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**The Role of Gastronomy in the Tourism  
Geography of Hungary**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

When providing a justification for the selection of the theme, I have to note that I have been involved in the field of gastronomy for over 40 years including its theory and practice. In the past 30 years I have been teaching hospitality at the College of Commerce, Catering and Tourism that is called Budapest Business School since 2000 at the Commerce, Catering and Tourism Faculty focusing on food preparation and gastronomy as a responsible person for these fields. When starting the Doctoral School of Earth Sciences at the University of Pécs it became obvious to me that I would choose the gastronomy and geography disciplines as the subject of my thesis.

The significance of the topic is based on the fact that dishes prepared out of locally produced vegetables and meats of free living and raised animals are unique to the given geographical area. The significance of the topic is further highlighted by the worldwide expansion of tourism, which places the dish offerings of hospitality establishments in the limelight. The number of nights spent by local and foreign guests at the various quarters varies greatly - it might range from one day to several weeks therefore their dish consumption is respectively different. At the same time guests eat three times on a day. Optimally restaurants, small restaurants and roadside restaurants should feature local dishes on their menus that should be - at least in part - made out of local ingredients.

The topic is relevant since the region and its dishes (as well as the social-economic environment) go hand in hand, which ideally results in a gastronomic offer that is typical to the given area and can be sold in tourism and used in marketing and plays an important role in the creation of unique offers. It is also relevant since on the basis of the present hypothesis one of the problems is that it is easier and cheaper to buy ingredients in big supermarkets, so restaurateurs tend to buy most of their ingredients in these supermarkets instead of going after local products. Another problem is that local producers are not always able to provide products of constant quality and in the needed quantity. An additional problem is the lack of local dishes in the offers of catering units.

The special literature background for this thesis is partly provided by base works of earth sciences, nature and social geography. I also use my own publications issued earlier in the field of this research topic. Such is for example SÁNDOR D. 2009: Tájjellegű ételek megjelenésének elemzése a dél-dunántúli turisztikai régió ételválasztékában (Analysis of the presence of typical local dishes in the dish choices of the South Transdanubia touristic region). *Tourism Bulletin* 2009/1. pp. 14-18. and SÁNDOR D. 2009: Dunántúli ételkínálat – helyi alapanyagok, ételek – elemzése (Transdanubian dish offers - analysis of local ingredients, dishes). *ECONOMICA*, Scientific publications of the College of Szolnok. Szolnok 2009. pp. 50-57. studies that serve as basis for the statistical and tourist region examination of Hungary in this field. Hungarian and English language publications covering the whole of Transdanubia, the Budapest Middle Danube region, the North and South Hungarian Plain prove my hypothesis, which states that local ingredients and typical local dishes are minimally offered in the menus of the restaurants.

The secondary literature statistical database of the thesis processes the data available in a seven region decomposition, while the primary database is processed on the basis of a nine tourist region decomposition. This latter is explained by the fact that Lake Balaton and Lake Tisza are busy tourist areas where special attention is paid on hospitality.

## 2. GOALS

The overall goal of the essay is to outline the demand side needs of Hungarian gastronomy after the primary researches are done and to outline the present situation and future possibilities of the supply side as a potential tourism attraction.

### My goals and hypotheses:

- catering establishments with full kitchen facilities: evaluation of the dish offers of restaurants, small restaurants and roadside restaurants on the basis of professional viewpoints, since my hypothesis is that dish offers of the Hungarian catering industry are stereotyped;
- examination of the presence of local ingredients and local dishes in the offers of various catering units, since I propose that there is a lack of local dishes in the offers of the catering units;
- present, analyze and evaluate the opinions of catering professionals, since my hypothesis is that it is easier and cheaper to purchase ingredients in big supermarkets, what is more, local suppliers cannot always provide goods of the same quality and quantity;
- evaluate the needs of guests as regards dish choices, since it is my opinion that the needs of guests - for the Hungarian gastronomy to use locally produced ingredients for the preparation of dishes and to have typical local dishes in the menus - are not met by the supply;
- to review the restaurant demand-supply sides in case of three sample areas, since on the basis of my hypothesis the available ingredients are differentiated regionally as well as the local dishes and eating habits;
- to propose some improvements in the examined field.

## 3. RESEARCHING METHODS

### Primary research methods

The theoretical basis of the primary research methods is provided by an area and time restricted **national dish choice survey** that was executed within the framework of my own research. On the basis of the research plan an analysis of the database is needed, which processes the collected data on the basis of smaller regions - tourist regions - and that focuses on restaurants, small restaurants and roadside restaurants among hot dish catering units.

The basis of the dish choice analysis is 381 menus that were available between 2005 and 2008. After electronically gathering and registering the data about the dishes on the menus the data was cumulated on the basis of dish types. After that the averaging of the available dishes within the dish types was done separately in case of the various catering units (restaurant, small restaurant, roadside restaurant). Information is available about the dish types and dishes of the menus on the basis of cumulative and averaged data. The basis of the

research methods is the analysis, comparison and evaluation of the dominant elements of the dish supply on the basis of regional averages.

The next applied research method is an electronic, **questioning survey that may be exported to a national coverage. In this instance the work collects and analyses the opinions of the professionals working in hospitality in the examined field.** The aim of the survey was to get answers from the hospitality professionals living and working in different parts of the country to the questions relevant to the essay, such as: "What changes have you observed in the field of goods supply in the past two decades?" or "Do you use any ingredients purchased from a producer close to the restaurant?" or "What changes are needed to make the local products more popular and make them available on a constant basis?".

The examination of the demand side (guest needs) is furthered by **two examination methods. One gathers information by means of a questionnaire about the eating out habits of the guests respective to the field.** In this instance **210 guests with average age of 41 years** eating in hot dish catering units (restaurant, small restaurant, roadside restaurant) answered the questionnaire and the gathered data has been analyzed. During the collection of the data, I sent out emails to the various catering units that provided me with their menu earlier asking them to print out the questionnaire in 30 copies and have them answered by their guests and then post them back to me. The pictures of the received envelopes and filled out questionnaires are shown in the Annex of the essay. This was followed by the manual accumulation of the answers provided on the questionnaires namely by highlighting the given answers on the paper then by collecting them to groups of five and finally by cumulating the results. The picture of this work phase is also shown in the Annex of the essay.

**The sample of the other survey registers and analyses the eating out habits of 500 potential guests providing their information on an internet based questionnaire.** In this case **the average age of the respondents is 23.2 years**, and the majority of them studies in the field of Tourism/Hospitality/catering. This is so since the target audience of the questionnaire was the students of the Commerce, Catering and Tourism Faculty of the Budapest Business School. The use of the kerdoivem.hu website helped a lot in the evaluation of the 500 valuable answers during the data collection process. The system put the answers to the given questions in charts automatically. The detailed information about this survey is included in the Annex of the essay. Besides this self-edited diagrams were also made from the Excel chart database that is found in the main part of the essay.

As a result of the rather significant difference in the age groups of the two surveys we processed the surveys separately and also provide a comparative analysis for the two surveys. At the same time however in case of the most important questions like the use of local ingredients and the offering of typical local dishes we can see the results of the two surveys together at the conclusion. Both self-executed surveys - where the questions of the questionnaires were the same - were done in 2010.

In order to graphically display the data processing and the various analyses charts, tables and maps - highlighting diversity and average values - have been inserted in the text of the essay.

## **Secondary research methods**

In case of applying the secondary research methods I processed the data of the local and international professional literature needed for the well founded explanation of the topic. This included the processing of various natural and social science fields - geography, tourism, gastronomy, catering, ethnography, etc. with the relevant professional books, magazines, statistical data, legal regulations and internet databases. I have used some materials from the following professional publications: Földrajzi Értesítő (Geographical Report), Földrajzi

Közlemények (Geographical Review), Turizmus Bulletin (Tourism bulletin), Cornell Hospitality Quarterly, EU Working Papers, Falu, Város, Régió (Village, Town, Region), International Journal of Hospitality Management, Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research, Advances in Food, Hospitality and Tourism. Among the statistical databases the followings were of help in the preparation of the essay: KSH 2008: *Statistical yearbook of Hungary*, KSH 2008: *Regional differences in agricultural development, shifts since the change of system until nowadays* and KSH 2009: *Report on the accomplishment of tourism in year 2009*. Some of the internet based data that assisted me in writing this thesis: [www.biokontroll.hu](http://www.biokontroll.hu), [www.vm.gov.hu](http://www.vm.gov.hu), <http://www.dti.rkk.hu>, <http://www.slow-food.hu>, [www.mtaki.hu](http://www.mtaki.hu), <http://www.agroland.hu>, <http://mek.oszk.hu>, <https://teir.vati.hu>, <http://www.fvm.hu>, <http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture>, <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>. The legal framework of the essay was provided by further printed and online sources, such as PALLÓNÉ, KISÉRDI I. 2002: *Legal background and requirement system for traditional and regional food collections*. Sources: FARNADI É. (editor) 2002. *Traditions – flavors – regions*. FVM. AMC. Budapest, pp. 8-11., <http://eur-lex.europa.eu>, VM order 2010: 4/2010. (VII. 5.) Nr. Order 5.) about the amendment of the 52/2010. (IV. 30.) FVM Order about the conditions of small scale food production 30.) and sales and also the Nr. 19/2004. (II. 26.) FVM–ESZCSM–GKM joint Order 26.) about the labeling of food products.

The processed data is added with introductory comments, critical notes so the end result is not only professional literature review providing foundation for the topic, but an extended chapter including my own opinion.

## **4. RESULTS**

### **4.1. Evaluation of establishments with full kitchen facilities (restaurants, small restaurants, roadside restaurants):**

Within the results of the work the tourist region analysis of the dish choices of the 381 processed menus has a significant role. The South Transdanubian region has been introduced in the main part of the essay as regards the dish choice offered by the various catering establishments with full kitchen facilities (restaurant, small restaurant, roadside restaurant) in the examined period (2005-2008). We can use this analysis as a sample so the similar material concerning the other eight tourist regions as regards menu analysis and their results are found in the Annex. The recommendations contained in the essay are applicable for all nine tourist regions and its summary about the total data and national averages is found in the next chapter.

Correspondingly to Hungarian traditions soups dominate the introductory courses (cold and hot starters, soups). In case of restaurants and roadside restaurants the average number of soups available is: 7, while in case of small restaurants it is: 8. The large number of average available soups shows that establishments prepare and serve too many types of soups. In case of cold starters the average numbers are as follows: in case of restaurants: 4, in case of small restaurants, roadside restaurants: 3. The average number of hot starters in case of all three types of establishments: 3. The number of starters is considered to be good (Figure 1).

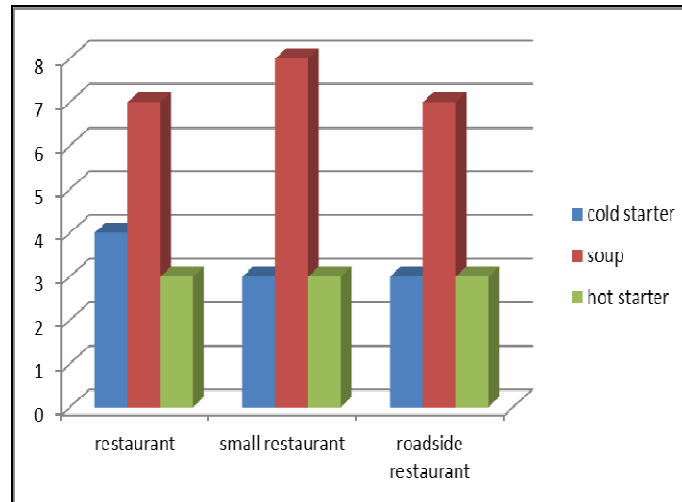


Figure 1: Number of soups and cold/hot starters in case of the various establishments with full kitchen facilities  
 Edited by: SÁNDOR, D.

Figure 2 shows the average of main courses, which shows that poultry and pork dishes are the most popular with an average number of 10. The choice of pork dishes is the widest in case of small restaurants with an average number of 12. It is unnecessary to offer such a wide range of poultry and pork dishes and the ability to provide for constant quality is also in question. The next most popular choice is fish dishes with an average number of 7, then come the beef dishes with an average number of 5 to choose from. The high number of fish dishes is mainly a result of the menus of Fish roadside restaurants (Halászsárda) with a wide selection of fish dishes.

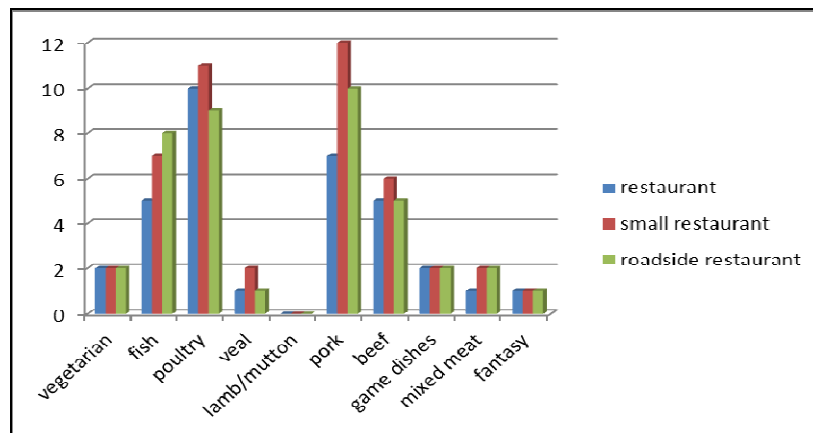


Figure 2: Number of main dishes in the catering establishments with full kitchen facilities  
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On the basis of the total values of the garnishes, Hungarian type of vegetable (főzelék), salads and sauces shown in Figure 3. We can see that the average number of garnishes in case of restaurants is: 6, while in case of small restaurants, roadside restaurants: 7. In case of garnishes the problem is not the number of selectable choices, the problem is that this group of dishes is shown separately. Of course there is a possibility to communicate the choices this way; however in case a dish creation is made e.g. - meat, garnish and sauce - there is no need to show the garnishes category. The average number of Hungarian type of vegetable is the same in all three types of establishments: 0. The choice of Hungarian type of vegetable is very sad. The lack of demand might as well affect the shortage in supply. At the same time there is

a need to include tasty Hungarian type of vegetable in the menus that are made of seasonal ingredients with modern food preparation technology.

In case of restaurants and roadside restaurants the average number of salads available is: 7, while in case of small restaurants it is: 8. According to Hungarian traditions there are 7-8 types of salads out of which the number of pickled vegetables is conservatively high. In this case there is a formal solution: the name can be reduced to one line "pickled vegetables" (cucumber, pepper, etc.) while the choices can be unique such as cucumber, small pepper, green tomatoes, etc. In this case the sales price has to be certainly the same in case of all pickled vegetables. With the same logic salads could be listed in various lines as well (tomatoes, cucumber, etc.). In case of restaurants and roadside restaurants the average number of sauces available is: 1, while in case of small restaurants it is: 2. The question arises again - why is there a need to show sauces as a separate type of dish.

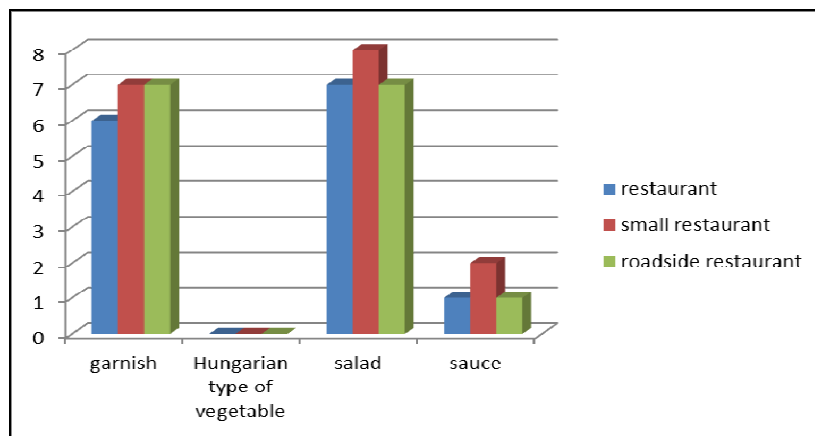


Figure 3: Number of side dishes in the catering establishments with full kitchen facilities  
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On the basis of the total values of cheeses, cold desserts, hot pastries and fruits/preserved fruits shown in Figure 4. We can see that the average number of cheeses in case of restaurants and roadside restaurants is: 0, while in case of small restaurants it is: 1. The choice of selectable cheeses is very low. Establishments however frequently offer cheese plates containing various types of cheeses. The average of cold desserts in case of restaurants and small restaurants: 3, in case of roadside restaurants: 2, which are acceptable. The average number of hot pastry in case of restaurants: 4, while in case of small restaurants it is: 5, in case of roadside restaurants: 6, this latter two is considered too much. The average of fruits/preserved fruits in case of restaurants and roadside restaurants: 0, while in case of small restaurants it is: 1. These numbers also speak for themselves. It would be desirable in case of restaurants and roadside restaurants to have at least one fruit on the menu.

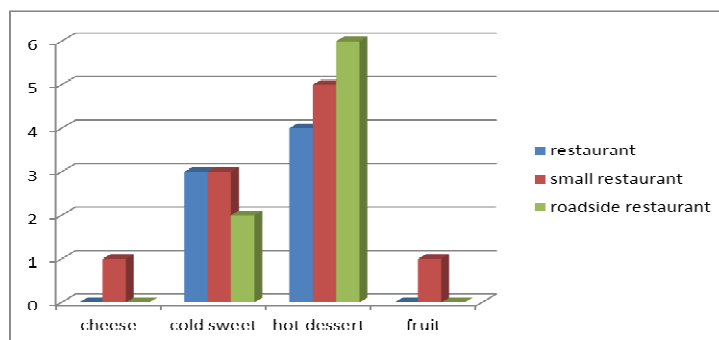


Figure 4: Number of desserts in the catering establishments with full kitchen facilities  
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4.1.1. Average number of dish choices as per tourist regions of Hungary in catering establishments with full kitchen facilities (restaurants, small restaurants, roadside restaurants) and the differences in the national averages

Chart 1. shows the average number of dish choices as per tourist regions of Hungary and statistically significant differences between national averages. The **results** show that there are two regions with significantly more number of choices than the national average. In case of West Transdanubia the difference is significantly higher in case of 15 (!) dish groups (in case of fishes, poultry dishes it surpasses the national average with 3 full points). Taking into consideration ratio as well, beef dishes also show a 40% positive difference compared to the national average. It is supposed that local people and Austrian guests have high demand for fish, poultry and beef dishes, this is why restaurants provide an above average choice from these dishes. In case of the North Plain the ratio of soups, poultry and pork dishes is significantly higher than the national average. The high number of soups is probably a result of the local traditions that is well reflected by the title of a book "Soup dish, as the main dish of the Hungarian people" (ECSEDI I.). The high number of garnishes in North Hungary is also noteworthy that is reflected not only in the case of restaurants but also in case of small restaurants and roadside restaurants. At the same time in case of South Transdanubia the ratio of soups, poultry and pork dishes is significantly lower than the national average. Significantly positive variation from the national average is highlighted with yellow; significantly negative variations are highlighted with green. The similar analysis of the small restaurants and roadside restaurants is to be found in the essay.

Chart1.

Averages of tourist region dish choices of restaurants and significant differences between the national averages as regards tourist regions

Restaurants	National average	Budapest Middle Danube region	Lake Balaton	South Transdanubia	Middle Transdanubia	West Transdanubia	South Plain	North Plain	Lake Tisza	North Hungary
cold starter	4	5	4	3	3	5	3	4	3	4
soup	7	7	6	5	7	8	6	9	7	7
hot starter	3	3	3	4	3	4	3	4	2	2
vegetarian	2	2	1	2	1	3	2	3	2	2
fish	5	5	5	4	4	8	4	6	7	5
poultry	10	10	6	7	8	13	11	13	9	9
calf	1	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	1
lamb/mutton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
pork	7	6	6	4	6	8	9	10	7	8
beef	5	5	5	4	5	7	4	6	4	4
game	2	1	1	1	2	3	1	1	2	2
mixed meat	1	1	0	0	1	1	2	1	1	1
fantasy dish	1	0	2	1	0	2	0	1	0	1
side dish	6	5	6	5	5	6	5	6	5	10
puree	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
salad	7	6	5	6	7	8	6	8	8	6
sauce	1	0	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	3
cheese	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1
cold dessert	3	3	2	2	3	4	2	3	2	2
hot pastry	4	4	3	3	4	4	4	5	4	3
fruit	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0

Source: SÁNDOR, D.

#### *4.1.2. Dish offers of Hungarian hospitality are stereotypical*

During the work the **hypothesis** was proved that the dish offers of the Hungarian hospitality industry are basically stereotypical. The dish offers of the examined 381 menus in the examination period (2005-2008) show a number of similarities for example similar dish types and preparation methods regardless of the geographical location: variations of breaded dishes (Wiener Schnitzel, cutlet, cheese, mushroom, liver, etc.).

Among the introductory courses - soups, cold and hot starters - soups are in domination. At the same time for quality assurance purposes the number of soups should be decreased to 3-4 that on the basis of the national average currently is: 7.

The choice in case of main dishes is also rather one-sided despite of the fact that the national average of poultry and pork dishes is 10-10. Besides the previously mentioned coated meat dishes turkey and duck breast steaks as well as salmon steaks are listed in the menus of the various establishments with full kitchen facilities in a higher than average ratio. The choice for vegetarian dishes is based on coated cheese (port salute, camembert) and on mushrooms primarily in case of small restaurants and roadside restaurants that reflects the practice of the past decades. A positive fact is that in case of restaurants Italian style no meat pastry products are also included in the menus such as the penny bun penne, papardelle with mozzarella and tomatoes, cheese gnocchi, etc. in order to serve vegetarian guests.

The determining dessert is pancake with its endless variations while in case of cold desserts sponge cake (somlói galuska), ice creams and chestnut puree are served most frequently. This monotony is sad if we take into consideration the fact that there are a number of variations available as regards ingredients and preparation methods as well to make the menus and choices more colorful and more varied. Not talking about the fact that catering establishments should set an example and offer the guests dishes that they do not yet know or do not prepare in their homes. This is certainly not true in case of the before mentioned dishes. What would motivate the guest to go to a restaurant/small restaurant/roadside restaurant in case he frequently eats at home the followings for example: breaded cheese, ice cream and pancakes? Most likely the Hollandaise sauce made with bear's garlic of Mecsek, paprika chicken made with asparagus of Öttömös or the rose donut filled with plum jam from Penyige would be attractive choices.

#### **4.2. Examination of the presence of local ingredients and typical local dishes in the dish choices offered by various catering establishments**

The **results** show that local products and typical local dishes are only minimally apparent in the dish repertoire. On the basis of the total data derived from the examination of dish choices of nine tourist regions we can see that the ratio of local dishes never reaches 2% compared to the full choice of dishes on offer. After processing the 381 menus containing ca. 30,000 dishes some 360 typical local dishes could be identified therefore the national ratio of typical local food is 1.2% West Transdanubia, North and South Plain regions are somewhat over the national average but the ratio of typical local food remains below 2%.

It is refreshing to see that some menus of given restaurants, small restaurants and roadside restaurants list a higher ratio of typical local dishes than the average of the given region.

The national analysis of menus reveal a further problem, namely that in many cases only the names of the dishes refer to local dishes like Pike-perch fillet Pécs style, Filled mushrooms Villány style, Villány fine bites, and the variations for chicken breast: Szatymaz

style, Maros style, Félégyház style, Plain style, Balástya style etc. These names are only fantasy names that are not closely related to the given region.

The above facts prove the **hypothesis**, which says that there is a general shortage in offering typical local dishes by the establishments.

**As a recommendation** let us review a sample from the local ingredients and typical local dishes of the **South Transdanubia tourist region**. The use of **local vegetables and food originating with animals** is an excellent possibility to expand the choice of typical local dishes, Figure 5. shows the geographical appearance of the items in italics: *Bogyiszló pepper*, *Pécs peach and Pécs smelly grapes*, *Szekszárd champignon*, *Mecsek bear's garlic*, *Iharosberény chestnut*, *Szekszárd dessert cheese*, *Mohács overwintering cabbage lettuce and savoy cabbage*, *Mohács early smooth-seeded green pea*, kulen, stifolder, szajmóka (FARNADI É. szerk. 2002). The latter two is a meat product of German origin, while kulen may be of German or Slavic origin.

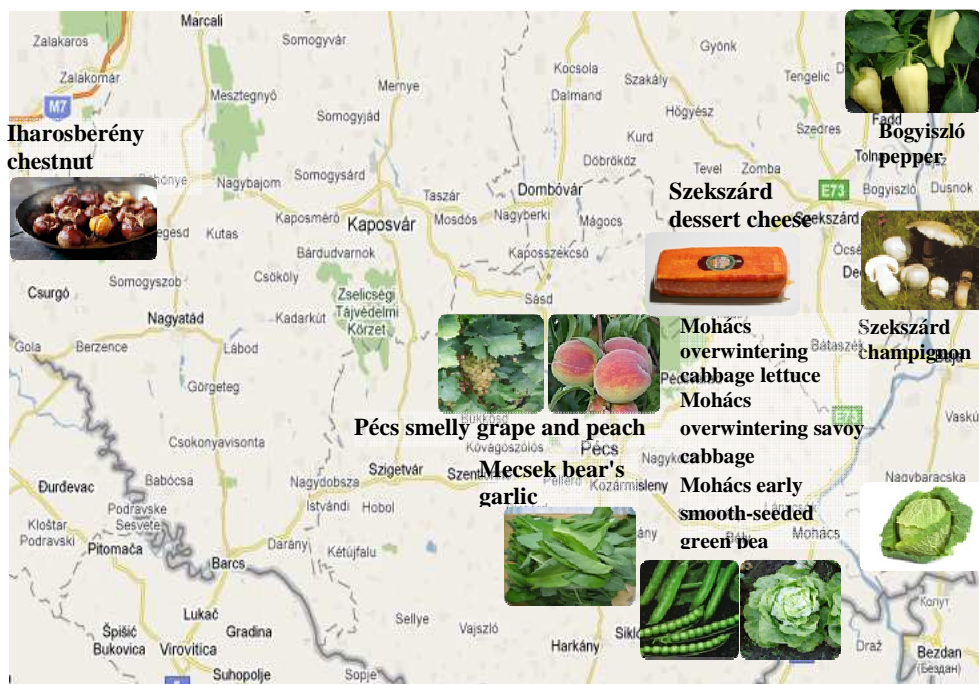


Figure 5: Local ingredients, South Transdanubia  
Source: ArcGIS, self-editing

Some **typical local dishes** are recommended for the South Transdanubia region, Figure 6. shows the ones in italics.

**Baranya:** Hungarian Pork Soup with beans, *Baranya veggio soup*, Ófalusi bean soup, *Ormánság liver balls soup*, Cabbage dumplings, Ormánság stuffed cabbage, Ráchegy sausages, Göntér stew, *Villány duck roast*, Baranya poppy seed dumplings, *Bóly cottage cheese roundel*, *Siklós pie*.

**Sárköz:** *Bogyiszló big bean soup*, Fish soup with paprika, Sour cherry soup, Bába letcho, *Bátaszék meet-mushroom rice*, *Bogyiszló chicken*, Sárköz pork loin, *Szekszárd guard's roast*, *Tolna pork slices*, Corn spoon, Cottage cheese roundel.

**Somogy:** Sour cream cicege – sour cream tochni, – Kaposvár noodles, Curds and sour cherry prósza, Cabbage tutyi – cabbage filled raised – (SZIGETI A. 1999), *Somogy walnut pastry*.

**Zselic:** *Zselic soup*, Gálosfa ham balls, Szenna pocket meat, Cabbage prósza.

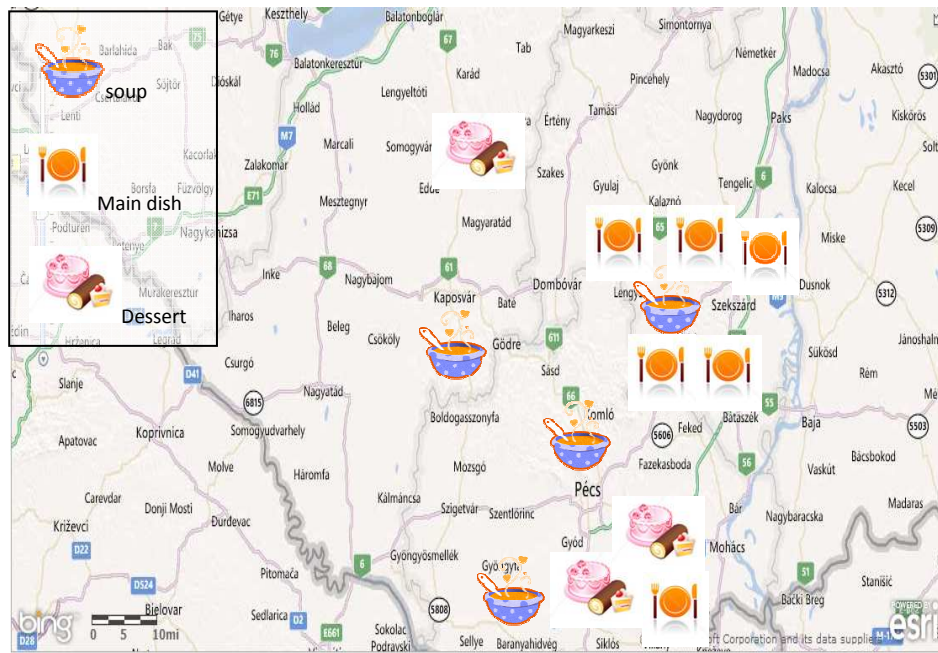


Figure 6: Typical local dishes, South Transdanubia

Source: ArcGIS, self-editing

### 4.3. Opinions of hospitality professionals

The main **result** of the answers of the professionals is that we could gather primary information about the local hospitality industry in the given time period. The following general answers have been received in the below specified fields.

#### 4.3.1. Changes you have observed in the field of goods supply in the past two decades

In case of the supply of goods there is an increase in the variety of goods, now ingredients are available that had not been available before also there are new food supplies and comestibles that had been unknown to the Hungarian hospitality industry earlier. At the same time there is a widening gap in quality there are more high quality goods and more low quality goods, as well. Delivery became more precise and more flexible. The quality of packaging technology has significantly improved that is in close connection with the quality assurance of the goods. There is a strong price competition and longer payment terms on the market.

#### 4.3.2. Positive and negative factors in the field of purchasing goods

A positive factor is the possibility to purchase a wide range of high quality fresh materials and also that some special products can be bought locally like Hungarian Grey Cattle, Mangalitsa pork, buffalo, cottage poultry, bio products, fresh herbs and spices. The variety of products is increased, home delivery is more frequent, we feel that there is a competition for the restaurant market; there are regular sales and better payment terms. A negative development is the appearance of the so called cheese like products and the unrealistically cheap meat products (Frankfurt sausage, sausages, cold cuts) as well as the milk like products and there are too many comfort products. The ratio of frozen meat is also very significant and this does not help with quality goods supply. Violent direct marketing became commonplace, in many cases the origin of the goods is questionable. As a result of the price competition, local products are getting out of focus, since they have higher production costs. In case of big

supermarket chains quality issues are arising as a result of low prices. It also might happen that the caterer receives a delivery of quantity and quality other than what was ordered.

#### *4.3.3. Use of products purchased from a producer close to the restaurant*

Answers reveal that all contacted professionals buy at least on occasional basis from local producers and consequently use these products in their restaurants; these products include fresh vegetables, dairy products and honey. On the basis of the respondents the purchase of local products is economic, reliable, it is delivered in the ordered quantity and quality and the products are fresh and of high quality. Quality is assured by the fact that the restaurateur knows the producer personally. On the other hand issues arise in case of local purchases as regards the constant high quality of the products, constant ability to deliver and about guaranteeing the meeting of food safety requirements.

#### *4.3.4. Changes needed to make the local products more popular and make them available on a constant basis*

On the basis of the opinion of the professionals more opportunities should be made for the producers to let them introduce themselves. For this excellent marketing would be required, real local market on a weekly basis with local products and the support of the town halls would also be needed. There would be a need for verified selection of stocks, for proper quality production and products with the quality assurance of constant delivery.

#### *4.3.5. Channels/sources of present purchasing*

The composition of the indicated supplier companies shows that besides the retailers making more comfortable ordering possible there are smaller or bigger specialized suppliers, such as Baromfiudvar 2002 Kft., Mateusz-VAD Kft., Sajtkalmár Kft., Print Kft. etc., that are also partners of catering units. Local small producers, smaller meat industry enterprises, and the local market are also indicated among the purchasing channels.

#### *4.3.6. Good quality local ingredients and their purchasing possibilities*

On the basis of the information contained in the essay it is clear that purchasing possibilities have undergone quality changes in the past twenty years. Catering units are able to choose from a wide variety of suppliers including wholesale enterprises, specialized suppliers and local producers.

#### *4.3.7. Knowledge of typical local dishes*

Typical local dishes listed and analyzed in the thesis could serve as good examples for the restaurants, small restaurants and roadside restaurants that operate in Hungary since they point out the fact that offering local dishes represents real value. Optimally dishes are prepared with local ingredients and plates are presented in a way that combines the preservation of traditions refreshed to today's standards. Dish descriptions found in the Annex of the essay point out the fact that there are typical local dishes available that are based partially on traditions and on the restaurant practice.

Based on the answers provided by the professionals my **hypothesis** is partially verified, which states that it is easier and cheaper to purchase ingredients in big supermarkets, what is more, local suppliers cannot always provide goods of the same quality and quantity. At the same time it is good news that the contacted restaurateurs do purchase local products and use them.

#### 4.4. Evaluation of the needs of guests as regards dish choices

The analysis of the questionnaire based surveys including 500 online respondents and 210 respondents on traditional paper questionnaire can be tracked down. Below we can review the comparative analyses and their results of two independent surveys that included the same questions about restaurant consumption. The essay contains fourteen outstanding questions, here I highlight three. The first question is about the variety of choices that the guest wants to see (Figure 7).

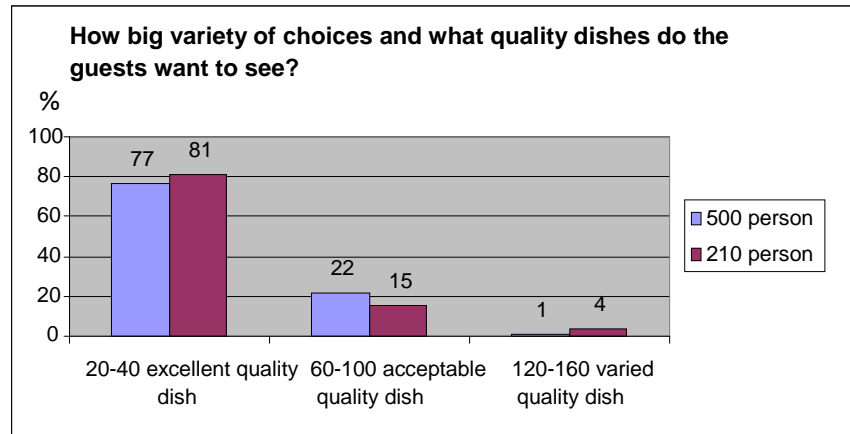


Figure 7: How big variety of choices and what quality dishes do the guests want to see?  
Edited by: SÁNDOR, D.

Answers reveal that in case of the 500 person survey the majority of respondents some 77% of them while in case of the 210 person survey 81% wishes to see high quality dishes. 22% of the persons surveyed (in case of the 500 people sample) and 15% (in case of the 210 person sample) wishes to have a choice to choose from 60-100 acceptable quality dishes, while the remaining 1% and 4% wishes to see a choice of 120-160 dishes of varied quality.

The **results** show that almost 80% of the guests would want to see smaller number of choices and high quality dishes on the basis of the two samples (710 people).

The second question is about the wish to consume dishes prepared of local ingredients (Figure 8).



Figure 8: Would you be happy to try dishes prepared of local ingredients?  
Edited by: SÁNDOR, D.



The **results** show that almost 100% of the respondents would be happy to try dishes prepared of local ingredients, 97% of the 500 people and 96% of the 210 people. It would be desirable to increase the number of dishes prepared of local ingredients not only because of the needs of the guests but also because of professional reasons.

The third question relates to the consumption of typical local dishes (Figure 9).



Figure 9: Would you be happy to try typical local dishes?  
 Edited by: SÁNDOR, D.

On the basis of the **results** of both surveys some 97% of the respondents would be happy to consume typical local dishes; therefore the number of traditional and typical local dishes would need to be increased. In daily practice in the majority of cases typical local dishes are only minimally apparent.

My **proposal** - which says that guests need the Hungarian gastronomy to use locally produced ingredients for the preparation of dishes and to have typical local dishes in the menus and this is not met by the supply - is also justified.

#### 4.5. Review of three sample areas about the situation of restaurant demand-supply

We have the possibility to look into three sample regions, and into the needs of the guests of three catering units in three towns - Sopron, Mohács and Szilvásvár - on the basis of the 210 person survey and we will look into the possibilities of the supply side. The selection of the sample regions was done in a way that we reviewed three small regions out of all the questionnaires received from all over the country namely the Sopron basin; Mohács strip plain and the North Bükk (DÖVÉNYI Z. editor 2011).

Figure 10 shows the geographical location of the Sopron basin small region.

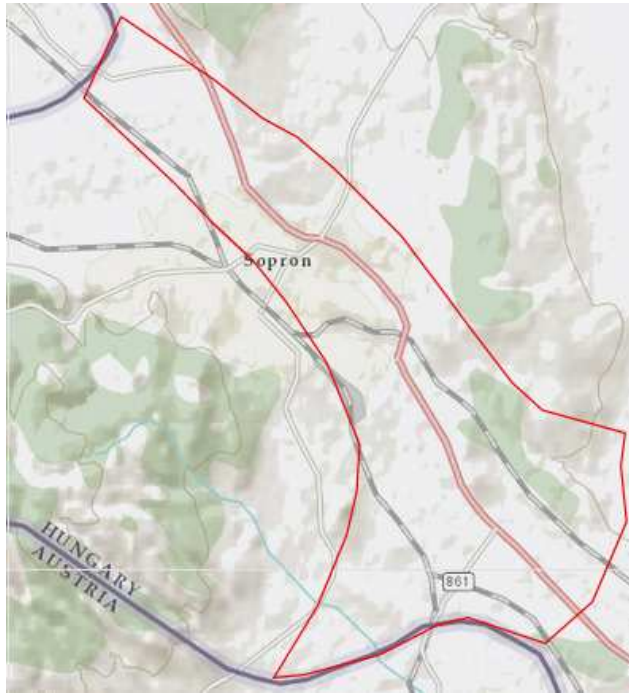


Figure 10: Geographical location of the Sopron basin small region  
Source: SOMOGYI S. – MAROSI S., ArcGIS, Editing: HALMAI Á. – SÁNDOR D.

Figure 11 shows the geographical location of the Mohács strip plain small region.



Figure 11: Geographical location of the Mohács strip plain small region  
Source: SOMOGYI S. – MAROSI S., ArcGIS, Editing: HALMAI Á. – SÁNDOR D.



Figure 12 shows the geographical location of the North Bükk small region.

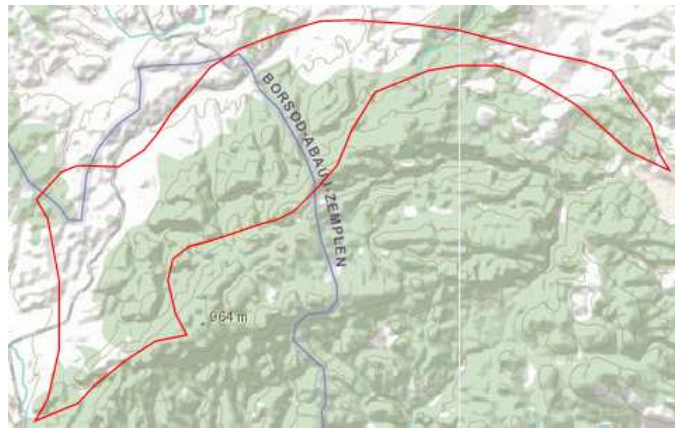


Figure 12: Geographical location of the North Bükk small region  
Source: SOMOGYI S. – MAROSI S., ArcGIS, Editing: HALMAI Á. – SÁNDOR D.

The questionnaire consists of 14 questions; I will introduce two of them that are relevant to the topic:

- ◆ Would you be happy to try dishes prepared of ingredients produced close to the restaurant?
- ◆ Would you be happy to try typical local dishes?

Analyzing the supply-demand side of the sample regions the **results** show that on the basis of the survey the needs of the guests of the regions - 95-97% of them wants to try dishes prepared of locally produced materials and 94-97% would try typical local dishes - are only fulfilled to a small degree by the offers of the three catering units even though their score is above the national average (local products 5-10%, typical local dishes 5-9%).

At the same time the natural environments of all three geographical regions provide products that are specific to the region and generally only a fraction of these products is included in the menus of restaurants. The tiny circle of typical local dishes on the menus does not support the meeting of the needs of the guests. Based on the information presented in the essay it is apparent that typical traditional dishes have been present in the examined areas that were at times prepared by the local ethnic minorities.

Analyzing the **results** of the demand-supply sides of the three sample regions – Sopron basin, Mohács strip plain, North Bükk small regions – it is clear that guests require the use of **local ingredients** in the preparation of the dishes more and would be happy to see more **typical local dishes** in the offers than it is presently the case.

My **hypothesis** is also verified, which says that the available food ingredients differentiate on a regional level as well as the typical dishes and eating habits of the given region, since the natural geographical environments of the regions, the traditional and presently available food ingredients as well as the eating habits of the region all appear as unique tourist attractions. In order to create a real gastronomic attraction out of these possibilities the owners of hospitality establishments should have a change of paradigm. The menus of restaurants, small restaurants and roadside restaurants should feature more varied and a higher number of typical local dishes and dishes prepared of local ingredients.

#### 4.6. Gastronomic festivals and programs

Figure 13 shows thematically all the 270 gastronomic events held annually in Hungary between 2009 and 2011 (the figure does not include all the events). The division, number and ratio of the events is positive: "Celebrations of local products" represent 111 events with a share of 41%, "Cooking celebrations and competitions of traditional dishes" represent 93 events with a share of 34%, "Cook and gastronomic competitions" appear on 24 events with a ratio of 9%; while "Mixed events" offer 42 programs with a share of 16%. The main database of the events was provided by the event calendar of the Hungarian National Gastronomic Association.

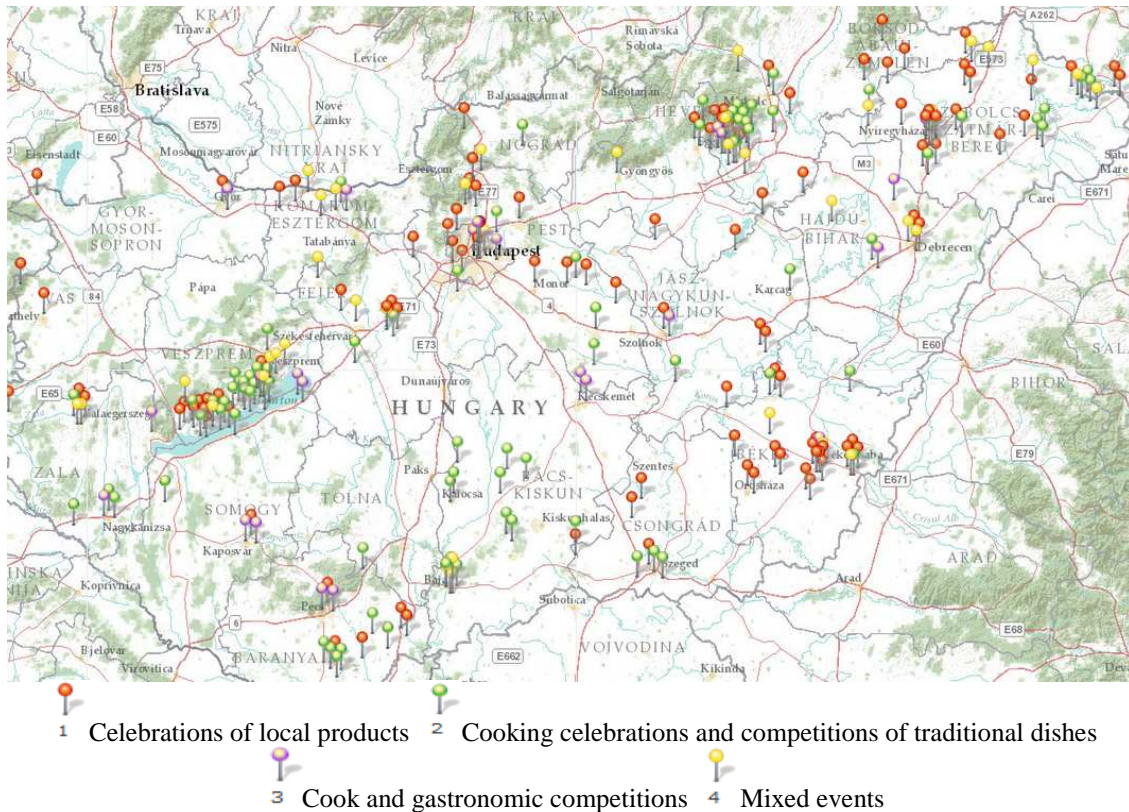


Figure 13: Gastronomic events of Hungary in thematic partition  
Source: ArcGIS, editing HALMAI Á. – SÁNDOR D.

Summarizing the significance of gastronomic festivals we have to note that in the past ten-fifteen years these events became more and more widespread, are very popular, which has a positive effect on the national tourism and they play an unquestionable role in the preservation of traditions that makes our dining culture more complete. Gastronomic events are significant tourism attractors, in case of an event of high standard they can become a tourist attraction resulting in possible repeating guests, visitors.

## 5. SUMMARY

The contents of the Goals and Hypothesis sections have been verified during the work. The original goal - that is the introduction of the demand side of Hungarian gastronomy - was met by the primary researches that show that the vast majority of the 710 questioned guests, some 97% would be happy to taste dishes made of using locally available ingredients and also 97% would be happy to try out typical local dishes. Taking into consideration the present situation and future possibilities of the supply side of Hungarian gastronomy as tourism attraction there is a long way to go since the number of catering units offering unique, special dishes and choices is minimal.

During the evaluation of catering establishments with full kitchen facilities: in case of restaurants, small restaurants and roadside restaurants several critical elements have been noticed. Such for example is the too wide choice of selections that can contain over 200 dishes - this has to be changed. My proposal that says that dish offers of Hungarian hospitality are stereotypical has been verified. The dish offers of the examined 381 menus in the examination period (2005-2008) show a number of similarities for example similar dish types and preparation methods regardless of the geographical location: variations of breaded dishes (Wiener Schnitzel, cutlet, cheese, mushroom, liver, etc.). The results show that there are two regions with significantly more number of choices than the national average on the basis of the significant statistical differences between the national average numbers and the tourist region dish choices of the restaurants. So, in case of West Transdanubia the difference is significantly higher in case of 15 (!) dish groups (in case of fishes, poultry and beef dishes it surpasses the national average with 3 full points). It is supposed that local people and Austrian guests have high demand for fish, poultry and beef dishes, this is why restaurants provide an above average choice from these dishes.

While reviewing the ingredients, dishes and dining habits of Hungary we could see that we have a number of traditional and still existing values. While reviewing the presence of the local ingredients and typical local dishes - in the offers of various catering establishments - we could see that the ratio of local ingredients and typical local dishes is only 1-2% in the whole choice.

Professionals working in the hospitality industry say that the supply of goods has improved significantly over the past 20 years. Summing up the present purchasing practices we can state that a part of restaurateurs prefer the "all from one place" purchasing method. Another part uses specialized companies (meat, vegetables, dairy products, etc.) to deliver the ingredients to their restaurants. A third part uses "mixed" purchasing methods where the primary purchasing channels are added with smaller companies and local producers. At the high end Hungarian hospitality it is not uncommon to see that restaurateurs purchase the ingredients themselves from abroad ensuring constant high quality.

The demand side, almost 100% of the guests would be happy to see local ingredients, typical local dishes on the menus while the supply side's 1-2% such offer refers to a lack of coordination. The management of catering establishments should take steps to improve the offers of dishes since it is the ever better fulfilling of the needs of the clients that makes a business successful.

The ingredients and typical local dish offers of the highlighted establishments in the sample regions are above the national average. The local ingredients ratio (7%) and typical local dish ratio (5%) in the Sopron Corso restaurant, the local ingredients ratio (5%) and typical local dish ratio (5%) in the Mohács Halászcserda and the local ingredients ratio (10%) and typical local dish ratio (9%) in the Szilvásvár Fenyő restaurant are above the average (1-2%) of the involved touristic regions. Among the examined small regions the bean sterc and the bean scone is known among the traditional dishes in the Sopron basin small region. It is important to note the Esterházy-roast that is a common and known dish nationwide

especially in case of restaurants. In case of the Mohács strip plain we need to mention the dining habits of two nations. The Croatian ethnic minority ate a special bean dish on a daily basis that was prepared in a fireproof crock on open fire and this dish is prepared today in a flavor rich way with a lot of meat and smoked delicacies. The German ethnicity around Mohács ate every day something different: on Monday they had noodles, on Tuesday they ate cabbage, Wednesday was the time for meat, on Thursday they had dumplings, Friday was for beans, Saturday for potatoes. This menu was repeated each week. In case of the North Bükk small region the Palóc dining habits are typical such as the leavened bread and some pastries: csík, haluska (noodles), and the strapacska that is of Slovakian origin. Their traditional dish is the görhe or málé (spoon). In Szilvássvár mornány milk-loaves were prepared and consumed at Christmas.

The Hungarian popularity of the gastronomic festivals represents a significant touristic attraction, high level events can become tourist attractions with unquestionable effects on tourism and on gastronomic culture.

Finally let us review some **suggestions**, development possibilities in the examined field: it would make sense to limit the variety of choices on the menu that corresponds to the size of the catering establishment while at the same time there is a need to provide constant high quality dishes to the guests otherwise the economical and quality assurance risk significantly increases during the operation. The circle of local dishes prepared of locally available ingredients would need to be expanded since on one hand this could mean an economical market for the local agricultural producers with low transportation costs, on the other hand local and foreign tourists are interested in tasting dishes that are typical to the region. Not talking about the fact that a catering establishment will become attractive to the guests by offering unique, high quality dishes. The flexible purchasing based on personal connections would need to be applied, since purchasing fresher, better quality ingredients can only be an advantage for restaurants and guests alike. Furthermore, money spent this way is returned to the local economy providing higher standards of living and this could result in an increased demand to consume in catering establishments.

## **6. FURTHER DIRECTIONS OF THE WORK**

A research can never be considered totally completed, that is for sure. In this very case there is a possibility to make further examinations, as well. It would be beneficial to process a later time period in a way similar to the method used in this research. From time to time newer analyses would need to be done, these would need to be compared to each other in chronological order and the changes should be evaluated. On the other hand depending on the technical possibilities it would be worthwhile to expand the circle of the examined catering establishments and the number of contacted professionals. Measurements and calculations could be done as regards the connection between smaller choice of dishes and the economic performance of the establishment. With further comparative analyses examinations could be extended to similarities and differences between the regions and the national average and their modifications over time. It would also be worthwhile to look into the matter of how the local agricultural producers would be able to provide constantly and seasonally high quality ingredients based on the needs of the guests as it is outlined in the essay. The study could be extended to an international level to be able use the well-functioning systems also at home. A further research area could be the study of the beverage offers of the catering establishments.

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