

SAVOR THE WORLD: A MULTICULTURAL GASTRONOMIC FESTIVAL AT THE CROSSROADS OF ECONOMIC, CULTURAL AND SUSTAINABLE ISSUES

Marie PLOUGOULEN¹², Felix H. ARION^{2#}

¹ L'Ecole supérieure des Agricultures. Master of Science Food Identity, 55 Rue Rabelais, 49000 Angers, France

² Department of Economic Sciences, University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Cluj-Napoca, 3-5 Mănăştur St., 400372, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Abstract

This study investigates the feasibility and impact of launching a multicultural culinary festival, "Savor the World". The aim is to promote cultural diversity, sustainable food practices, and community engagement through a gastronomic event. The research includes a literature review, SWOT and PESTEL analyses, and case studies of similar festivals. The results show strong public interest in intercultural food experiences and increasing demand for sustainable and inclusive events. The SWOT analysis highlights advantages such as Bretagne' central location, cultural openness, and tourism potential, but also identifies threats like weather uncertainty and funding challenges. The PESTEL analysis confirms a supportive socio-political and economic environment. The study concludes that the project is well-aligned with current societal trends and presents real potential for success. Effective communication, partnerships with local and international stakeholders, and inclusive programming are key to ensuring its positive impact. "Savor the World" could become a model for promoting culinary diversity and local development while fostering intercultural dialogue and sustainability.

Keywords: Food events, cultural diversity, culinary tourism, event management

#Corresponding author: Felix H. ARION (felixarion@usamvcluj.ro)

INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly globalized world, food has emerged as a powerful vehicle for cultural exchange, identity expression, and community cohesion. Culinary practices not only meet nutritional needs but also serve as markers of cultural heritage and social construction (Mintz & Du Bois, 2002). They help shape social dynamics, traditions, and identities, particularly in multicultural contexts.

Moreover, culinary events such as food festivals have become influential platforms for promoting gastronomic diversity and encouraging intercultural dialogue. These festivals enable participants to explore a wide variety of culinary traditions, fostering understandings and appreciation of other cultures (Heldke, 2003). In this sense, food becomes a means of cultural mediation, a universal language that transcends linguistic and social barriers.

Despite France's renowned gastronomic reputation—highlighted by its local produce, Michelin-starred chefs, and UNESCO-recognized culinary traditions—there is a notable lack of large-scale festivals dedicated to the diversity of global cuisines. Most French gastronomic events

focus on regional or national specialties, often centered around specific products (wines, cheeses, etc.), without fully embracing contemporary cultural plurality. This gap presents a unique opportunity to create an innovative event that celebrates culinary diversity while fostering intercultural exchange grounded in inclusion, curiosity, and mutual respect. Such a project responds to a growing societal demand for participatory, sustainable, and multicultural culinary experiences.

Gastronomy is increasingly recognized as a key driver of territorial development, offering immersive experiences that showcase local and international food cultures while strengthening community engagement. Festivals are seen as agents of social change, capable of raising awareness about sustainability, diversity, and solidarity (Organ et al., 2015). It is within this context that the Savor the World project was conceived—to celebrate the world's culinary diversity and promote intercultural dialogue through food. Unlike traditional gastronomic events, this festival integrates educational components, interactive workshops, community gatherings, and eco-responsible commitments to create a holistic experience that is

simultaneously sensory, social, and educational. The choice of Brittany for the inaugural editions is motivated by its rich festival tradition and the opportunity to address a current gap in large-scale culinary events in the region.

The hypothesis guiding this work is that such an immersive culinary festival can enhance cultural awareness, promote sustainable practices, and strengthen social cohesion at both local and international levels. The objectives of this article are to present the conceptualization and design of the Savor the World festival, to analyze its feasibility and potential impact, and to discuss the challenges and opportunities associated with its implementation.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The Savor the World project was designed through a qualitative analysis combining regional, cultural and tourism needs with a review of existing culinary festivals. A comparative study of similar festivals in France and abroad informed the development of the concept.

Market analysis focused on experiential and gastronomic tourism trends assessed potential audience size and interest. Brittany was selected based on its festival tradition, infrastructure, and the lack of large-scale culinary events.

A business model was created to evaluate the feasibility of the project. Operational viability was assessed through a SWOT analysis addressing logistical, financial, cultural, and regulatory challenges.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Feasibility and financial viability of Savor the World

The business model developed for the Savor the World festival is based on an assumed diversification of financial flows, an approach often deemed essential to ensure the medium- and long-term sustainability of cultural events (Organ et al., 2015). Expected revenues combine on-site spending by festival-goers (catering, merchandising), exhibitor registration fees, institutional support, private partnerships and subsidies from the cultural and tourism sectors. This plurality of funding sources reduces dependence on a single source of income, thus limiting economic risk.

With this in mind, and in keeping with the project's values of inclusion and accessibility, admission to the festival will be free, with no

ticket sales. This choice, in line with the observations of the 2024 Festivals Barometer (Weezevent), reflects a growing trend to make culture accessible without economic barriers, encouraging diverse and spontaneous attendance. Existing examples such as London's Notting Hill Carnival illustrate the viability of this strategy: a large-scale event, free to the public, and supported by a mix of sponsors, public subsidies and on-site sales.

However, the fact that the event is free of charge does not obviate the need for heavy initial investment, particularly in temporary facilities, the complex logistics involved in international participation, and compliance with health and environmental standards. These upstream costs require significant financial contributions, which could potentially block the project if external financing is not secured in time. This type of structural fragility is frequently cited in analyses of cultural festival management (Organ et al., 2015). Hence the importance of establishing solid partnerships with local authorities and businesses, who will benefit from the festival's economic and symbolic spin-offs.

SWOT Analysis: operational strengths and challenges

The SWOT analysis of the project highlights several major strengths. One of the main ones is the conceptual originality of Savor the World, which goes beyond the classic framework of a gastronomic festival focused on a particular terroir or specialty. By combining an immersive dimension, sustainability awareness and an educational approach, the festival is part of a new generation of more committed events, in tune with a societal demand for meaning (Bessière, 1998). This unique proposition is a powerful differentiator.

Brittany's location also represents a strategic lever. Rich in cultural and festive traditions, the region has the necessary infrastructure to host large-scale events. This territorial context provides a fertile breeding ground for forging solid links with local players, a decisive factor in anchoring the project and ensuring it a certain legitimacy (Bessière, 1998).

Despite these assets, there are a number of weaknesses that need to be considered. The open-air setting makes the festival vulnerable to the vagaries of the weather, which can impact on attendance and logistical costs. The coordination of numerous international players

adds a layer of managerial complexity, requiring rigorous planning and effective management tools. What's more, the current lack of awareness of the Savor the World brand implies a substantial communications effort, both to arouse the curiosity of the public and to gain the trust of partners.

Table 1

SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
Unique immersive and participatory concept	Dependence on local spending
Accessibility (no ticketing)	Complex logistics and cultural diversity
Located in Brittany, a festive and tourist region	Difficulty attracting partners without a reputation
Diversification of revenues (on-site sales, sponsors)	
Opportunities	Threats
Strong trend towards immersive festivals	Unfavorable weather
	Financial risk without ticketing

One of the central challenges lies in the accurate representation of culinary cultures, to avoid any risk of caricature or cultural appropriation. Mintz & Du Bois (2002) stress the importance of informed and respectful mediation, involving cultural experts and representatives of the communities concerned. This requirement, while high, also represents an opportunity to reinforce the educational value and ethical credibility of the festival.

Finally, the need for substantial initial capital is a lasting constraint. It reinforces dependence on hybrid (public-private) partnerships and specific aid schemes, particularly in the fields of culture, international cooperation and tourism.

Market opportunities and threats

The market environment offers a remarkable window of opportunity for a festival with a multicultural focus. While many French gastronomic events still focus on showcasing emblematic local products (wines, cheeses, charcuterie), Savor the World is positioned as a space for transnational culinary exploration. This positioning responds to a growing demand, particularly among younger urban generations,

for authentic experiences and exotic discoveries (Heldke, 2003).

The festival's cosmopolitan approach fills a gap in France's cultural offering, offering not only tastings but also a veritable narrative of culinary cultures, opening up a space for intercultural dialogue. Mintz & Du Bois (2002) remind us that food is a powerful vector of mutual understanding and inclusion, hence the strategic interest in building a festival that assumes this societal mission.

The development opportunities don't stop there. Creating synergies with training establishments (hotel schools, universities), craft producers, chefs and cultural ambassadors can amplify the festival's reach. These partnerships reinforce the credibility of the project, while diversifying activities and target audiences. What's more, being rooted in eco-responsible practices is a high value-added differentiation criterion (Desai, 2021), particularly appreciated by consumers aware of environmental issues.

However, several threats need to be anticipated. Competition from other, sometimes better-established, cultural events can hamper the project's visibility, particularly during the launch phase. Health risks, such as those revealed by the COVID-19 pandemic, call for rigorous safety planning and can result in significant additional costs. Added to this are regulatory uncertainties (food safety, hygiene, waste management) and economic

A strategy of anticipation, incorporating crisis scenarios and rapid adjustment mechanisms, should therefore accompany the project right from the start.

Implications for cultural and social impact

Beyond economic and organizational considerations, Savor the World aims to play an active role in promoting cultural diversity through gastronomy. By choosing food as its main vector, the festival becomes a space for intercultural mediation and raising awareness of the richness of culinary heritages. For Mintz & Du Bois (2002) and Heldke (2003), food practices are powerful markers of identity and a privileged means of cultural transmission. Their staging in a festive and educational context helps reinforce social cohesion and cultural empathy.

The planned activities - workshops, demonstrations, debates - are designed to encourage the active participation of the public. This immersion fosters a sensitive

understanding of contemporary issues, whether related to sustainability, food sovereignty or cultural appropriation. It also involves visitors in a reflective process, making their experience more engaging and formative (Desai, 2021).

The fact that Savor the World is based in Brittany is no coincidence: it reflects a desire to combine local and global identities. By welcoming cuisines from around the world to a region with a strong gastronomic heritage, Savor the World promotes both openness and tradition. This dual dynamic can help revitalize the image of culinary festivals, which are still sometimes perceived as rigid or elitist. Bessi re (1998) points out that this type of initiative promotes local development, attracts quality tourism and stimulates short circuits.

Finally, by integrating a strong eco-responsible approach, the festival meets current environmental expectations, reinforcing its legitimacy with local authorities and the public. This environmental ethic is not simply a label,

CONCLUSIONS

The project demonstrates a real potential for success in a region like Brittany, where culinary heritage and tourism are strong assets. The SWOT analysis confirms that the concept benefits from current social trends such as sustainability, cultural discovery and experiential tourism.

Identified weaknesses such as weather dependency or coordination complexity can be mitigated by careful planning and strong partnerships.

The PESTEL analysis reveals a favorable environment for launching such a project, particularly due to sociocultural and environmental factors.

The initiative combines economic, educational, and cultural value, making it relevant for both local development and consumer interest.

but a central component of the project's identity stages via sensors. This could further lower the barrier for beginners and bring fermentation into the realm of precision cooking and health tech (Adebo, 2023). Brands offering compatible cultures and digital fermentation support could gain early-mover advantage in this space.

As awareness grows in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as post-Brexit UK, new pockets of opportunity are forming. These regions often have strong cultural ties to fermentation but lack modern, accessible tools. Liquid starter products can reintroduce ancestral food wisdom with modern convenience, especially when paired with storytelling that honors local traditions.

In essence, the next decade of fermentation innovation will not be about simply selling cultures—it will be about empowering a new generation of fermenters through knowledge, tools, and culture (in every sense of the word).

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