



## LOCAL FOODS ON THE MENUS OF LOCAL BUSINESSES

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### Abstract

The purpose of this research is to examine the inclusion level of local dishes in the menus of hotels and food and beverage establishments serving in the city of Konya (Central Turkey), which has a significant potential in terms of gastronomy tourism. For this purpose, primarily semi-structured interviews with the participants (n=20) who are responsible for food and beverage businesses in the sample group of the research were conducted. The data obtained as a result of the interviews were subjected to content analysis. As a second stage in obtaining data of the study, a menu observation key form consisting of local Konya dishes was created by using the literature. Afterwards, the menus of hotels and food and beverage establishments serving in the city were accessed (n=44). Local dishes in the menus of these businesses were identified through the prepared menu observation key form. The collected data were transferred to the computer environment, their frequencies were taken and analyzed through tables. Analysis results show that the most preferred local dishes by the customers of the local businesses are Bamya soup, Etli ekme, Furun kebab and Hoşmerim dessert. These dishes are also among the local foods most frequently included in the menus of businesses. Based on the findings, it is evident that while a substantial portion of the businesses serve the local foods that customers most desire, many local dishes specific to Konya cuisine are not included in their menus. Accordingly, the level of inclusion of local foods in the menus is generally low among the examined businesses. The implications of the findings are discussed in the conclusion section of the study.

**Keywords:** Gastronomy Tourism, Local Foods, Local Businesses, Konya Cuisine

### Introduction

Touristic journeys are motivated by a variety of factors, including food. Experiencing local cuisines and discovering local dishes has become an important motivation for traveling for many people. Gastronomy tourism, which can simply be defined as traveling for food and drink, has become an important part of marketing activities to attract tourists to destinations in recent years. Gastronomy tourism involves visiting primary and secondary food and beverage producers, attending gastronomic festivals, exploring food venues, and experiencing specific destinations where the tasting and discovery of unique local culinary offerings serve as the primary motivation for the visit (Mitchel Hall et al., 2003). Gastronomy tourism creates a link between local food systems and tourists by seeking distinctive and memorable eating and drinking experiences (Green and Dougherty; 2008: 150). Many tourists specifically look for destinations famous for their unique and diverse local delicacies. For these visitors, dining is also an opportunity to experience the culture, history and traditions of a destination. During food and beverage-motivated travels, tourists have the opportunity to get to know the history, traditions and customs of the region as well as the cuisine of a destination (Agyeiwaah et al., 2019). This is because gastronomy tourism is commonly categorized as a subgroup of cultural tourism (Chaney and Ryan, 2012). Destinations are increasingly realizing the potential of gastronomy tourism and are promoting their local cuisine to attract tourists who are passionate about food and culture discovery. Food and beverage businesses serving in these destinations will gain a share of the growing gastronomy tourism market by focusing on their unique local cuisines and offering authentic culinary experiences.

Local food is defined as food served at a specific destination (Björk and Kauppinen- Räsänen, 2016; Sims, 2009). Local food is also stated as iconic products of a specific destination (Bessiere, 1998). Consumers perceive local food to be authentic, traditional (Kauppinen-Räsänen, Gummerus and Lehtola, 2013), fresh, tasty and reliable (Roininen, Arvola and Lähteenmäki 2006). Tasting local dishes and experiencing local cuisine is the main motivation of travel for gastronomy tourism participants. According to Pavlidis and

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Markantonatou (2020), local dishes can act as a trigger in creating demand for a destination. In this way, travelers can choose a particular destination because of the local cuisine and expected gastronomic experiences. Local food is a key component of a destination's attributes and contributes to its attractions and overall tourist experience (Symons, 1999). Local food can result in benefits for both hosts and guests (Okumus, Okumus and McKercher, 2007). The increasing demand of tourists for local cuisine will contribute to the economic development of the local people (Sims, 2009). Local food will provide tourists with the opportunity to experience local culture (Sims, 2009) as well as quality and fresh food (Long, 2004). One strategy to differentiate a destination from its competitors and attract a consistent flow of visitors is to promote local food products (Sims, 2009). It is important for local businesses to offer their customers the opportunity to experience local food, both in terms of gaining competitive advantage and customer satisfaction. Local cuisine will contribute to visitor experience and differentiate tourism destinations while providing economic advantages to the local community and preserving its identity (Haven-Tang and Jones, 2006).

Studies on local dishes in the literature have researched; the role of local food in community development (Green and Dougherty, 2008) and tourism policies (Handsuh, 2000), factors influencing local food consumption in destinations (Kim, Eves and Scarles, 2009), tourists' intentions and attitudes towards local cuisine (Ryu and Jang, 2006; Enteleca Research and Consultancy, 2000), the role of local food in the sustainable tourism experience (Sims, 2009), the role of local cuisines in destination marketing (Rand, Heath and Alberts 2003; Rand et al., 2006; Okumus et al., 2007; 2013; Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2016; Haven-Tang and Jones, 2006), travelers' gastronomic dining experiences, including local food markets (Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2014), motivations influencing tourists' local food consumption (Yurtseven and Kaya, 2011), tourists' behavioral intentions about local beverages (Sparks, 2007) and inclusion of local food in local menus (Yıldırım, Karaca, and Çakıcı, 2015; Seçim and Esen, 2019; Büyüksalvarcı, Şapçılar and Yılmaz, 2016). Konya cuisine is one of the traditional ones that stands out with traces of the Mevlevi cuisine and the palace cuisine of the Anatolian Seljuk period. The cuisine has a significant potential in terms of gastronomy tourism with its local, traditional and rich history. Among the studies in the literature, it has been observed that there are limited studies on local dishes in the menus of food and beverage establishments serving in Konya (Seçim and Esen, 2019; Büyüksalvarcı et al., 2016). In this context, the aim of the current study is to determine to what extent local dishes specific to Konya are included in the menus of food and beverage establishments serving in the city.

### **Conceptual framework**

In this part of the study, theoretical information about Konya cuisine is included. Afterwards, details about the studies investigating the inclusion of local dishes in the menus of local businesses are stated.

### **Konya cuisine**

Turkey is a country where several ethnic groups from various nations have coexisted for a long time, preserving their cultures and enhancing Turkish cuisine. Due to this characteristic, the country has a considerable potential for gastronomy tourism (Şen and Silahşör, 2018: 417). Turkish cuisine bears the traces of a rich geography and is one of the leading cuisines of the world. Central Anatolian cuisine is one of the important components of Turkish cuisine, which is a combination of regional cuisines. Konya cuisine is also the center (Seçim and Esen, 2020: 280) and the most important representative of Anatolian cuisine. Konya is a center that has hosted different societies throughout history and there are remnants of numerous civilizations in the city. Although traces of Konya culinary culture can be found in some written works of the Great Seljuk Empire and Anatolian Principalities period, the Anatolian Seljuk State period is the starting point of Konya cuisine (Halıcı, 2011: 11). Konya Cuisine continued its development during the 200-year period (12th and 13th centuries) when the city was the capital of the Anatolian Seljuk State. In the 13th century, Mevlevi cuisine played an important role in shaping Konya cuisine (Ertaş, Bulut Solak and Kılınç, 2017). Mevlevi cuisine is a cuisine that reflects the philosophy of the Mevleviyeh which is the order of Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi, a famous Persian Sufi and poet who lived in Anatolia in the 13th century. Konya was annexed to the Ottoman Empire in 1466 and Konya cuisine was mentioned in many studies from this period. Konya cuisine preserved its traditional structure until the 1960s. Over time, there have been changes in the classical texture of Konya cuisine due to reasons such as the decrease in people who know how to prepare traditional dishes, the decrease in local vegetables and fruits used in traditional dishes, and technological innovations (Halıcı, 2011: 14). Nevertheless, the cuisine has made a name for itself among the local cuisines that have been preserved until today.

The basic ingredient of traditional Konya cuisine until the 1950s was sheep or goat meat. In addition to meat, grains, fresh and dried vegetables are also used in meals. Meat is included in dishes as cubes or in pieces with

bones (called Orta or Bütümet) (Işık, 2006: 45). The usage area of minced meat is limited and it is used in sarma, dolma and meatballs. Especially eggplant and green beans are used in vegetable dishes (Odabaşı, 2001: 20). In traditional Konya cuisine, there is no habit of grilling fresh meat and white meat is used as a condiment (Işık, 2006: 44). Bread is one of the basic ingredients of the cuisine in Konya, which is an agricultural city. Konya cuisine is rich in terms of bread varieties and dishes made from bread (e.g., tirit, papara, ekmek salması) (Işık, 2006: 33).

### Prior studies about inclusion of local foods in local businesses

Studies on local cuisines and local dishes were examined through the literature review. The details of these studies are summarized in Table 1 below.

**Table 1. Studies About Inclusion of Local Foods in Local Businesses**

Author	Purpose	Main Result
Ginigen, Aydın and Güçlü (2022)	To investigate whether local dishes of Batman (Turkey) are included in hotel menus.	It was determined that local dishes were not included in any hotel menus accessed within the scope of the research.
Seçim and Esen (2020)	To investigate the inclusion of local dishes of Konya (Turkey) in restaurant menus.	It has been determined that, apart from a certain number of local dishes, many dishes and desserts belonging to Konya cuisine are not included in the menus.
Čaušević and Fusté-Forné (2020)	The aim of the research is to determine the local cuisine image of Sarajevo city of Bosnia and Herzegovina with the rate of including local dishes in the restaurant menus serving in the city.	As a result of the research, it has been determined that the restaurants examined do not offer a variety of local menus, although they offer the dishes that visitors and tourists expect to taste as authentic Bosnian delicacies.
Erdem, Mızrak and Kemer (2018)	To investigate the inclusion of local dishes in restaurant menus of Bolu-Mengen (Turkey).	It has been determined that local dishes are not preferred by businesses.
Kurnaz and İşlek (2018)	To investigate the inclusion of local dishes in the restaurant menus of Muğla-Marmaris (Turkey).	It has been determined that local dishes are not included much in business menus.
Şen and Silahşör (2018)	To investigate the inclusion of local dishes of Erzincan (Turkey) in restaurant menus.	It has been determined that a significant majority of businesses include local products in their menus.
Ceylan and Güven (2018)	To investigate the inclusion of local dishes of Kütahya (Turkey) in restaurant menus.	It has been determined that local dishes are not included much in business menus.
Özel, Yıldız and Akbaba (2017)	To investigate the inclusion of local dishes of Kilis (Turkey) in restaurant menus.	It has been determined that local dishes are not included much in business menus.
Arıkan (2017)	To investigate the inclusion of dishes specific to Eskişehir (Turkey) cuisine in restaurant menus.	It has been concluded that many of the local dishes are not included in business menus.
Yeşilyurt et al. (2017)	To investigate the presence of local dishes in the menus of hotel establishments in Adıyaman (Turkey).	It has been concluded that there are no local dishes in the menus of the businesses.
Cömert and Özata (2016)	To examine the reasons why tourists prefer establishments with local dishes in their menus with the example of Black Sea cuisine (Turkey).	It has been concluded that tourists have high interest in Black Sea cuisine.
Büyükşalvarcı et al. (2016)	To investigate the inclusion of local dishes of Konya (Turkey) in restaurant menus.	It has been concluded that local dishes are not preferred by businesses or are preferred less than other dishes.
Mil and Denk (2015)	To determine the local products used in the menus of hotels in Palandöken-Erzurum (Turkey).	It has been determined that hotels include a limited number of local dishes in their menus.
Kızılırmak, Albayrak and Küçükali (2014)	To investigate the inclusion of local dishes in restaurant menus in Trabzon-Uzungöl (Turkey).	It has been determined that there is no section specific to local dishes in the menus.
Yurtseven and Kaya (2011)	To investigate the inclusion of local dishes in restaurant menus serving in Gökçeada (Turkey).	It has been determined that local foods on restaurant menus constitute 47% of all menu items.

Haven-Tang and Jones (2006)	The use of local foods to differentiate tourism destinations is discussed in the example of a Monmouthshire (Wales) town.	It has been stated that it will be possible to extend the tourism season, improve quality and preserve the local identity of Monmouthshire through the use of local foods.
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When the studies listed in Table 1 are reviewed, it is possible to say that the level of inclusion of local dishes in the menus of local businesses from different regions is not high. However local businesses include a certain number of local dishes in their menus. They also stated that visitors are interested in local dishes.

## Method

The aim of this research is to determine the level of inclusion of local dishes in the menus of hotels and food and beverage establishments operating in Konya. The research was conducted in businesses located in Konya city center. Purposeful sampling method, one of the non-random sampling methods, was preferred in the study. The sample of the research consists of restaurants serving in 3-, 4- and 5-star hotels and food and beverage establishments serving in Konya with high scores on the TripAdvisor.com travel site. The study was conducted in October 2023. A two-stage process was followed in obtaining data in the study. Information regarding these processes is shared below.

Stage 1. Semi-structured interviews:

In the first stage, semi-structured interview technique, one of the qualitative data collection methods, was preferred to obtain data. First of all, a working group consisting of food and beverage businesses' responsables (n=20) in the sample group of the research was determined. Purposeful sampling method, one of the non-random sampling methods, was used to determine the study group. Information about the participants is shared in Table 2 below. A total of 20 businesses, including 7 hotels and 13 restaurants, were included in the research.

**Table 2. Information About Participants of the Research**

Interviewees	Gender	Title
Interviewee 1	Man	General Manager
Interviewee 2	Man	General Manager
Interviewee 3	Man	Assistant General Manager
Interviewee 4	Man	Food and Beverage Manager
Interviewee 5	Man	General Manager
Interviewee 6	Man	Business Owner
Interviewee 7	Man	Business Owner
Interviewee 8	Man	Restaurant Manager
Interviewee 9	Man	Business Owner
Interviewee 10	Man	Restaurant Manager
Interviewee 11	Man	Restaurant Manager
Interviewee 12	Man	Restaurant Manager
Interviewee 13	Man	Restaurant Manager
Interviewee 14	Woman	Restaurant Supervisor
Interviewee 15	Man	Restaurant Manager
Interviewee 16	Man	Restaurant Manager
Interviewee 17	Woman	Restaurant Supervisor
Interviewee 18	Woman	Restaurant Manager
Interviewee 19	Man	Food and Beverage Manager
Interviewee 20	Man	Food and Beverage Manager

After the determination of the study group, a literature review was conducted to prepare the questions to be asked to the participants during the interviews. In determining the questions, in addition to the information obtained through literature review, the interview form used by Yildirim et al. (2015) was taken as reference. The interview form of the current study consists of 12 open and closed-ended questions. The data was collected from the determined participants through face-to-face interviews held in October 2023. The interviews were recorded with the consent of the participants and then transcribed on a computer. During the interviews, care was taken to encourage conversation, control the process and be impartial. The data obtained as a result of the interviews were analyzed using the content analysis method. The questions in the interview form are listed below:

- 1- What is the type of your business?
- 2- How many years has the business been in service?
- 3- Is your business preferred by domestic and foreign tourists other than local people?

- 4- What is the rate of preference of your business by local people, domestic tourists and foreign tourists?
- 5- How do you decide on the foods on your business' menu?
- 6- How often do you update the content of the menu?
- 7- Do you include local foods in your menu?
- 8- Why do you include local foods in the menu?
- 9- Why don't you include local foods in the menu?
- 10- Which local foods and beverages are most preferred by domestic and foreign tourists on your business's menu? (Multiple options can be specified).
- 11- Do you think that Konya cuisine is rich in local foods?
- 12- Do you think that local foods play an important role in the development of gastronomy tourism in Konya?

Stage 2. Compilation of data with menu observation key form:

In the second stage of the study, local Konya dishes were identified by using existing studies (Odabaşı, 2001; Işık, 2006; Halıcı, 2011; Seçim and Esen, 2019; Büyüksalvarcı et al., 2016) in the literature. Later, a menu observation key form was created in the light of the form used by Yıldırım et al. (2015) in their research. The form includes local dishes under the headings “Local Meat Foods”, “Local Soups”, “Local Pastries”, “Local Desserts” and “Local Drinks”. The relevant form is shared in Table 3 below.

**Table 3. Menu Observation Key Form**

Local Meat Foods	Local Soups	Local Pastries	Local Desserts	Local Drinks
<i>Furun Kebab</i>	<i>Bamya Soup</i>	<i>Etliekmek</i>	<i>Höşmerim</i>	<i>Syrups</i>
<i>Tirit</i>	<i>Yayla Soup</i>	<i>Bıçakarası</i>	<i>Sacarası</i>	<i>Compotes</i>
<i>Etlı Yaprak Sarma</i>	<i>Tandır Soup</i>	<i>Peynirli Börek</i>	<i>İrmik Helvası</i>	
<i>Patlıcan Orta</i>	<i>Arabaşı Soup</i>	<i>Konya Böreği</i>	<i>Ekmek Kadayıfı</i>	
<i>Düğün Pilavı</i>	<i>Toyga Soup</i>	<i>Yağ Somunu</i>	<i>Zerde</i>	
<i>Ekmek Salması</i>	<i>Terhun Soup</i>	<i>Su Böreği</i>	<i>Kaygana</i>	
<i>Kabak Çiçeği Dolması</i>		<i>Sac Böreği</i>	<i>Pekmez Helvası</i>	
<i>Ekşili Kabak</i>				
<i>Topalak Köftesi</i>				
<i>Calla</i>				
<i>Çullama</i>				

Within the scope of the study, after the menu observation key form was created, the menus of the businesses determined as the research sample were accessed. During the semi-structured interviews conducted in the first phase of the research, the menus of the relevant businesses were also collected. In addition, other hotels and restaurants in the sample group were contacted and the menus of a total of 44 businesses were accessed. In determining the establishments, 3-, 4- and 5-star hotels and restaurants with high scores on the Tripadvisor.com travel site were preferred. The local dishes on the obtained menus were transferred to the menu observation key form, their frequencies were taken and analyzed in the computer environment.

The study obtained Ethical Approval from the “Scientific Ethics and Evaluation Committee of Selcuk University, Faculty of Tourism”, with the letter numbered 604916 and dated 02.10.2023.

## Findings

Under this heading, findings regarding semi-structured interviews and data compiled with the menu observation key form are included.

### Findings from semi-structured interviews

In line with the interviews conducted within the scope of the study, the answers given to each question were subjected to qualitative and quantitative content analysis. The findings are expressed below through tables and direct quotes from participant responses. Data concerning the businesses attending in the research is specified in Table 4 below.

**Table 4. Data Concerning Businesses Participating the Research**

Feature	Frequency (N=20)	%
<b>Type of Business</b>		
Hotel	7	35
Restaurant	13	65

Total	20	100
<b>Age of Business</b>		
Between 1-5 years	3	15
Between 6-10 years	6	30
Between 11-15 years	3	15
Between 26-30 years	1	5
Between 45-50 years	5	25
More than 50 years	2	10
Total	20	100
<b>Situation of preference by domestic and foreign tourists</b>		
Yes	20	100
No	0	0
Total	20	100
<b>Frequency of preference by locals, domestic tourists and foreign tourists</b>		
Mostly locals	6	30
Mostly locals and domestic tourists	3	15
Mostly domestic and foreign tourists	4	20
Mostly domestic tourists	4	20
Mostly foreign tourists	0	0
The ratio of locals and domestic/foreign tourists is app. the same	3	15
Total	20	100

According to the results illustrated in Table 4 %35 of the business are hotels and %65 are restaurants, %30 of them have been operating for 6-10 years, all of them are preferred by local and foreign tourists and %30 of the enterprises is mostly preferred by locals. Menu specification method and menu update frequency of the businesses attending in the research are illustrated in Table 5 below.

**Table 5. Menu Specification Method and Update Frequency**

Menu specification method	Frequency	%
General Manager or Business Manager specifies	6	30
Customer demand is considered	7	35
Customer profile is considered	3	15
The menu that draws from the past since it is a long-running business	4	20
Total	20	100
Frequency of updating menu items	Frequency	%
Don't update the menu	3	15
Once in a year	8	40
Once in several years	4	20
When necessary	5	25
Total	20	100

According to the results in Table 5, %34 of the enterprises specifies their menus considering customer demands and most of them (%40) update their menus once in a year. Sample statements made by some of the participants regarding the subject are as follows:

*“Since it is an international chain business, the menu is decided by the management.” (P4)*

*“The menu is prepared in response to customer demands.” (P10)*

*“We determine the menu based on customer profile.” (P18)*

*“We have been doing this for a long time. Inherited from family. We include the same dishes in the menu by diversifying them.” (P15)*

Results about inclusion of local food in the menus of the businesses are specified in Table 6 below. According to the table, almost all businesses (%90) include local food in their menus.

**Table 6. Inclusion of Local Food on the Menus of the Businesses**

Inclusion of local food in the menu of the business (n:20)	Frequency	%
Yes	18	90
No	2	10
Reason for inclusion of local food in the menu (n:18)	Frequency	%

To promote local food	6	33
To respond to customer requests	6	33
Both to promote local food and to respond customer requests	4	22
It's our family tradition	2	11
<b>Reason for not-inclusion of local food in the menu (n:2)</b>	Frequency	%
Because it is an international business	1	50
Headquarters determines the menu since it is a chain business	1	50

According to Table 6, most of the businesses stated that they include local foods in their menus to promote them (%33) and to respond to customer demands (%33). Sample statements from the participants are as follows:

*“Since it was recommended by customers, we decided to include it in the menu.” (P2)*

*“Both to promote local dishes and to meet the demands of our customers.” (P9)*

*“As a family tradition, we always produce dishes specific to Konya cuisine.” (P14)*

*“To introduce Konya's food culture to local and foreign tourists.” (P11)*

According to the results stated in Table 6 only two of the businesses do not include local dishes in their menus and they stated the reasons as follow:

*“Since our business is a branch of a chain business, the menu is determined by the headquarters.” (P1)*

*“Since we serve international guests, we provide mostly international cuisine.” (P4)*

In the study, most preferred local foods by the customers of the businesses were asked to the participants and results are illustrated in Table 7 below. Most of the participants specified more than one item. According to the results, most preferred local dishes are Bamya soup, Etliemek, Furun kebab and Hoşmerim dessert.

**Table 7. List of Most Preferred Local Foods on the Menus of the Businesses**

Local food name	Frequency	%
<i>Bamya</i> soup	11	55
<i>Etliemek</i>	9	45
<i>Furun kebab</i>	7	35
<i>Hoşmerim</i> dessert	3	15
<i>İrmik Helvası</i>	2	10
<i>Etli Yaprak Sarma</i>	2	10
<i>Arabaşı</i> soup	1	5
<i>Tirit</i>	1	5
<i>Yağ Somunu</i>	1	5
<i>Düğün pilavı</i>	1	5
<i>Sacarası</i> dessert	1	5

Participants of the study who believe that Konya cuisine is rich in local foods and they are important for gastronomy tourism in Konya are specified in Table 8 below. According to the results all of the interviewees believe that Konya cuisine is rich in regional foods and local foods play an important role in the development of gastronomy tourism in the city.

**Table 8. Interviewees Who Believe That Konya Cuisine is Rich in Local Foods and They Are Important for Gastronomy Tourism in Konya**

Feature	Frequency	%
Interviewees who believe that Konya cuisine is rich in regional foods	20	100
Interviewees who believe that local foods are important for gastronomy tourism in Konya	20	100

Regarding the information shared in table 8, sample statements by some of the participants about Konya cuisine are as follows:

*“Considering its past, Konya has a very old history and has hosted various civilizations and cultures. That's why food culture is so diverse in our region. For example, Furun kebab is a dish specific to Konya from the Seljuk period. It is known that beverages such as compote come from the Mevlana period and from the Mevlevi culture. Two great Turkish States ruled in the region*

for many years. Of course, the culinary culture of these two states was developed. As generations back to them, we continue their culture and heritage in terms of gastronomy.” (P5)

“Our city is very rich in local dishes. Furun kebab, Etliemek and Bamya soup are our most well-known dishes. However, there are many more local dishes in Konya cuisine. These need to be introduced.” (P13)

Regarding the information shared in table 7, sample statements by some of the interviewees who believe that local foods are important for gastronomy tourism in Konya are as follows:

“We have been serving local dishes for many years. According to our observations, local dishes are important for Konya's gastronomy tourism. In this regard, the promotion and promotion of local dishes should be increased.” (P14)

“Yes, local dishes are important for Konya tourism. Most of the customers who come to hotels ask about local dishes. For some reason, International Hotels insist on staying away from local dishes in their menus. In terms of gastronomy tourism, local foods should be included in hotel menus in the hotel industry.” (P3)

### Findings regarding the data compiled with the menu observation key form

Availability of local food in menus of the businesses according to menu observation key form are illustrated in Table 9 below.

**Table 9. Availability of Local Foods on Menus According to Menu Observation Key Form**

Item No	Local Meat Foods	Frequency	%	Item No	Local Pastries	Frequency	%
1	Furun Kebab	15	34	18	Etliemek	12	27
2	Tirit	11	25	19	Bıçakarası	9	20
3	Etli Yaprak Sarma	4	9	20	Peynirli Börek	9	20
4	Patlican Orta	1	2	21	Konya Böreği	9	20
5	Düğün Pilavı	1	2	22	Yağ Somunu	3	7
6	Ekmek Salması	1	2	23	Su Böreği	1	2
7	Kabak Çiçeği Dolması	0	0	24	Sac Böreği	1	2
8	Ekşili Kabak	0	0	Item No	Local Desserts	Frequency	%
9	Topalak Köftesi	0	0	25	Höşmerim	12	27
10	Calla	0	0	26	Sacarası	9	20
11	Çullama	0	0	27	İrmik Helvası	3	7
Item No	Local Soups	Frequency	%	28	Ekmek Kadayıfı	0	0
12	Bamya Soup	18	41	29	Zerde	0	0
13	Yayla Soup	6	14	30	Kaygana	0	0
14	Tandır Soup	5	11	31	Pekmez Helvası	0	0
15	Arabaşı Soup	4	9	Item No	Local Drinks	Frequency	%
16	Toyga Soup	3	7	32	Syrups	1	2
17	Terhun Soup	1	2	33	Compotes	0	0

According to Table 9, the most included local meat food to menus of the businesses is Furun Kebab (%34). It's followed by Tirit (%25) and Etli Yaprak Sarma (%9). The inclusion of Patlican Orta, Düğün Pilavı and Ekmek Salması is very low. Local meat foods Kabak Çiçeği Dolması, Ekşili Kabak, Topalak Köftesi, Calla and Çullama are not included in the menus.

Among the local soups, Bamya (%41) is the most included local soup in the menus of the businesses. It's followed by Yayla Soup (%14) and Tandır Soup (%11). Even though some of the soups are rarely included (Arabaşı Soup, Toyga Soup, Terhun Soup) all of the soups specified in the menu key form are included in the menus.

Among the local pastries, Etliemek (27) is the most included local pastry. It's followed by Bıçakarası (%20), Peynirli Börek (%20) and Konya Böreği (%20). Even though some of the pastries are rarely included (Yağ Somunu, Su Böreği, Sac Böreği) all of the pastries specified in the menu key form are included in the menus.

The most included local dessert to menus of the businesses is Höşmerim (%27). It's followed by Sacarası (%20). The inclusion of İrmik Helvası (%7) is low. Local desserts of Ekmek Kadayıfı, Zerde, Kaygana and Pekmez Helvası are not included in the menus.



There are two types of local drinks specified in the menu key form; Syrup and Compotes. Syrups are served in just one of the businesses and compotes are not included in the menus.

When we consider Table 9 in general, it can be stated that the most included local foods in the menus are Bamya Soup (%41), Furun Kebab (%34), Etliemek (%27) and Hoşmerim Dessert (%27). Among the 33 local food menu items 10 of them (%30) are not included in menus and 12 (%36) of them are very rarely included (below %10) in the menus. Based on this result, it is possible to say that the level of inclusion of local dishes in the menus of local food and beverage enterprises is low.

### **Conclusion and suggestions**

This study aims to examine the inclusion level of local dishes in the menus of hotels and food and beverage establishments serving in Konya, which has a significant potential for gastronomy tourism. According to the results of the study, the most preferred local dishes by the customers of the local businesses are Bamya soup, Etliemek, Furun kebab and Hoşmerim dessert. These dishes are also the most included local foods in the menus. Likewise Seç and Esen (2020) and Büyükşalvarcı et al. (2016) also stated in their studies that the mentioned dishes were mostly found in the menus.

Although a significant part of the businesses includes the most preferred local dishes in their menus, many local dishes belonging to Konya cuisine are not included in the menus. Accordingly, the level of inclusion of local foods in the menus is generally low among the examined businesses. Similarly, Seç and Esen (2020) and Büyükşalvarcı et al. (2016) also found that inclusion level of local Konya dishes in menus is low. There are also studies examining local dishes in the menus of local businesses serving in different regions (Ginigen et al., 2022; Čaušević and Fusté-Forné, 2020; Erdem et al., 2018; Kurnaz and İşlek, 2018; Ceylan and Güven, 2018). These studies have similarly revealed that the level of inclusion of local foods in menus is low. Accordingly, it is possible to say that the research findings are in parallel with the literature.

In studies examining the relationship between local dishes and visitors' destination choice, it has been stated that local food is a positive attraction in destinations, they are demanded by visitors (Yıldırım et al., 2015; Yurtseven and Kaya, 2011), they enhance the visitor experience (Sims, 2009) and they increase the likelihood of tourists visiting the destination again (Ryu and Jang, 2006). Local cuisine and local dishes also enrich the travel experience by allowing visitors to explore the cultural aspects of destinations, to communicate with local people and to have authentic experiences. With these advantages, local dishes will increase visitors' interest in a region and their demand for local businesses. However, the results of the current research and similar studies in the literature also show that businesses serving in destinations do not include enough local dishes in their menus, despite this positive infrastructure. This may cause a deficiency in meeting visitors' desire to have local and authentic experiences in destinations. In this regard, suggestions that can be developed for local businesses and local governments in the light of the research results are given below. It is aimed that the research results will help local businesses in their marketing strategies and local governments and local tourism offices in planning promotional activities for Konya:

- Businesses can conduct research to get feedback on their current and potential customers' demands and expectations for local food. In line with customer interest in local dishes, businesses can make the necessary adjustments to their existing menus. According to Ryu and Jang (2006), restaurant operators can provide satisfactory service by developing new dishes with local authentic ingredients in line with visitors' expectations.
- Businesses can highlight local dishes in their menus. They can include explanations and interesting details about local dishes. Detailed information including historical background of local dishes, their preparation procedures, their story, if any, and traditional rituals related to food may be particularly interesting for gastronomy tourists.
- Food and beverage businesses can benefit from local suppliers to increase the number of local dishes they include in their menus and to make existing dishes more qualified with fresh and quality ingredients. They can collaborate with resources such as local businesses, farmers and chefs specializing in traditional dishes to obtain the necessary ingredients for the preparation of local dishes. Sharing this information with visitors, especially within the scope of marketing activities, may also be attractive for visitors focused on local food.
- To offer their visitors a more unique dining experience, local food and beverage establishments can organize culinary workshops where they can involve visitors in the preparation of local dishes.

- Food and beverage businesses can highlight local food in their promotion and marketing activities through their corporate websites or social media platforms. They can make efforts to increase customer satisfaction, especially by responding to feedback from social media.

- Local governments can also take various initiatives to increase the inclusion of local dishes in the menus of businesses serving in the region. Büyükşalvarcı et al. (2016) stated in their research that local governments can contribute to increasing awareness on this issue by organizing local cooking competitions. The research also stated that local governments and local tourism offices taking initiatives to highlight local cuisine in written and visual media (with promotion and advertising activities, cooking programs, etc.) will contribute to the introduction of local dishes, especially among young people. Similarly, Seç and Esen (2019) stated that local governments can contribute to the local cuisine by acting in cooperation with public institutions and universities, conducting promotional activities and organizing gastronomy events. In this way, the local cuisine, which is a part of the local culture, will be preserved by being passed on from generation to generation.

This study has several limitations. The sample group of the study consists of a limited number of food and beverage establishments (n=20). For this reason, the results are limited to the sample. Expanding the sample group in future studies will increase the generalizability of the data. In addition, in the study, analyzes were made through the menus of the businesses and interviews with the business managers. For this reason, the study focuses only on the supplier perspective. In future studies, visitors' expectations regarding local food can also be examined. In this way, both supplier and consumer perspectives can be included at the same time.

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