

## INTRODUCTION

The rise of gastronomic tourism has led to food markets appearing as a new type of resource and tool for the regeneration of urban centers. This interest has appeared not only because cuisine plays an important role in everyday activities (for both tourists and residents) but also because it is an element of local identity building and therefore of cultural specificity that appeals to both **residents and tourists** (Hjalager and Richards, 2002; Richards, 2012). Therefore Kivela and Crofts (2006) suggest that consumption of food and beverages is a key reason for visiting a particular destination. In fact, local foods can spark a particularly noticeable interest among tourists because they are considered ‘flagship’ products that capture the typical nature and identity of a particular place (Bessi re, 1998; Urry, 1990). Consequently, food markets attract the interest and attendance of travellers (Silkes, 2012) **as excellent places to get to know specific features of local culture.**

**Due to the rising interest in urban food markets,** the main purpose of this article is to analyze the motivational dimensions of tourists during their visit and their relation to satisfaction. **After a thorough literature review, the following factors have been selected for analysis of their influence on visitors' satisfaction: *escape from routine, cultural experience, prestige and food market involvement.*** Also, and as the original aspect of this study, food neophilia is recognized as having an important moderation effect on the relationship between motivation and satisfaction. A survey done at the Boqueria Market in Barcelona is the paradigmatic example used to explain the motivational dimensions of its visitors, filling a gap in existing knowledge on tourists' interest in local food markets.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Food tourism and food markets

Gastronomic and culinary tourism is defined as trips that focus on exploring and enjoying meals and beverages typical of their destinations in order to experience local culture. Therefore it is a kind of tourism that connects travel, leisure, and food (Boniface, 2003; Smith & Xiao, 2008) and provides travelers with memorable experiences (Hashimoto & Telfer, 2006; Okumus, Kock, Scantbury, & Okumus, 2013). Thus, cuisine is no longer just one aspect of the tourism experience, but a key aspect. Cuisine has evolved from having a superficial or supplementary relationship to the tourist trip to playing a central role in the design of travel plans. **Those enthusiastic tourists motivated by novel food, new cooking styles, and unfamiliar tastes, plan their trips taking into account the gastronomy of the destination.**

"Culinary" and "gastronomic" tourism are often used as synonyms. Both concepts cover the cooking skills and the local foods that provide insights into a destination's cuisine (Okumus et al, 2013). Therefore, elements of culture and heritage belong to the food experience, including shopping (farmer's markets and food markets), and cultural events featuring food and other local traditions.

In short, the gastronomic, gourmet or culinary tourism is a concept that combines tourism with food and emphasizes local food as one of the most naturally cherished cultural aspects of society (Corigliano & Baggio, 2002). So, destinations have begun to

recognize that food and local cuisine are a fundamental part of their intangible heritage, demonstrate features of their national and local culture and allow them to develop as an international brand (Fox, 2007; Okumus, Okumus & McKercher, 2007). Food is a multidimensional cultural artifact capable of linking issues of place and identity (Everett, 2009), thus food market visits may provide a better understanding of differences between one's own and the host culture. Therefore it is important to highlight the importance of understanding the 'cultural distance' (McKercher and Chow, 2001) between tourists' native food culture and the host food culture in affecting tourist food consumption (Mak et al., 2012). Local cuisine is analogous to a cultural attraction, and its appreciation may be affected by the concept of cultural distance (Chang et al., 2011). McKercher and Chow (2001) propose that the greater the cultural distance, the greater the tourists' interest in participating in cultural tourism activities.

At this point, we have to draw attention to "*food-market lovers*". This proposed new category has to do with "foodies" (Morgan, Watson & Hemmington, 2008). Foodie is a term used to describe and conceptualize the current trend or lifestyle linked to food: "food-as-lifestyle", linked to the people who devote time and energy to eating and learning about good food and delicacies. This interest is interpreted as an art form, leisure activity and source of social status and privilege. There are a variety of foodies, from those whose food preferences are casual to those who pursue perfect culinary experiences. In any case, they tend to shy away from instant coffee, canned foods and restaurant chains. However, research and theory building on this demand side is limited. Paolini (2000) distinguished between "gastronauts" (tourists exclusively dedicated to gastronomic experiences) and "foodtrotters" (wine tourists who want other experiences). Also, foodies can be segmented according to what, or how, they want to eat. Hall et al.

(2003) described a range of interests or involvement levels from "culinary to gastronomic to gourmet tourism". Therefore, a new category is added: *food-market lovers*, who spend their time visiting this kind of urban facilities. As Crespi-Vallbona and Dimitrovski argue (2016, 13-14), this typology of food market visitors are motivated by cultural experiences, architectural uniqueness of site and experiencing the local atmosphere. Thus, their level of satisfaction is connected to the possibility of experiencing a unique site and simultaneously performing their daily food market routines: interaction with local producers and vendors as one of the best ways to become acquainted with local culture and heritage.

Gastronomic tourism resources are classified into four types, according to Ignatov and Smith (2006) and Smith and Xiao (2008): a) facilities (building / space); b) activities (consumer, business, education / observation); c) events (festival, event, etc.); d) and organizations (restaurants, associations, etc.).

Food markets have become an important tourist attraction because of their facilities as well as the activities they offer inside the place. Normally, the buildings where food markets are located are of historic and artistic interest. Furthermore, on the inside people can engage in various activities: observe and buy goods at the different stalls, consume typical food and beverages, be in direct contact with local people, participate in cooking-shows, etc. This suggests that tourists, especially non-institutionalized (Cohen, 1972) or allocentric tourists (Plog, 1974), may be particularly interested in exploring local cuisine by visiting food markets. Mitchell and Hall (2003), basing their typology of food tourist behavior on Plog's typology, establish the following categories: Gastronomes (high interest/involvement), Indigenous foodies (high and moderate

interest/involvement) on the neophiles/allocentrics side, and 'Tourist' foodies (low interest/involvement) and Familiar foods (low interest/involvement) on the neophobes/psychocentrics side. According to Mitchell and Hall (2003) respondents with high level of food neophilia may be perceived as food neophilic/allocentric.

According to Tourism Studies OECD (2012), concerning food and tourist experience Spain has become a gastronomic destination because of its regional gastronomic diversity and high quality food products and gourmet experiences. In the case of Barcelona, food markets are positioned as new facilities capable of forging relevant culinary tourism experiences because the city's food and tourism image have a complementary and existential relationship (as rated by Quan and Wang, 2004). The paradigmatic case is the Boqueria Market, located at the historic center of the city.

### **Food market motivation**

Tourist motivation related to food markets has not been expanded upon. Consumption of food and beverages is the core experience for food tourists. Consumption is not limited to the act of eating or drinking. It also includes three more experience dimensions: the cognitive experience (learning about culture and cuisine, with authenticity being an essential aspect), the affective experience (socializing with partners and friends; community with like-minded foodies) and conative (behavioral) experience with appropriate activity (special events or special places) (Getz and Robinson, 2014). According to Fields (2002) there are four categories of motivators for consumption of food and beverages in a tourist destination: "physical motivators", "cultural motivators", "interpersonal motivators" and "status and prestige motivators".

Kim et al. (2009) found nine motivational factors affecting local food consumption: an exciting experience, escape from routine, health concerns, acquiring knowledge, an authentic experience, togetherness, prestige, sensory appeal and physical environment.

All of these factors can be looked at to find out if they are useful in explaining visits to local food markets. We have adopted this approach, as well as the experience dimensions, as a model with the goal of revealing motivational factors and constructing a research model of travel motivations linked to local food markets.

The factors that have been studied for their key influence on visitors' satisfaction in food tourism, specifically in the context of food markets, are: *escape from routine; cultural experience; prestige, food-market involvement and food neophilia.*

### *Escape from routine*

Cohen and Avielli (2004) identify two main stances characteristic of vacation time: a recreational position, the so-called break, and a position in continuity with everyday routine. If the break with daily life involves the discovery of new cuisines, it is considered a memorable experience, which influences the quality and success of the trip. To food-curious tourists, food discovery marks out their itineraries and reflects their quest for cultural identity and enrichment. Hjalager and Richards (2003) recognized that some tourists interested in tasting local food seek to escape from their everyday eating habits, through activities such as food shopping. 'Distancing' oneself from everyday reality is a necessary tool for managing everyday routines, enabling us to feel that we are not creatures enmeshed by routine (Elands and Lengkeek, 2012). Therefore, escape from daily routines or the experience of different things is another

important motivational factor related to food consumption. Several authors (Liang et al., 2013; Kim and Eves, 2012; Chang and Yuan, 2011; Kim et al., 2009; Fields et al., 2002) investigated the importance of food as a tool for getting away from the usual environment. Major travel motive for non institutionalized (Cohen, 1972) and allocentric (Plog, 1974) tourists is escape from the mundane, an attempt to get away from the crowds and noise of mass tourism and the preference for exploring destinations on their own (Chang et al., 2011). Therefore, visiting local food markets can be considered as a way of escaping from routine and having a new experience, completely or quite different from the markets back at home (Silkes, 2012). Food-market visiting may be seen as anti-stress therapy, enjoying the market crowds and noise blending in with other sensory pleasures in perfect harmony. Visitors escape from their routine, because any market has its own and particular way of displaying goods. The essence or involvement of any market is the same: colors, people interacting, food, stalls, closed building or open-air market, etc. but, there are lot of cultural aspects, related to local idiosyncrasy that explain why tourists use this resource to escape from their own food-market routine. Even the atmosphere, the ambiance is different, because of the local imprint, due to the identity of the place. This stance coincides with Urry's argument (2002) which postulates that tourist experience involves a variety of sensescapes, including soundscapes, smellscapes, tastescapes, and touch, or as Everett (2008) stated a plethora of indulgent multisensory experiences. Thus food-market visits provide a relaxing experience by walking through food market alleys, enjoying sensory attractions, and at same time escaping from everyday concerns. In conclusion, we propose the following hypothesis:

H1a: Escape from routine has a positive influence on satisfaction.

### ***Cultural experience***

For many tourists, culture is a main factor when choosing to visit a certain destination. More specifically, tasting foodstuffs, with accompanying explanations, is an important aspect of the tourist food experience. It entails the discovery and appropriation of a foreign culture, of "the other": the local, the rural, the vendor, the farmer...Exchange, dialogue, discussion, the creation of social links with producers are seen as essential to the tourist food quest. Open-air markets are seen as places for exchange, sociability and a way of accessing local culture. Thus, food markets may be seen as cultural attractions, with the capacity to enhance cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1997). It is the food that creates this link with the unfamiliar "other". Markets also help to develop a sense of community pride and ownership. The people who use them can start to see them as centers of the community, which foster a sense of belonging. By consuming natural, traditional or farm products, the tourist adopts the values associated with local identity codes. It seems quite clear that cultural experience is an important factor for visiting food markets, as a cognitive experience. This leads us to propose the following hypothesis:

H1b: Cultural experience has a positive influence on satisfaction.

### ***Prestige***

Status and prestige motivators play an important role in the decision-making process of many tourists, mainly when deciding on the type of holiday or the destination, even if subconsciously. The imitation effect of visiting or experiencing the same, or even



exceeding, the neighbors' achievements moves travelers to visit one resource or decline it. Thus, all of those tourist resources that become must icons are essential landmarks in any trip; they appear in any travelers' tourist list. Many scholars in the field of food tourism spent time on research of this factor (Kim and Eves, 2012; Kim et al., 2009; Chang et al., 2010; Hu et al., 2013; Mak et al., 2013), which leads to the following hypothesis:

*H1c: Prestige has a positive influence on Satisfaction.*

### ***Food market involvement***

Food-market involvement may be regarded as level of importance of food markets in a person's life. Food markets have been characterized as 'third places' that encourage informal association among people (Tiemann, 2008). In particular, they have been recognized for their potential to facilitate interaction and conversation between individuals of diverse backgrounds, fostering social cohesion. Whether the interactions are between consumers and producers, individuals from rural, urban and suburban origins, or young or old, this engagement serves to create relationships rich in social capital (Blay-Palmer, 2008; Tiemann, 2008). Thus, in a world where the importance of place is increasingly emphasized, local food markets are emerging as a place-making tool. A place where the affective dimension takes place. Therefore, tourists' interaction with a destination's overall environment and their internalization of what they see and sense play a key role in their overall trip satisfaction (Kirillova et al., 2014: 282). Considering that food-market involvement seems to be a significant visiting factor of urban food markets, we propose the following hypothesis:

H1d: Food-market involvement has a positive influence on Satisfaction.

### ***Satisfaction and revisit intention***

As Kim et al. (2010) argue, many scholars have proved that tourists with previous experience in travelling are more likely to return to those known destinations that offer outstanding overall satisfaction and perceived value. Gastronomic experiences play an important role in satisfaction with travel experience and future travel behavior (Remington and Yuksel, 1998; Neild et al., 2000; Hjalager and Corigliano, 2000). Kim et al. (2010) demonstrate that food tourists are more likely to revisit a destination where they have been before. Therefore food markets' managers focus on establishing a favorable level of routine, cultural place, prestige and food-market involvement in order to project a positive image and induce memorable experiences in food halls. All of these dimensions combine to form tourists' aesthetic judgment, with special emphasis on satisfaction, revisit intention, and the intention to recommend a place to others (Kirillova, 2014). This leads to the proposition of the following hypothesis:

H1e: Satisfaction has a positive influence on revisit intention.

### ***Food neophilia***

Food neophilia is considered the opposed concept of food neophobia. Food neophobia has been widely analyzed (Pliner and Hobden, 1992; Arvola et al., 1999; Ritchey et al., 2003; Nordin et al., 2004; Verbeke and López, 2005; Pliner and Salvy, 2006; Veeck,

2010; Schnettler et al., 2013, Verneau et al., 2014) as the personality trait that shows reluctance to try new foods; as a form of behavior that rejects or avoids any unknown food proposals. Food neophobia has been seen as the avoidance to try new food (Arvola et al., 1999; Backstrom et al., 2004; Henriques et al., 2009; Chung et al., 2012) and as a restriction of the acceptance of new food flavors, styles and ingredients (Johns et al., 2011). Torres (2002) suggests that tourists in general prefer foods to which they are accustomed and resist trying local varieties.

In contrast, food neophilia is also an attitude, involving the interest of novel foods, showing great pleasure in eating a wide variety of foods, familiar and unfamiliar ones (Raudenbush and Frank, 1999). Food neophilia has been recognized as one of the important motivators for tourism (Chang et al., 2010; Mitchell and Hall, 2003). Bell and Valentine (1997) have suggested that the development of 'new cuisines' and the globalization of national cuisines around the world are due to the effects of neophilic tendencies as travel motivator. Tourists taking part in food tourism may have a tendency towards food neophilia, which is the tendency to seek to taste something new, to consume local food on holiday (Kim et al., 2009). Similarly, Fischler (1988) describes the tendency to search for novel foods as neophilic, while Mak et al. (2013) argue that consuming novel and exotic foods satisfies neophilia. Pliner and Hobden (1992) remarked that food neophiles seem to be more inclined toward new food experiences. Food neophilia may be associated with possessing a different taste physiology, which enables individuals to experience food with more pleasure (Kim et al., 2009).

Most of the research on food acceptance has focused on familiar instead of novel foods (Martins and Pliner, 2005; Pliner and Salvy, 2006). Few studies have particularly

focused on the differences between food neophobic tendency and people from different countries. However, Ritchey et al. (2003) found that people from Sweden are generally more willing to try novel food compared to people from the US and Finland. Verbeke and López (2005) expounded that many US consumers crave more variety in their food consumption experiences due to the influence of ethnic diversity, globally sourced food, cultural experiences, and media exposure. Chung et al. (2012) demonstrated Koreans showed higher food neophobic tendencies than US individuals. Based on the theory of cultural distance (McKercher & Chow, 2001) allocentric/ventures tourists (Plog, 1974), may be particularly interested in exploring local cuisine of culturally distant destinations, influenced by a higher level of food neophilia. Based on Plog's typology, Ross (1994) suggests that allocentrics are naturally neophilic ('love new/novel' phenomena). Jang and Kim's (2015) research respectively argued a growing demand for ethnic restaurants and ethnic food markets in the US. In the study by Mak et al. (2013) one third of the participants expressed the desire to try food that could not be easily found in their home countries.

Seeking novelty in food has been recognized as one of the important food-related personality traits in human behavior (Mak et al., 2013). In this sense, Quan and Wang (2004) argued that food consumption is derived from both motivation (novelty seeking) and memorability. Gyimothy and Mykletum (2009) found that food in a tourism context had a challenging culinary trophy element with an association of novelty. Individuals have different food-related personal traits, expressed as food adventurousness (Furst et al., 1996). Novelty exemplifies the contrast between a familiar and a new place, experience or food. Tourists consider novel, never-before-seen aspects of a destination (as in the case of food markets) as more beautiful than their familiar landscapes (and therefore, their usual food markets). Food markets as tourist attractions have a sense of

novelty, as they are opposite to mature destination amenities, fast-food chains or restaurants. Food markets are dynamic social environments whose heterogeneity draws tourist attention. Visiting food markets is always a new experience, so the constant novelty of the food-market experience drives revisit intention.

Little research has been done to reveal the role of food neophilia in a motivation satisfaction relationship. Chang et al. (2011) suggest that the neophilia concept provides justification for tourists' inclination to seek various food experiences when on holiday. Other researchers, such as Chen, 2007; Kim et al., 2009; Chang et al., 2011; Mak et al., 2012 argue that tourists are willing to engage in 'novel' or 'unusual' experiences (neophilic engagement). Although tourists may be willing to engage in 'novel' or 'unusual' experiences (neophilic), neophobic tendencies regarding ingestion of unfamiliar food might also be present (Mak et al., 2012). Therefore, it is necessary to consider the extent of food neophilia influence on the likelihood of future food behavior (Cohen and Avieli, 2004; Ritchey et al., 2003). As we can see from different studies, food neophilia has a high influence on motivations related to food tourism. Thus, within the study, food neophilia is represented as a potential relationship moderator between independent variables (motivations) and satisfaction. In line with this, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H2a: Food neophilia has a significant moderating role in the relationship between escape from routine and satisfaction.

H2b: Food neophilia has a significant moderating role in the relationship between cultural experience and satisfaction.

H2c: Food neophilia has a significant moderating role in the relationship between prestige and satisfaction.

H2d: Food neophilia has a significant moderating role in the relationship between food-market involvement and satisfaction.

In accordance with the formulated hypotheses, the proposed research model is shown in Figure 1. As shown in Figure 1, the model contains four independent variables (escape from routine, cultural experience, prestige and food-market involvement), food neophilia as a moderator variable and satisfaction and revisit intention, which in the given model are presented as the dependent variables. The model was designed to determine the statistically significant drivers of visitor satisfaction, but also to test the moderator role of food neophilia between independent variables and satisfaction. In addition to these relations the proposed model focuses on the relationship between satisfaction and revisit intention.

## **INSERT FIGURE 1**

### **METHODOLOGY**

The research was conducted on a convenience sample of 200 respondents, visitors of one of the most attractive food markets in the world, La Boqueria in Barcelona, Spain. The aim of our research was to determine the primary motives of visitors' satisfaction with the visit of this specific food market, and to see if food neophilia affects the strength of the motives towards satisfaction.

La Boqueria is the most popular and frequently visited market in the city of Barcelona, but also one of the most famous in the world. It is designated as a highly recommended attraction on different websites, in tourist guidebooks, blogs, etc. In essence, the value of La Boqueria comes from its antiquity. It has existed since the twelfth century when it was an open-air market outside the walls of the medieval town. Nowadays, it is located in an arcade, built in the nineteenth century, equally located in the Rambla, the most popular walking area in the historic city.

It has two hundred and fifty-seven establishments along the walkways, which mix traditional and local products with delicatessen ones. It also plans cooking classes, and organizes gastronomic events, for residents and tourists. A significant number of stalls target only new customers: fresh juices, fruits cut into pieces, take-away and ready meals, sweets, candies and chocolates, etc., i.e., products that tourists can easily consume during their visit. These stalls are usually the most photographed due to the colors and the eye-catching way their goods are displayed. These stalls stand out from the traditional ones offering meat, fish, and other products of recognized quality (mushrooms, spices, nuts...), which focus on residents' purchases. Some of them combine local and traditional products with tourist ones. In that case, their counters (just using 5% of the space) display products prepared to take-away and easy to taste for tourists, but the rest of the stall shows traditional products for residents. Only a small part of the market is dedicated to establishments selling their own locally produced products, mainly green vegetables. At present, they are located at Sant Galdric Square, in the open air.

Surveyors contacted market visitors during their visit. Questionnaires were distributed to visitors at the front entrance of La Boqueria food market, as well as in different alleys

inside the market. The information was collected during different days of the week (except weekends), combining Mondays (with less tourist attendance) and Fridays (plenty of tourists) during different hours, mornings and afternoons, from March 9th to April 17th. During the collection of data special attention was given to fact that market visitors were tourists, not locals. Respondents who agreed to participate in the study were provided with sufficient time to consider their answers.

The respondents were asked to answer 25 questions grouped around seven latent variables. In particular, respondents expressed their level of agreement with the items offered using the seven-point Likert scale (1-strongly disagree; 7-absolutely agree with a given statement). Prior to distribution, the questionnaire was preliminarily tested in order to formulate questions that would be clear and understandable to the respondents. After that, a preliminary survey was performed on a small group of 30 randomly selected respondents. By analyzing the suggestions obtained from the pilot sample, minor modifications were made to the initially formulated statements, shaping the final version of the questionnaire.

Each variable of the proposed research model was developed and measured using two to five statements. Escape from routine was measured by two statements on the basis of the following studies: Steptoe et al., 1995; Kim and Jamal, 2007; Kim and Eves, 2012, which were further adjusted for the purpose of this study. Cultural experience was measured by three items adopted and adapted from several studies: Crompton and McKay, 1997; Kim et al., 2009; Poria et al., 2006; Kim and Eves, 2012. Prestige was measured with three items that were designed based on few researches (Kim et al.,



2009; Steptoe et al., 1995; Kim and Eves, 2012). Food-market involvement also consisted of three items (Organ et al., 2015), also adjusted for the purposes of research.

Food neophilia as moderation variable consisted of three items taken and adapted from the following studies: Kim et al., 2010; Cohen and Avie, 2004.

Satisfaction as a dependent variable was measured using five items extracted from a literature review focusing on gastronomic tourism (Mason and Paggiaro, 2008), while revisit intention consisted of three items (Mason and Paggiaro, 2008).

Data analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (version 21.0) and the AMOS-in (version 18.0). Selected statistical analyses were implemented: reliability analysis, confirmative factor analysis and regression moderation. In the first step, based on the value of the coefficient Cronbach's alpha, the reliability and internal consistency of the items describing latent variable models was estimated. Then, using the confirmative factor analysis the fit of the research model was tested. Moderated regression analysis was used to test the main and interaction effects. In addition, the independent variables were first centered and then multiplied by each other, in order to avoid a multicollinearity problem that may occur when calculating interaction effects.

## **RESULTS**

The structure of the sample consists of 47% (94) male respondents and 53% (106) female respondents. The largest proportion of respondents is in the following age groups: 25-34 years (31%) and 18-24 years (28.5%). Regarding marital status, married

respondents cover 43.5% (87), singles accounted for 51% (102), and divorced or widowed for 5.5% (11). When it comes to the level of education, 34.5% of respondents have a bachelor's degree, 26% have an associate degree, and 21% of examinees have master's degree, while 18.5% of respondents are high school graduates. The sample also includes 73% employees, 24% unemployed and 3% retirees.

#### **INSERT TABLE 1**

Generally, the majority of the visitors are from European countries and the USA, especially in comparison to other world regions. It is important to mention that there are also 17 Spanish visitors, but only those visiting Barcelona and living outside of the Catalonia region were included in the study. The detailed sample structure of the visitors to La Boqueria market by country is shown in the following table:

#### **INSERT TABLE 2**

At the beginning of the statistical analysis the approach to total item correlation was applied with the aim to reduce the initial number of items used. Based on these results, we decided to remove two statements, one from the cultural experience variable and another from the food-market involvement variable. After exclusion of these two items, we conducted a reliability analysis and confirmatory factor analysis. Values of Cronbach's alpha for all eight variables of the proposed research model are shown in Table 3. All variables have an adequate level of reliability, as the coefficient of Cronbach's alpha is over the required threshold of 0.7 (Nunnally, 1978). As results suggest, the highest level of reliability is manifested in the revisit intention variable

(Cronbach's alpha = 0.904), whereas in the case of the prestige variable a slightly lower level of internal consistency of the statements is present (Cronbach's alpha = 0.752).

### **INSERT TABLE 3**

Proposed model fit testing was performed by applying confirmative factor analysis. Results indicate that the proposed model reasonably fits the data. Value of  $\chi^2/df$  is lower than the threshold of 3 recommend by Bagozzi and Yi (1988). Specifically, in the case of our study, this value is 1.444. Also, other fit indices reach adequate values (Comparative Fit Index = 0.958; The Tucker-Lewis index = 0.949; Incremental Fit Index = 0.959; The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation = 0.047). According to Byrne (1998), the value of the first three mentioned indices (CFI, TLI and IFI) must be greater than 0.9, while the value of RMSEA coefficient is lower than the threshold of 0.1 (Steiger, 1990), as it is the case with the results of our study. Results of confirmative factor analysis are presented in Table 4.

The proposed model also has an acceptable level of convergent validity, discriminatory validity and composite reliability. The model has a composite reliability (CR), due to the fact that the CR values of all variables are above the threshold of 0.6 (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988) (see Table 4). Average variance extracted (AVE) of all variables is greater than 0.5 (see Table 4).

### **INSERT TABLE 4**

Moderated regression was used to test the main and interaction effects. In its application, we determine the strength and significance of the influence of independent variables on satisfaction, as well as the role of food neophilia as moderator in the relationship between the other independent variables and satisfaction. In that sense, regression analysis was carried out in two steps. In the first step, the calculation of main effects was performed (model 1), while in the second step, the interaction effects were calculated (model 2). Prior to the analysis of standardized regression coefficients, the problem of multicollinearity was studied. All variance inflation factor values are lower than 5, so multicollinearity is not a problem in the present study.

#### **INSERT TABLE 5**

Analysis of the main effects shows that three independent variables have a statistically significant impact on satisfaction: cultural experience ( $\beta = 0.279$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and food market involvement ( $\beta = 0.190$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), with cultural experience having the greater impact on satisfaction. This confirmed hypotheses H1b and H1d. On the other hand, the results of the research did not confirm a significant effect of prestige and escape from routine on satisfaction. Therefore, hypotheses H1a and H1c were not confirmed.

Also, there is a positive relationship between satisfaction and revisit intention ( $\beta = 0.621$ ,  $p > 0.01$ ) thus confirming hypothesis H1e, indicating that if tourists are satisfied there is higher likelihood to revisit mentioned tourist attraction (Table 6).

#### **INSERT TABLE 6**

In the second phase, interaction effects were calculated. In this step, food neophilia is set as a moderating variable. The idea is to determine whether this variable changes the intensity of the connection between the other independent variables and satisfaction. The following tested interaction effects are statistically significant: escape from routine and cultural experience. This supports hypotheses H2a and H2b, while hypotheses H2c, H2d are not confirmed. In this way, we can conclude that food neophilia has a partially significant moderator role in the relationship of the independent variables and satisfaction. Therefore, food neophilia changes the strength of the escape from routine and satisfaction in a positive direction, so if desire for escape is increased, satisfaction is also increased.

#### **INSERT TABLE 7**

## **DISSCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS**

### ***Theoretical implications***

Relatively little attention has been given to examine tourist motivation for food-market visits (Silkes, 2012). This motivation could be seen as part of local food consumption in a tourist destination (Kim and Eves, 2012), as tourists are driven by the desire to taste local products offered on food markets. It could also be seen as part of the pursuit of local heritage and culture (Silkes, 2012).

The present study expands the theoretical background of food-market tourism research, mainly related to tourists' motivation and satisfaction. The study's originality lies in the

relevant recognition of food neophilia as a moderation effect in the relationship between motivation and satisfaction.

As our results suggest, *escape from routine* turns out to be an irrelevant factor in influencing visitors' satisfaction. It can be concluded that tourists do not perceive the La Boqueria experience as a kind of escape from the daily routine, as this activity, going to a food market, is often connected with everyday life at back home destinations. Escape from routine is often present in food tourism literature (Kim and Eves, 2012; Fields et al., 2002; Kim et al., 2009; Liang et al., 2013; Chang and Yuan, 2011), while its connection with satisfaction is partially confirmed only in Silkes' study (2012) of food markets.

*Cultural experience* shows itself to be an important satisfaction antecedent, supporting studies that emphasized the relevance of the cultural dimension in food tourism (Hu et al., 2013; Mak et al., 2012; Mak et al., 2013; Fields et al., 2002; Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Kim and Eves, 2012). As results indicate, tourists see food-market visits as exploration of the local culture and heritage. The chance to experience something novel, peculiar or unusual, such as local gastronomy, significantly increases their level of satisfaction.

*Prestige* is also recognized as an important motivator for food tourism (Kim and Eves, 2012; Kim et al., 2009; Chang et al., 2010; Hu et al., 2013; Mak et al., 2013), yet the results of the present study didn't identify a statistically significant relationship between prestige and satisfaction.

Experience in farmers' markets with local producers is seen as crucial for consumers to decide to shop there (Turner and Hope, 2014). *Food-market involvement* is considered as affinity towards local food products and personal interaction with local producers, and as the results show, it is seen as a consistent motivation factor for food-market visit. Therefore, visitors are more satisfied when they are consuming food that is produced locally, due to interaction with local farmers, producers and vendors. Interaction with local producers is especially vital in a food-event environment (Kim et al., 2010; Organ et al., 2015).

The results also imply that satisfaction has a significant relationship with *revisit intention*, which is relevant with earlier studies in food tourism, usually focused on food events (Lee et al., 2008; Mason and Paggiaro, 2012; Wu et al., 2014).

*Food neophilia* is present as an important factor influencing satisfaction in food tourism (Kim et al., 2009; Chen, 2007; Mak et al., 2012; Chang et al., 2011), but little research has been done to reveal the role of food neophilia in the motivation and satisfaction relationship. In Chen's study (2007), food-related personality traits are used as a moderation effect, and results show that food neophilia has moderating effects on the relationship between some of the food choice motives and the consumer's attitude to buy organic foods. Our results confirm that there is a positive connection between food neophilia and satisfaction, confirming the thesis by Mak et al. (2012) that tourists are willing to engage in 'novel', "peculiar" or 'unusual' experiences (neophilic engagement). Also, local food engagement, such as food-market visit, may be driven by food-related personality traits, such as food neophilia (Kim et al., 2010).

Tourists who like to taste new foods also want to experience something new and thus they escape from their daily routine, which makes them more satisfied. In spite of the relevant connection between cultural experience and satisfaction, this has decreased due to influence of food neophilia as moderator. So, the results show that food-market visitors interested in cultural experience and heritage did not have this connection with food in the foreground, because they perceive the market as a site of cultural and heritage significance, not a place for a new gastronomic experience.

### ***Managerial implications***

According to our results, individuals and organizations responsible for tourism development of food markets must in the future pay special attention to motivations, and prepare adequate strategies to respond to tourists' desires and wishes. Cultural experience is seen as one of the most important satisfaction predictor during food-market visit, with the highest impact value on satisfaction. Thus, the management of La Boqueria market could organize guided market tours, explaining the history of the food market in detail, but also the artistic value of the site and the building itself.

Food neophilia is recognized as an important satisfaction antecedent and moderation stimulus as well. So the management of La Boqueria market could also increase the diversity of products, mainly those grown locally and offer local dishes. Therefore, market managers should try to reduce the stalls of foreign products and focus their attention on promoting the stalls of local products. This action could result in an increase in the number of visitors, both locals and foreigners. Interaction with local producers is also favorable as it increases loyalty and buying behavior towards local



producers (Turner and Hope, 2014). So local producers could organize small thematic fairs, where they would have time and opportunity to present their products and interact with consumers, be they local residents or tourists. Study results may help stakeholders interested in food-market tourism development to broaden their knowledge about travel patterns of tourists and thus plan direct marketing activities towards specific segments based on their motivations.

### ***Future research and limitations***

Finally, it is important to point out several limitations of this research. The methodological limitations of this study are such that the results can't be automatically generalized, as every food market represents locally produced food and local culture. Nevertheless, La Boqueria is a well-known food market so it is a good starting point. Cluster analysis is also desirable for future research, to determine who food market visitors are, and to plan future marketing strategy in a more precise way. We also want to expand our study of neophilia effects in the relationship between motivational and satisfying factors during food-market visits researching different levels of food neophilia among consumers from different countries. Also related to food neophilia, we need to determine its link with new digital technologies. Lastly, during the modeling process, the research was only focused on push motivation, so future research could address pull motivation as well, or other potential motivation variables such as family togetherness or socialization.

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