



## **Spiritual understanding and experience in the creative tourism of gastronomy**

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### **Abstract**

By producing the paradigm of creative tourism, the knowledge increasing discipline of tourism invites tourists to visit and interact with the unique and live culture of societies instead of just sightseeing in museums and ancient monuments. In this paradigm, tourists engage all of their senses in the creation of their unique experience and improving their relations with local people from seller/buyer to a master/apprentice level. Not only the cultural capital but also the social capital would be increased from this interaction. The main goal of this research is to show that, contrary to what appears at first, the creative domain of gastronomy is a spiritual one and flourishing local communities and creative tourism based on this paradigm can evolve the wellbeing and material life of inhabitants and tourists as well. Moreover, this includes significant spiritual endowments both for guests and hosts in the creative gastronomic destinations. Creative tourism based on gastronomy regards new looks to local communities as the first step in creating unique and added value experiences including economic, human, and social values. In creative tourism, locals and tourists will open their eyes on the destination in completely new ways, so that they could see better in creating new and valuable experiences. This definition is closely related to the Quranic command of "The man must consider what he eats". In this research, using thematic analysis and Delphi method, it is shown that the components of spiritual perception have significant overlaps with the components of gastronomic creative tourism. Factors such as "comfort and satisfaction", "Giving meaning to life", "interaction with others", "friendship with nature and environment", and "surrender and thanksgiving", as the components of the spiritual understanding, showed common and undeniable spaces with the components of creative tourism. These components include "authentic experiences", "active participation", "learning", "self-esteem and self-awareness", "new products and processes", and "new spaces". Based on our results, each of these components has their own proprietary domains and non-negligible common spaces, and even in some cases are subsets of each other.

**Keywords:** Creative tourism, spirituality, gastronomy, "the man must consider what he eats"

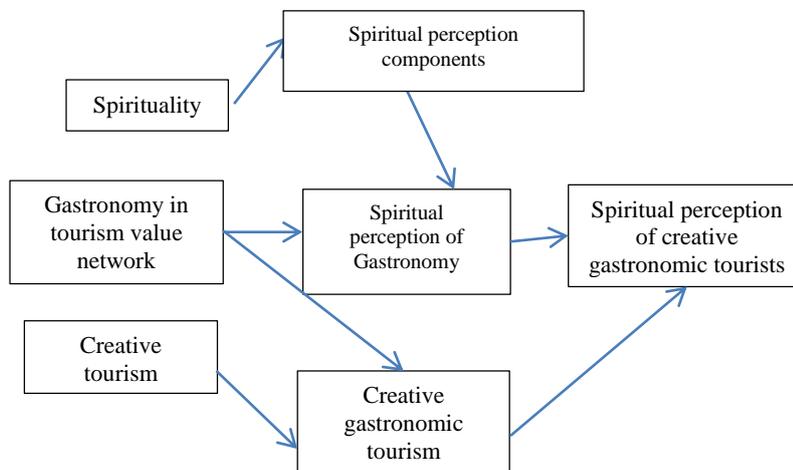
## 1. Introduction

In a world that men increasingly need spirituality for their internal growth and also to organize their social life, this concept must be understood correctly and their components explained for obtaining a profound effect in the various dimensions of life.

As the creative domain of gastronomy is of interest to many cities of the world for endogenous development based on native culture, linking this domain to the concept of spirituality could open new horizons for the city policymakers, authorities, and all of its stakeholders. Such a linking also leads to more satisfaction for the educated tourists that seek for a more meaningful tourism experience.

To understand the components of spiritual perception in the creative gastronomic tourism and its related activities according to the conceptual model of Fig. 1, it is necessary to define and interpret the concepts of spirituality, creative tourism, and gastronomy in the tourism value network correctly. To this goal, we designed the following exploratory questions and tried to find answers for them:

- What are spirituality and the components of spiritual perception?
- What are creative tourism and its explaining components?
- What are gastronomy and its historical trend in the tourism value network?
- What is the link between gastronomy and spirituality?
- Which activities should be used to realize Spiritual perception in creative gastronomic tourism?



**Figure 1. Conceptual model of the research**

## **2. Research methodology**

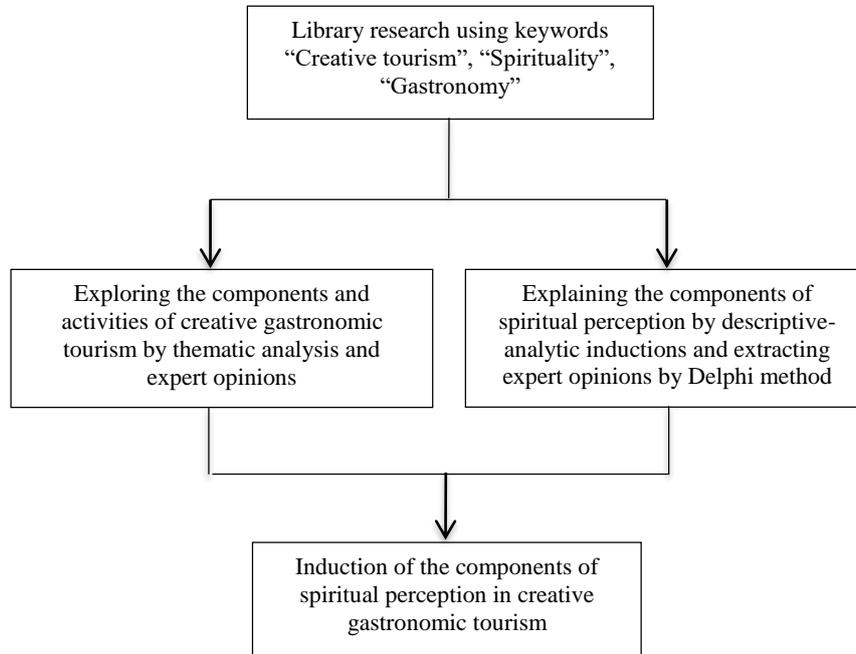
This exploratory and descriptive-analytic research was conducted using thematic analysis, the two-step Delphi method, and a desktop study (Fig. 2).

Thematic analysis is a data analysis method that is based on an objective systematic and quantitative investigation of communicative messages.

This extensive research method is used to analyze the obvious contents of messages included in a text (Neuendorf, 2016). Thematic analysis is a method for recognition, analysis, and reporting the patterns in qualitative data. This method is a process for the analysis of textual data that turns scattered and various data to detailed and rich data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Delphi method is also a systematic method in research for extracting opinions from a group of experts on a subject or a question (Hsu & Sandford, 2007). This multiphase research method is applied to gather opinions in subjective matters and using written answers instead of gathering an expert group with the aim of reaching a consensus with the possibility of free expression and review of ideas (Ali, 2005). In this study, at the first stage, the interviews are performed by 8 experts in the field of philosophy of spirituality and spiritual perception. The experts were identified by snowball sampling method. Then, the components of spiritual perception were shared with the experts and by asking open-ended questions, they were asked to tell if any components should be removed or added. At the second stage, the final components for removal and addition were given to them and the final components were extracted.

In this research, the resources or theoretic examples are investigated using the following keywords: creative tourism and creative city in the domain of gastronomy. In addition to using the MAXQDA software, it was tried to ensure that the relationship between extracted concepts and patterns obtained from authentic and valid texts. To this end, opinions of experts were extracted and the components of spiritual perception were finalized with their help.



**Figure 2. Research implementation process**

### 3. Spirituality and the components of spiritual perception

Man is a spirituality-oriented being (Cohen, 1979). His spiritual quest has its roots in his biological, psychological, and social nature (Hardy, 1981). Man is always in the search for adding meaning to his life. According to Hill et al., everything could be regarded as spiritual if a sense of transcendence and connection, or extracting a deep personal meaning results from it (Hill et al., 2000). Piedmont regards the spirituality as “standing beyond the instantaneous sensing of time and place and looking to life from a wider and more targeted perspective “that implies crossing over the ordinary limits of the body. It is a process by which one improves himself by a better understanding of himself and the others (Piedmont, 1999). By reviewing the 22 characteristics of a spiritual man (Sohrabi-Far, 2012), the meaning of spirituality could be better understood:

1. Spiritual man sees the world much bigger than the material world from an ontological point of view.
2. From an epistemological point of view, he believes in mystery; an unknown that he could not discover as long as he is a human being.

3. From a psychological point of view, he is always in motion and transformation to newer and better states (e.g., beliefs and sensations).
4. He grabs every legitimate and useful thing from every possible school.
5. “What should I do” is his most fundamental question and questions like where have I come from, where I am destined to go, and what is the goal of creation are so important that aid him in answering the first question.
6. He has a noble life.
7. He belongs to here and the current time.
8. In view of a spiritual man, the results of one’s works are developmental results.
9. His goal of doing things is to reach inside happiness, comfort, and joy; not for the desire of the Paradise or fear of the Hell.
10. He is satisfied with the totality of the universe. This means that although he tries to correct things in this full of suffering world, he is satisfied also with the existing world.
11. He differs between changeable and unchangeable affairs and spends all of his efforts for changeable ones.
12. He ethically and psychologically accepts the difference between human beings.
13. The spiritual man is always in competition with himself, not the others; competition in being rather than in having.
14. He searches for truth, guidance, and love.
15. He offers his experiences to the others without asking them for acceptance.
16. He is hopeful and happy. He does not become hopeless despite objective and external problems because he has a satisfied heart and so much comfort.
17. He treats others based on justice, help, and kindness.
18. He loves himself so dearly even though he does not regard himself better than the others. This is a type of spiritual love.
19. He has the least consumption and the most production in his surrounding world.
20. He considers himself responsible for his own destiny.
21. Suffering will give him meaning in his life and this, in turn, makes bearing it easy for him.
22. He is not merely a servant of God.

One can state that spirituality is “the expansion of existing limits beyond oneself “or in other words, “moving the gravity of existence beyond “(Naraghi, 2018b). As man is continuously in interaction with his fourfold of self, God, nature, and the others, in his paleness space he would be devoted to the threefold of God, nature, and the people. It is worth mentioning that the effect and feedback of this expansion of existence is a meaningful and peaceful life and provides a deep spiritual satisfaction.

As mentioned above and based on the experts’ opinions and their consensus, the components of spiritual perception can be mentioned as follows: “comfort and satisfaction “, “giving meaning to life“, “interaction with the others“, “friendship with the environment and nature“, and “surrender and thanksgiving“.

#### 4. Creative tourism and its components

The knowledge increasing system of tourism has experienced many paradigms these days (Table 1).

**Table 1. The evolution of tourism trends (Lee & Lee, 2015)**

Tourism paradigm	Historical era	Environmental conditions	characteristics
Mass tourism	Industrial Age	Stable political conditions and the emergence of jetliners	Tourism packages, large amusement places, and subjective parks
Cultural tourism	De-industrialization age	Preservation of historical heritage and globalization of cultural heritage	Tangible heritage, visiting historical heritage
Creative tourism	Networks age	The growth of the creative economy and economy of experience	Intangible heritage, creative participation in activities, and networking with local people

Thinkers and researchers have studied the subject and concept of creative tourism from different perspectives and each enlightened part of this paradigm. By investigating research works, various concepts and interpretations of creative tourism have been extracted by the thematic analysis. The results of such analyses are summarized in Table 2.

Whereas cultural tourism is based on observation, watching, and thinking (e.g., visiting museums), creative tourism is based on experience, participation, and learning. This reality meets with higher levels of the

need for spiritual growth with a focus on the active development of skills and reaching self-awareness. The level of engagement of carriers of creativity including products, processes, people, or environment in the creative tourism determines the intensity of employing creativity in this new paradigm. In other words, low-intensity creativity as a context includes activities such as buying or visiting and high-intensity creativity needs a high level of engagement in the creative process from tourists and local people. Participating in activities such as making handicrafts or traditional cooking turns local people into instructors and tourists into learners. This social interaction between local people and tourists sometimes occurs so coherently that tourist feels himself like local people, on one hand, and local people transforms into curious explorers of their own cities, on the other hand. This mutual transformation via collaboration between local people and tourists is an important characteristic of creative tourism that has a profound effect on the renovation of urban and rural spaces (Rabazuskaite, 2015) and could bring about developmental results.

**Table 2. Components of creative tourism**

<b>Components of Creative Tourism</b>	<b>Explanation/Interpretation</b>	<b>Reference</b>
Authentic Experience	Transfer of experience by heritage and tangible resources and more important intangible resources	Fernandez, 2010
	Creative experience from local resources	Pearce & Butler, 1993
	Plenty of creative people such as musicians, authors, actors, painters, sculptors, etc. have an important role in the explicit experience of a creative tourist	Lindroth et al., 2007
	A cultural experience with participation in local culture	Raymond, 2007 Richards, 2008 Lee & Lee, 2015
	Creating meaningful and satisfying experiences; a wide range of high or low-level creative experiences depending upon the amount of participation and engagement of tourist in the production of creative experience	Richards, 2014a
Active participation	The relationship between people-life same as local people	Richards, 2014a
	Obtaining intangible benefits from interaction, feedback, and collaboration of tourists	Fernandez, 2010
	Increasing social capital by forming durable network connections	Korez-Vide, 2013

	Close interaction between tourists and the local community, producers, and consumers that are able to interchange their roles; leveraging the relationship from seller-buyer to master-apprentice	Fernandez, 2010
	The collaboration of tourist in creative activities	Richards & Wilson, 2006
	Exchanging social, rational, and intellectual capital inside the networks	Richards & Marques, 2012
	Meaningful connections between hosts and guests in a destination	Richards, 2005
	Engaging tourist in the creative life in a tourist destination	Richards & Marques, 2012
	Forming close relationships between tourists and local people and their cultural heritage by active interaction of tourists	Wilson & Richards, 2007
Learning; development of capacity-skills	Collaborative learning of arts, cultural heritage with special characteristics of a destination	UNESCO, 2006
	Learning a skill that is a part of the culture of a nation or local community	Raymond, 2007
	Interactive workshops in small groups that reflect the values of a destination including arts, culture, tastes, and nature	Yozcu & İçöz, 2010
	Developing creative skills and challenges	Richards & Wilson, 2006
	Obtaining or developing tourist skills when he lives like a local	Fernandez, 2010
	Opportunities for learning new skills by participating in creative activities of the destination (handicrafts, arts, cooking, etc.)	Wilson & Richards, 2007
	A form of learning by amusement	Richards & Marques, 2012
	Development of creative capacities by active participation in special courses in a tourism destination	Richards & Raymond, 2000
Development of self-esteem and self-awareness	A tool for strengthening identity and personality; a form of manifestation and inside exploration; learning along with the realization of the character	Richards & Marques, 2012
	Satisfaction of the most transcendental human needs	Fernandez, 2010
	A journey in search of the origin, roots, and origin of experiences; the result of a post-modern philosophy; with the aim of creating a more humanistic and transcendental society	Fernandez, 2010
Development of new products and processes	Creativity in using available resources; development of tourism products and experiences; renovation of available	Richards, 2014a

	products; adding to the value of cultural and creative assets; producing by-products from creativity development; use of creative techniques to improve tourism experiences	
	Offering new products	Voss, 2004
	Symbolic production; symbols create value	Sacco, 2011
	Using new technologies to improve tourism experience; using the capacity of creativity development of economic activities such as music, theater, film, cooking arts, agriculture, and manufacturing	Fernandez, 2010
	Offering creative tourism services by converging related industries with information technology; smart services	KTO <sup>1</sup> , 2014
	Creative tourism products independent of destination	Jarábková & Hamada, 2012 Ohridska & Ivanov, 2010
	Using resources that are processed by nature such as local songs, handicrafts, painting, cooking, and festivals	Lindroth et al., 2007
Developing new spaces	A unique combination of knowledge, skill, cultural heritage, social, and spatial capital in a tourist destination	Jarábková & Hamada, 2012
	Creating a new space in places, renovation, and rehabilitation of places	Richards & Marques, 2012
	Adding vitality and atmosphere to places	Richards, 2014a
	Dependence on a specific and creative destination	Ohridska & Ivanov, 2010
	Cities form creative environments that attract visitors while are attractive for local people	Richards, 2014a
	Creativity as a context, branding for the city and creative atmosphere, and creative strategies based on moving from cultural branding to creative spaces	Rabzauskaitė, 2015
	Peaceful tourism places, capturing parts of the market that intend to have soft experiences that are usually related to local cultural heritage	Fernandes, 2011
	Internalizing creativity and creative values in special places; eventful cities; strategic use of events	Richards, 2014a
	Forming a creative atmosphere by local people or creative section	Rabzauskaitė, 2015
	From proactive and creative engagement to unbiased watching of the others or even buying creative products	Richards, 2011

<sup>1</sup> Korea Tourism Organization

## 5. Gastronomy in the tourism value network

The encyclopedia of Britannica (2000) defines gastronomy as “the art of selecting, preparing, serving, and enjoying fine food “. Today, food not only is a pivotal element of tourism destinations but is also an important source of identity formation in post-modern societies. Today, food has emerged as a unique system of production, distribution, and offering that can be used to describe the gastronomy as a cultural industry. The value chain of this industry has been expanded so that it includes a wide spectrum of economic activities including tourism (Hjalager & Richards, 2003).

The strong correlation between food and identity is such that every effort for altering food behaviors is regarded as a raid to the national and personal identity. Hughes suggests a natural relation between the land of a region, its environmental conditions, and the character of its food and that the geographic diversity leads to uniqueness in heritage and tradition of cooking (Hughes, 1995). This correlation between place and gastronomy has also shown itself in tourism. Munsters calls gastronomic paths as a cultural attraction and product. These paths reflect the connection between agricultural cycles and local and seasonal food production such that the seasoning of most of these products is concurrent with the main tourism season (Munsters, 1996). Also, these food paths can form a link between cultural and agricultural resources of a region and bring together the members of a gastronomy value chain.

Gastronomy has a strong relationship with local food production and can produce considerable economic value added. As the production of local food depends upon agriculture, hunting, and fishing, tourism can generate not only a market for final products but also a potential for more added value through expansion of tourist experiences in the form of agritourism and native entrepreneurial activities. In this regard, gastronomic tourism can lead to the development of local communities by increasing demand for the local food experience, stimulating innovation in the production and delivery of food, increasing the attractiveness of the destination and, as a result, preventing migration and enhancing the destination image. Also, food has a significant role as “souvenir“ in addition to the focus of the tourist experience (Richards, 2012).

Gastronomic tourism plays an important role in shaping the security of the destination (Wahlqvist, 1999); because tourists are now seeking the experience of eco-gastronomy (i.e., a food that has environmental sensitivities) and preparing and supplying it enriches both the mind and

the body (Scarpato, 2000). All this suggests that today's meal has become a special experience for tourists, rather than mere activity.

Food behaviors are intertwined with the culture of societies such that the time of eating, method of eating, and what people eat are all the distinctive features of cultures. Local food inspires a love for the tradition, is a part of the local heritage, is a credible sign of a tradition of life and a sign of human reconciliation with their environment; thus, it can be a pleasant and inner experience for the tourist. It is of note that in the era of experience, the nature of the complementary and interconnected relationship between tourism and gastronomy is very complex. So, if elements such as services, cleanliness and sanitation, decor, lighting, air conditioning, room size and shape, and price for a customer are disappointing, his meal experience would also be distorted.

However, the sustainable development of gastronomic tourism is not just about preserving the past, but also the creation of the future. The power of gastronomy as a cultural resource depends on its capacity for change. Gastronomy is a rich cultivated land for creative tourism (Richards & Raymond, 2000). Tourists are increasingly interested in learning and increasing their cultural capital to create new food experiences. Therefore, one of the most important challenges in the development of gastronomic tourism is tradition and innovation, which often act as opposing poles. Here, traditional culture can act as an important reservoir of cultural heritage and provide a basis for innovation.

According to Table 3, Gastronomic tourism has undergone four developmental stages. These stages reflect the degree of complexity of the value chain of the gastronomy (Hjalager & Richards, 2003), a value chain, and network, which includes economic, social, and humanistic values.

**Table 3. The development stages of gastronomy in tourism**

	Stage 1 (native development)	Stage 2 (horizontal development)	Stage 3 (Vertical development)	Stage 4 (Oblique development)
Main resource	Food production	Services	Entrepreneurship	Knowledge
Tourist behavior	Enjoying food	Experiencing food	Experiencing food	Exchange of knowledge and skill about food
Main strategies	Constant	Obligatory collaboration with existing organizations	Creating new local structures	Creating new global structures

### **6. The components of spirituality in the creative tourism of gastronomy**

Based on the mentioned issues, it can be seen that although the two areas of the creative tourism of gastronomy and spirituality and spiritual perception have their own spaces, they are also subjected to considerable overlapping domains. Table 4 illustrates in detail the activities that combine these two features. By multiplying the components of spiritual perception (i.e., “comfort and satisfaction“, “giving meaning to life“, “interaction with others“, “friendship with environment and nature“, and “surrender and thanksgiving“) by creative tourism components (i.e., “authentic experiences“, “active participation“, “learning; development of capacity and skill “, “development of self-esteem and self-awareness“, “development of new products and processes“, and “development of new spaces“) we can discover the components of spiritual perception of creative tourism of gastronomy through the resources and opinions of researchers. In other words, the points specified in the third column of Table 4 are the activities of the creative tourism of the gastronomy, which can also be regarded as spiritual perception.

**Table 4. The components of spiritual perception in the creative tourism of gastronomy**

Components of spirituality	Components of creative tourism	Creative tourism of gastronomy	Reference
Comfort and satisfaction	Developing new products and processes	Slow tourism, Slow city, and Slow food <sup>1</sup>	Rasht Municipality, 2015 Jarábková & Hamada, 2012 Suet Leng & Badarulzaman, 2014 <a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Smart City; Facilitated interaction and interaction between host and guest using smart technology	Sadeghi et al., 2015 Haji –Nowrouzi et al., 2012 Akbari-Motlagh, 2010 Jarábková & Hamada, 2012 Lee et al., 2015 Chang et al., 2014 <a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Mixing art in serving food; live music while eating	Haji-Hosseini et al., 2013 Sadeghi et al., 2015 Rasht Municipality, 2015 <a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Local food centers with goals for access to healthy food, reduced waste, increased job opportunities, justice, security, and food innovation	<a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Gaming tourism	Richards & Wilson, 2008
		Supplementary products and services for gastrostomy with IT industries, agriculture, energy, etc.	Fernandez, 2010
		Quality control of the gastronomy value chain	Hjalager & Richards, 2003 Richards.greg, 2014b Lee et al., 2015 Jian-Por et al., 2016

<sup>1</sup>In the postmodern philosophy, “Slow philosophy” – as a reaction to high speed in industrial societies – states that “slowness” in life leads to a plethora of pleasures. Slow life is always more conceptual, ethical, and more aesthetically pleasing. With slowness people discover new tastes and colors. This concept has been specifically featured in “Slow Foods”. This approach, i.e., “Slow tourism”, also means a kind of emancipation and drowning in the destination; a sort of “tramp” in the positive sense that the tourist has a sufficient opportunity to deal with people, local food and customs, and pleasure. Some people interpret slowness in tourism “both the pleasure of reaching the destination and the pleasure of staying at the origin”.

Components of spirituality	Components of creative tourism	Creative tourism of gastronomy	Reference
Giving meaning to life	Learning, Development of Capacity-Skills	college of organic agriculture	<a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Ethnic and food festivals	<a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		The international flow of ideas, ideas, and knowledge in food sciences	<a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Exchange of knowledge between chefs, students of food sciences, and farmers	<a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Training of cooking skills and culture of plants to tourists	Fernandez, 2010 Lee et al., 2015 Fernandes, 2011 Bardone et al., 2013
		Creative tourism as a complementary training activity for university and school students	Fernandez, 2010
		Backstreet Academy; the close relationship between tourists and artists of gastronomy	Richards .greg, 2014b Rabazauskaitė, 2015
		Scientific meetings on sustainable development	Rasht Municipality, 2015 <a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Training learned and skilled labor force in the agricultural sector	Rahimi et al., 2012 Sheikh Beigloo, 2015 Lee & Lee, 2015 Hjalager &, Richards, 2003
		Higher education in the field of gastronomy; sustainable agriculture and development; expanding academic exchange programs for university students and industry professionals in the field of gastronomy	Jian-Por et al., 2016 Haji-Hosseini et al., 2013 Abdoli et al., 2015 Lee & Lee, 2015 <a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Nurturing professional workforce in the field of gastronomy	Lee & Lee, 2015
		Cooking school	Rasht Municipality, 2015 Richards Greg, 2014b <a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>

Components of spirituality	Components of creative tourism	Creative tourism of gastronomy	Reference
		Global gastronomy center (foundation); food technology and innovation with the aim of globalizing of food traditions and developing a model for the sustainable development of the food industry	<a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Specialized exhibition of food, related industries, and technology.	Rasht Municipality, 2015 <a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Research in innovative food systems and strengthening the urban-rural mutual interaction; food and food laboratories safety and security; collaborative research with other creative cities of gastronomy	Rasht Municipality, 2015 Hjalager & Richards, 2003 <a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a> Suet Leng & Badarulzaman, 2014
		Knowledge management of gastronomy; knowledge development and facilitation of innovation; promoting knowledge and skills in host-guest interaction in the context of new technologies; exchanging successful experiences to support local food producers	Haji-Hosseini et al., 2013 <a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Workshop for linking design, handicrafts, gastronomy, and tourism for fostering innovation	<a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Film and Book Festivals in the culinary culture	<a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		International participation in the field of gastronomy and agriculture; collaboration with other creative cities for the development of resources and exchange of knowledge and food experiences	<a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		protecting intellectual property to preserve food science and cooking traditions	Jian-Por et al., 2016 Lee & Lee, 2015 Hjalager & Richards, 2003

Components of spirituality	Components of creative tourism	Creative tourism of gastronomy	Reference
	Development of self-esteem and self-awareness	Developing and guaranteeing the right to individual creativity	Haji-Hosseini et al., 2013 Abdoli et al., 2015 Rasht Municipality, 2015 <a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a> Korez-Vide, 2013
		Historical heritage linking with gastronomy, linking a tangible heritage with intangible one	<a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Protecting the identity of the city and preserving traditional patterns and promoting local culture through cultural projects in the field of gastronomy	Akbari-Motlagh, 2010
	Authentic Experiences	Museum of food and gastronomy	Rasht Municipality, 2015 <a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Integration of gastronomy, tourism, and local economy	Hjalager & Richards, 2003
		Local art and handicraft exhibitions related to gastronomy; local art mix with local nutrition	Jian-Por et al., 2016 Rasht Municipality, 2015 <a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Pedestrian and pathways of gastronomy	Jarábková & Hamada, 2012
		The presence of creative chefs	<a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Gastronomy festivals; annual culinary events	Rasht Municipality, 2015 <a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Technology and innovation in the field of medicinal plants; plant collection and natural treatment	Bardone et al., 2013
		The creation of the brand of gastronomy; the promotion of food traditions	Suet Leng & Badarulzaman, 2014 Richards, G., 2012

Components of spirituality	Components of creative tourism	Creative tourism of gastronomy	Reference
		The gastronomy observatory for the collection and analysis of information and knowledge	<a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Expansion of meal experiences in specialized restaurants	Hjalager &, Richards, 2003 Richards.greg, 2014b
		Gastronomy event or competition to support innovative systems	Jarábková & Hamada, 2012 Lee et al.,2015 Richards.greg, 2014b Richards, G., 2012 Suet Leng & Badarulzaman, 2014 <a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Management of value chain, innovation, and technology in industrial food production	Korez-Vide, 2013 Hjalager & Richards, 2003 <a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Management of food and agricultural value chain, innovation and technology in organic food production	<a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		New technologies in food storage and packaging industry; food as a souvenir	Rasht Municipality, 2015 Hjalager & Richards, 2003 Richards. G., 2014b Richards, G., 2012 Rabzauskaitė, 2015 <a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		A pervasive presence of cooking colporteur and mobile restaurants	Suet Leng & Badarulzaman, 2014
Interaction with the others	Active Participation	Native and traditional boarding halls; coffee houses and table nurseries	Rasht Municipality, 2015 <a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Accommodation of tourists in local homes; linking and facilitating the communication of tourists with local people	Richards.greg, 2014a

Components of spirituality	Components of creative tourism	Creative tourism of gastronomy	Reference
		International collaboration and partnership with other creative cities in the world; creating a public discourse for the successful experiences of gastronomy	<a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Annual food festival with the participation of chefs from other creative cities	<a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		NGOs, local institutions, and creative networks	Hjalager & Richards, 2003 <a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		cheerful and creative culinary community	<a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		the multiplicity of shops representing local culinary culture; the development of traditional, agriculture, marine, and organic foods	Nelson, 2015 Suet Leng & Badarulzaman, 2014 <a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Empowerment and participation of women in the field of gastronomy and related creative industries	Rasht Municipality, 2015 <a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Expansion of cooperation in the value chain of gastronomy (i.e., farmers, chefs, craftsmen, restaurants, and retailers)	<a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Visiting food industry factories	Jarábková & Hamada, 2012
		Show programs; storytelling as a powerful creative participatory behavior in tourism of gastronomy	Rasht Municipality, 2015 Richards & Marques, 2012 Pera, 2017 <a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Gastronomy creative tours	Lee et al. 2015
		Free food exhibitions	Rasht Municipality, 2015 <a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Vitality and increasing the index of hope and happiness; cultural vitality; the responsibility of the local community	Haji-Hosseini et al., 2013 Sadeghi et al., 2015 Sheikh Beigloo, 2015
		Strengthening intercultural dialogue in specialty kitchens	<a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>

Components of spirituality	Components of creative tourism	Creative tourism of gastronomy	Reference
		Creative industries and clusters of industrial gastronomy; terriors; local networks of the value chain of gastronomy	Korez-Vide, 2013 Lee et al., 2015 Richards & Wilson, 2008 <a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Beaches and floating markets for food on the rivers	Wattanacharoensil & Sakdiyakorn, 2016
		Tolerance; cultural and racial diversity and multiplicity; high level of tolerance	<a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Social equality; direct involvement of the local community in tourism of gastronomy and special protection of vulnerable groups	Rahimi et al., 2012 Korez-Vide, 2013 <a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
Friendship with the environment and nature	Development of new products and processes	Fishing tours; hunting tours; tours of mineral springs	Lee et al., 2015
		“One day at the farm“ event	Bardone et al., 2013
		Farm tourism; agricultural tourism	Tan et al., 2013 Bardone et al., 2013
		Shortening the supply chain by supporting agricultural entrepreneurs	<a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Innovative systems in farm and garden management	Akbari-Motlagh, 2010 <a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Promotion of traditional fishing; an opportunity for sustainable harvesting of marine resources	<a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Protecting indigenous plants as “living cultural assets“; promoting their use	<a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Systems for the collection and recycling of waste and sewage	Fernandes, 2011 Fernandez, 2010
		Farm parks and farmhouses	<a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a> Hjalager & Richards, 2003
		Excursion in eco-parks	<a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>

Components of spirituality	Components of creative tourism	Creative tourism of gastronomy	Reference
	Learning; development of capacity-skills	Teaching the optimal use of resources for locals and tourists	Fernandez, 2010
		Promotion of balanced and environmentally friendly approaches in the sustainable production and utilization of local food sources	Khatiri et al., 2015 Suet Leng & Badarulzaman, 2014 <a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
		Promoting sustainable agriculture; public awareness of environmentally friendly farming practices	<a href="https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities">https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities</a>
Thanksgiving, surrender	Developing new spaces	Prospects for understanding gastronomy	Hjalager & Richards, 2003

## 7. Discussion and Conclusion

With the discussion and reflection on the above, it can be summarized and concluded in three axes.

The three axes of this research, the following conclusion can be made: First, the most serious and strongest verse from Quranic verses and Islamic texts regarding the food is “The man must consider what he eats”<sup>1</sup>, which commands humans to look at their food carefully. One of the interpreters of the Quran says about the verse: “Invitation is to look at the revelations of creation in order to stimulate thought and consolidate faith. Therefore, a person becomes familiar with the mysteries of the mystic and the rules of creation with his sense, intuition, and research, then with these senses and thought and reasoning will look at the wisdom in the world view and find the ultimate purpose. Hence, with the excellence of thought and ethics and the understanding the secrecy of nature, a human can organize its own life and earnings, and enjoy the latent benefits of the universe. All these are evident from looking and thinking in the universe. If the jurisprudents praised the Quran’s explicit

<sup>1</sup> Surah Abass, verse 24: فَلْيَنْظُرِ الْإِنْسَانُ إِلَى طَعَامِهِ

commandments of thought and looking as commands and obligations and open a door to the jurisprudence in this regard, the condition of the Muslims would be much better than now (Taleghani, 1984).

Therefore, watching and looking at food is divine and spiritual, which has the capacity to transform the lives of human beings. This concept manifests itself in the new paradigm of tourism, which is called creative tourism. Some thinkers in this area do not regard creative tourism as necessarily traveling to new places but looking with new eyes. They believe that, apart from the benefits of tourism for a destination, this new mode of tourism creates an orbit of wisdom in places (Antonio & Justyna, 2014). This new look also includes both creative tourists and creative destinations, who can look at their identity, natural resources, food, history, and traditions with their new eyes, attract new visitors, communicate with them, and exchange valuable experiences.

Second, Naraghi – a contemporary philosopher – believes that in a spiritual perspective the eating is a process in which some sort of unity is created between mankind and the world. Also, according to Rumi, “bread turns to life” and a stranger allows entering the deeper layers of human existence to ultimately become a part of existence. The result of this alienation with the world is nutrition and gaining energy, strength, and growth (Naraghi, 2018a).

In this way, the creative tourists of gastronomy in a deep spiritual perception, as their bodies receive food, experience a kind of unity with the universe in a bigger sense that includes interaction and living with the local community, friendship with nature and the environment, and the perception of pleasure and tranquility.

Lastly, by multiplying components of spiritual perception by the components of creative tourism of gastronomy – that was done in this research – with thematic analysis, we could illustrate the spiritual perception in the creative tourism of gastronomy (i.e., food, cooking art, and nutrition science). This perception is at its most complete wordings, a deep look at what we eat.

The components of spiritual perception in the creative tourism of gastronomy, which are expressed in the third column of Table 4, to the authors' claims, are the minimums that can be presented in this area. Although at first glance, some may seem more relevant and appropriate, but with a bit of understanding of the field of spirituality that some thinkers believe in and at the beginning of this article were discussed, these components can be activities that have shaped and promoted the

creative tourism of gastronomy and also have brought spiritual perceptions to tourists and create spiritual experiences for them.

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