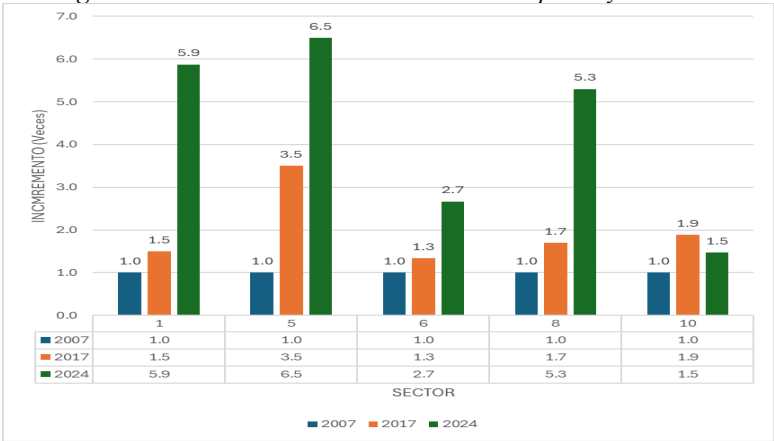
## 5. Results

Figures 1 and 2 present the number of gastronomic establishments in the five (5) gastronomic corridors identified in the Tourism Development Plan of the Miraflores district in Lima and their increase in the period 2007 – 2024:



Source: Own elaboration 2024

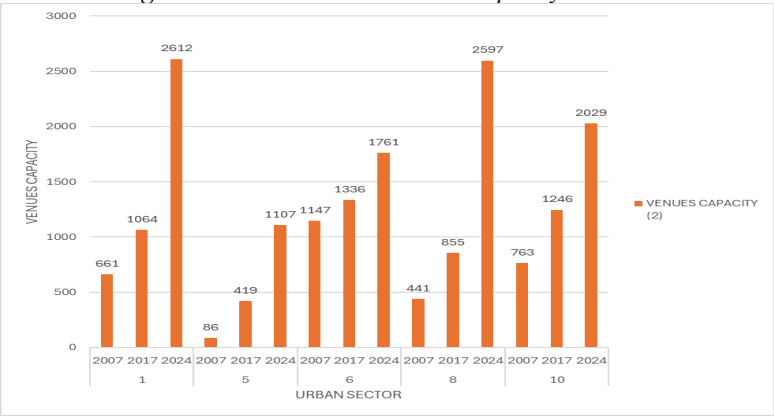
Figure 1: Gastronomic venues – Increase in quantity.



Source: Own elaboration 2024

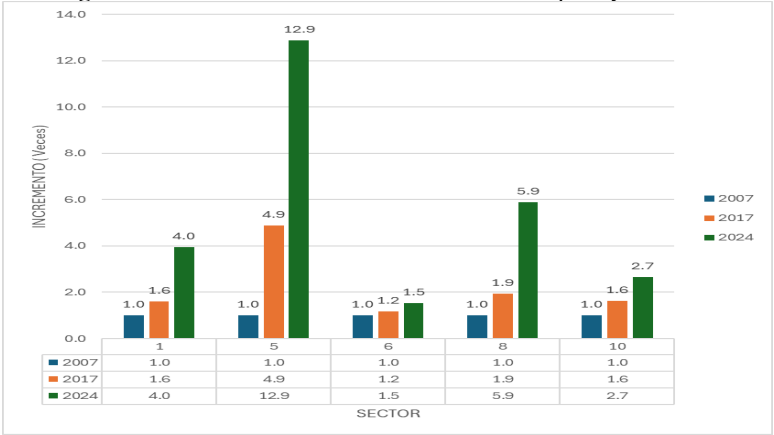
Figures 3 and 4 present the seating capacity of the gastronomic establishments in the five (5) gastronomic corridors identified in the Tourism Development Plan of the Miraflores district in Lima and its increase in the period 2007 – 2024:

Figure 2: Gastronomic venues - Capacity



Source: Own elaboration 2024

Figure 3: Gastronomic venues – Increase in capacity



Source: Own elaboration 2024

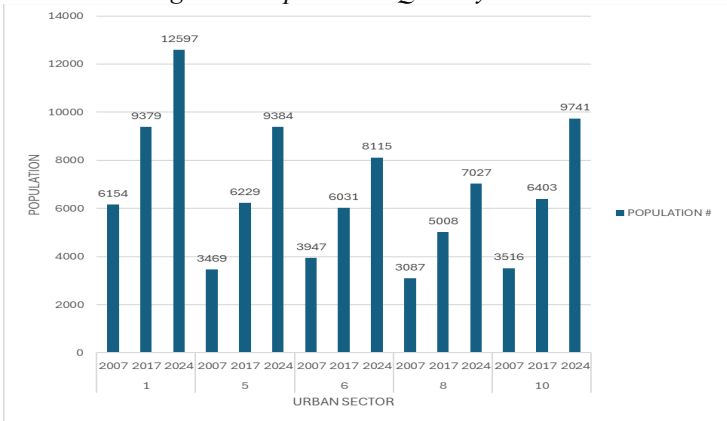
Figures 5 and 6 present the number of homes in the five (5) gastronomic corridors identified in the Tourism Development Plan of the Miraflores district in Lima and their increase in the period 2007 – 2024. For the housing and population estimates By 2024, the Compound Annual Growth Rate – CAGR observed in the period 2007 to 2017 has been maintained:

Figure 4: Houses - Quantity



Source: Own elaboration based on data from the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics of Peru 2024

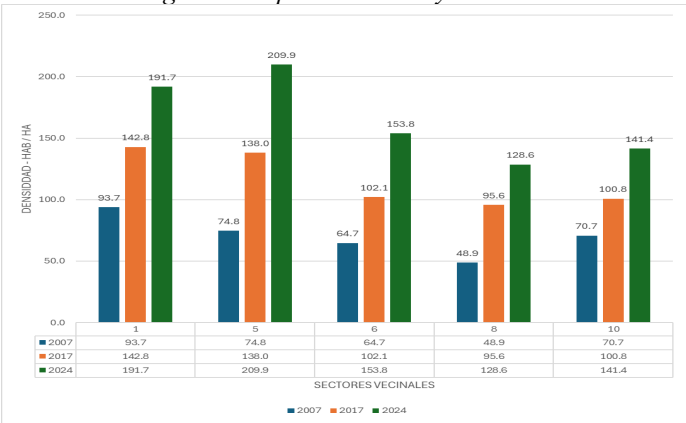
Figure 5: Population - Quantity



Source: Own elaboration based on data from the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics of Peru 2024

Figure 7 shows the population density of the five (5) sectors in which the gastronomic corridors are located:

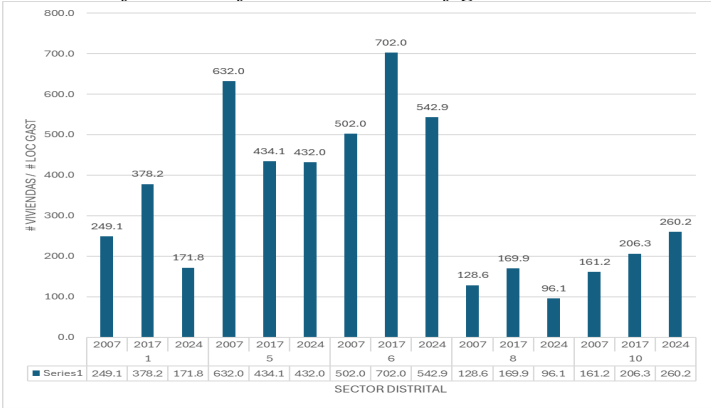
Figure 6: Population density.



Source: Own elaboration 2024

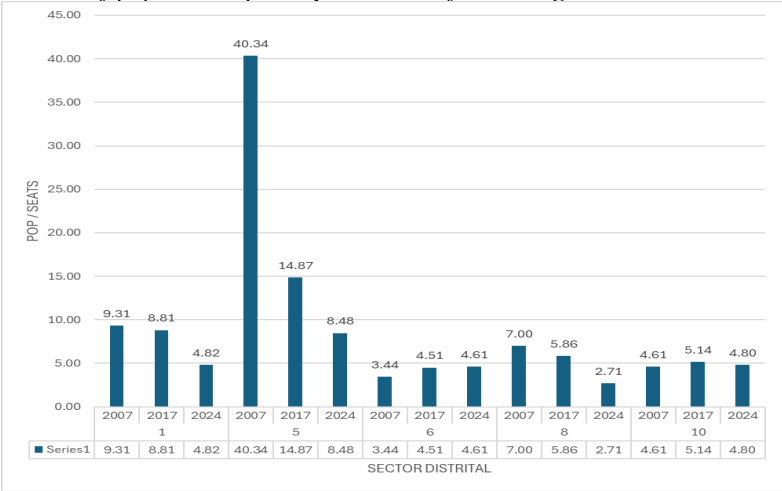
Figure 8 shows the correlation between the number of homes and the number of gastronomic venues in the five (5) sectors and Figure 9 shows the correlation between the number of residents and the seats of these.

Figure 7: Ratio of number of homes - number of gastronomic venues.



Source: Own elaboration 2024

Figure 8: Ratio of population quantity - number of seats in gastronomic venues.



Source: Own elaboration 2024

## 6. Analysis

Figures 1 to 6 show that in the period between 2007 and 2024, the quantity and capacity of gastronomic venues, homes and local population residing in the five (5) gastronomic corridors of Miraflores District increased. Likewise, Figure 7 shows that the population density in the five (5) sectors also increased in the same period.

Figure 8 shows that the ratio of homes per gastronomic venues, although it grows in 2017, decreases in all other sectors except in sector 10 where it does maintain growth. Similarly, Figure 9 shows that the ratio of population per gastronomic seat grows slightly in sectors 6 and 10 in 2017, while in the remaining sectors it decreases.

Based on the results presented, it should be noted that in sector 8, the central and founding space of the district, although there is an increase in gastronomic establishments, seats in them, housing and population, a decrease is evident in the ratios of houses per gastronomic venue and population for each seat in gastronomic venue. Even though the population grows, the correlation with gastronomic activity decreases.



## **7. Discussion**

Based on the analysis presented, it can be inferred that sector 8 of the Miraflores district, its central and founding space, has been showing significant growth that could become an “over-gastronomicization” of it, using a term equivalent to the so-called “overtourism” (Huete, R., & Mantecón, 2018).

If the population does not grow simultaneously and sustainably in relation to the growth of the gastronomic offer encouraged by tourism, it could be understood that the phenomenon is not being known or understood and therefore no action is taken as mentioned by Bertoncello (2016) in relation to the “post-tourism”, that is, trying to develop sustainable tourism, respectful of the place and its environment.

In fact, the Tourism Development Plans and District Urban Development of Miraflores do not mention this situation, which is evident in the results of this research, therefore no action proposals are presented to mitigate the phenomenon and seek urban and tourism sustainability. Even more so if there is no perceived growth in the number of homes, which would demonstrate that the idea that tourism operates as a “growth machine” is not taken advantage of (Romero-Martínez et al., 2017).

If the population decreases in relation to gastronomic activity, which is a service demanded by tourism, the deep immersion in local culture that Ovcharenko mentions (2021) will not be able to occur.

Promoting gastronomic growth to serve tourism without considering the promotion of the quality of urban life for residents will not generate expectations for residing in this place nor will the “sense of belonging” required for an adequate place of residence be achieved (Marans, 2015).

## **8. Conclusions**

Urban centralities run the risk of becoming “touristified” due to the intensity of the activities that tourists demand, and this can negatively influence the attraction of the population to reside, which makes the urban and tourist process unsustainable. Since one of the strategies of tourism is the provision of gastronomic services, there could be a risk that cities or some parts of them become “gastronomic” to the detriment of the local population, being a kind of reverse gentrification.

The use of indicators that correlate the growth of gastronomic establishments and the homes and residents of a specific urban area allows us to know to what extent both variables are developing and therefore follow the phenomenon in a more objective way. Interestingly, our review of the literature did not reveal significant prior use of such indicators, indicating a gap in existing research methodologies. Therefore, our study fills this gap by proposing a novel approach to quantifying the relationship between gastronomic growth and urban residential dynamics.

By introducing these indicators, we not only contribute to the advancement of research in this field but also provide valuable tools for urban development and tourism management. These indicators would be powerful instruments for the urban development and tourism areas of local governments to try to work together to avoid the negative impact of one activity on the other for the sake of urban and tourism sustainability.

These indicators allow us to compare various urban realities in which phenomena such as the one described in this research occur and therefore have a deeper and more objective level of knowledge of the phenomenon of urban tourism. Additionally, the use of indicators such as the

proposed one would enable comparative analysis across different cities, facilitating a broader understanding of the dynamics of urban gastronomic tourism and potentially identifying best practices and areas for improvement.

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