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## **Gastronomic Tourism in Italy: Measuring Tourist Attitudes and Identifying Market Segments**

Gastronomic tourism has become an increasingly important component of contemporary tourism demand, particularly in Mediterranean countries such as Italy, where food culture and local traditions are deeply embedded in territorial identity. This study investigates the importance assigned to gastronomy during travel and identifies different profiles of gastronomic tourists in Italy. The analysis combines two complementary methodological approaches. First, a composite indicator was developed to measure the overall involvement with gastronomic tourism and its main dimensions. Second, a mixture confirmatory factor analysis model was estimated to identify tourist segments characterized by different attitudes towards gastronomy. The results show that gastronomy represents a relevant determinant of destination choice and travel satisfaction for Italian tourists. Segments differ substantially in terms of motivations, perceptions, and socio-demographic characteristics. The findings provide important managerial and policy implications for destination marketing and sustainable tourism development.

### **Special/ Invited session**

### **Classification**

Mainly application

### **Keywords**

gastronomic tourism; tourist segmentation; composite indicators; mixture confirmatory factor analysis; tourist behavior; food tourism; Italy

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