



## PLATE DESIGN AND PRESENTATION IN MICHELIN-STARRED RESTAURANTS: THE CASE OF ISTANBUL

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### Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the plate designs and food presentations of restaurants that were awarded Michelin stars in İstanbul in 2023. In line with this aim, the qualitative research method of collecting data from online sources has been preferred. The study group consists of food presentation photos shared by Michelin-starred restaurants in İstanbul, on the Instagram social media platform between October 14, 2014, and March 11, 2023. It was determined that the most commonly used plate shape by all establishments was round, with white being the predominant plate color, and the plates exhibiting flat or minimal patterns and designs, with standard dimensions. Regarding presentation quantity, composition, and tools, it was observed that dishes were served in single portions, mostly as whole servings on plates. One restaurant (R4) predominantly uses natural stone as a presentation tool, while (R5) has a patterned/simple plate design. It is anticipated that other establishments in the food and beverage sector may achieve success in food presentation and plate design by adopting the use of round plates, preferring white as the color, and adhering to the use of flat and standard-sized plates, as observed in Michelin-starred restaurants.

**Keywords:** Michelin Star, Plate Design, Food Presentation, İstanbul, Turkey

### Introduction

In order to sustain their vital activities, humans must fulfill their nutritional needs. However, it is possible to argue that the manner in which humans meet their nutritional needs differs from that of other creatures. The act of eating has evolved over time to be considered not only a biological necessity but also an artistic product due to historical developments, interhuman interactions, and status needs. Therefore, the relationship between food preparation and art has increasingly grown, and this relationship has been reflected in plate presentations (Uçuk and Özkanlı, 2017). Generally, visual aesthetics are one of the first aspects considered when purchasing a visually aesthetic product or evaluating a purchased product (Mumcu and Kizman, 2015). The aesthetic values of the food context (Michel et al., 2014); presentation vessels for food (Chen et al., 2018), and visual characteristics (Wansink, 2004; Garcia-Segovia et al., 2015) are noted.

Studies have shown that the outward appearance of food is a significant preference criterion in consumer eating behavior (Youssef et al., 2015; Garcia-Segovia et al., 2015; Velasco et al., 2016). Moreover, this relationship has become a subject of competition among restaurants. Plate design, by differentiating the presentation of products in food and beverage establishments, provides a competitive advantage over other establishments. Ensuring the continuity of a food and beverage establishment depends not only on the products it produces but also on marketing those products and gaining the approval of its customers. In today's world, where design and presentation are increasingly important and prevalent in all aspects of life, plate design and presentation

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have become not just a preference but a necessity for food and beverage establishments. At this point, the importance of plate design and innovative presentation styles cannot be denied (Eren, 2019).

In conclusion, people not only desire delicious food but also prefer restaurants that offer quality in terms of plate presentation (Eren, 2019). Among these restaurants, Michelin-starred establishments stand out as recognized and globally accepted venues for both taste and presentation quality. Restaurant guides rate these high-quality restaurants, known for their creative chefs who prepare special flavors and constantly innovate. Through inspections conducted by anonymous inspectors appointed by restaurant guides, evaluations are made to determine the world's best restaurants. Among the restaurant guides that publish lists of the highest-quality restaurants and renowned chefs, the Michelin Guide holds a prominent position. The Michelin Guide is the most well-known and respected restaurant guide worldwide (Uğuzluoğlu, 2021). This research aims to examine the plate designs and food presentations of Michelin-starred restaurants. It is believed that documenting how these restaurants, considered successful in the private sector, execute their presentations can provide valuable insights to stakeholders in the private sector.

## **Literature Review**

### **The Relationship between Food and Art**

Eating is a biological necessity, yet dining encompasses the most fundamental social activity in many respects. Dining merges biological necessity with cultural significance. It is not merely a matter of digesting calories, proteins, vitamins, and minerals; rather, it is an action imbued with meanings that outweigh its metabolic or nutritional aspects, culturally shaped and laden with symbolism (Hegarty, 2006). Throughout history and across the globe, ideas, desires, and emotions have been widely represented in art through creative endeavors. Art can be expressed as the tangible embodiment of cultural, social, and political values from ancient civilizations to the present day. By exploring food as both an art form and a subject of art, changes in eating, cooking, and taste preferences in culinary styles over time can be observed (Güzey, 2019). Art and food are important for different reasons. Typically, while art is associated with beauty, emotions, and creativity, food is considered a fundamental means of sustenance (Andina and Barbero, 2018). The connection between food and human emotions and culture is a necessary and inseparable element for it to be considered as art. When a person can consume a meal and evoke aesthetic experiences with it, the intention of the preparer being such, then the meal becomes art (Neely, 2007). It is noted that food is the only art form that affects all five human senses (sight, taste, touch, smell, hearing) (Kivela and Crofts, 2006). It has pervaded all realms of art and has become a paramount and integral component of visual arts (Perullo, 2016). Dining encompasses aesthetic processes involving various molds (Teil and Hennion, 2018). In summary, dining stands at the intersection of several key aspects of life: energy (what food is), creativity (ways in which food can be prepared), and pleasure (Andina and Barbero, 2018).

### **Plate Design and Food Presentation**

Design is a word of Latin origin meaning to represent and shape (Tunalı, 2009). The relationship between food and design can be explained through aesthetic concerns. The process of preparing a meal involves several stages until the raw materials take their final form. The synthesis of professional, cultural, and artistic knowledge in preparing meals can be expressed as design (Uçuk and Özkanlı, 2017). Design and composition are often dependent on the ingredients that make up the taste of the dish and the style of the chef or restaurant (Velasco et al., 2016). The presentation of a dish involves arrangements aimed at exposing it to visual perception. The process from presentation to satiation is designed to encourage individuals to eat (Cornell et al., 1989). Visual processes related to the sense of taste and preference, such as the expectation of color influencing taste and preference, influence the preference for a dish and stimulate the desire to eat (Ueda et al., 2020). Additionally, being visually exposed to a new food can reduce neophobia and facilitate acceptance (Wadhwa and Capaldi-Phillips, 2014). This process is also related to the perception of food through sight and, consequently, the process of perceiving meals.

When examining research on consumers' perceptions of food, it becomes evident that vision plays a crucial role in the dining experience, particularly influencing appetite and acceptance of food (Cornell et al., 1989; Wadhwa and Capaldi-Phillips, 2014; Jang and Kim, 2015; Ueda et al., 2020). In other words, how a meal looks provides a wealth of information and, most importantly, helps identify the food being considered. Before consuming a meal, we see it. As stated, "the first taste is always taken with the eyes." Even a simple visual cue, such as the color of a food or beverage, is noted to influence the experience of consuming it (Spence et al., 2010; Zellner, 2013). Therefore, it is possible to say that there are various and multi-dimensional criteria for visual evaluations of meals. Among these criteria are taste, freshness, texture, color, aroma, density, shape,

and size of the meal (Zellner et al., 1991; Cardello, 1996; Szczesniak, 2002; Garber et al., 2003; Wada et al., 2010; Arce-Lopera et al., 2015; Motoki et al., 2020; Ueda et al., 2020). All these criteria constitute a quality discrimination process that influences consumer preferences and eating behavior (Arce-Lopera et al., 2015).

Considering the instructions given for plate design and food presentation, it is important to determine whether the attractiveness of the meal presentation enhances its taste. The attractiveness of plate design can be achieved through creative design and presentation, which includes liking the components of the meal, proper placement of food items, and having food items placed in different quarters of the plate (Gisslen, 1918). Therefore, businesses, chefs, or cooks should pay attention to plate design and food presentation.

### **Michelin-Star**

Nowadays, there are many organizations that evaluate restaurants, with some operating regionally and others internationally/worldwide. The Michelin Guide is one such organization. Being one of the most important assessment bodies (Onorati and Giardullo, 2020), the Michelin Guide employs homogeneous criteria to rate restaurants and awards up to three "Michelin stars" to the best chefs around the world (Castillo-Manzano et al., 2020). Michelin stars are awarded to restaurants based on five criteria: the quality of ingredients used, mastery of flavor and cooking techniques, the chef's personality in the kitchen, value for money, and consistency between visits. One star is given to restaurants that "cook high-quality meals", two stars represent "excellent cooking", and three stars signify "exceptional cooking" (Michelin Guide, 2016). In summary, a one-star restaurant is worth a visit, a two-star restaurant is worth a detour, but a three-star restaurant is worth making a trip for all by itself (Castillo-Manzano et al., 2020). Michelin-starred restaurants are symbols of gourmet experiences and are recognized internationally (Kiatkawsin and Han, 2019). Responsible for attracting media attention and numerous customers, they are not only responsible for showcasing the gastronomy of a place but also for enhancing its tourism appeal and economy (Meneguel et al., 2019). They are considered fine-dining establishments (Chiang and Guo, 2021) and positioned in the upper or luxury segment (Pacheco, 2018).

### **Methodology**

The purpose of this research is to examine the plate designs and food presentations of Michelin-starred restaurants. In line with this aim, the qualitative research method of collecting data from online sources has been preferred. Various online platforms such as email, websites, news groups, forums, and social media (Instagram, Twitter) can be chosen for qualitative research on the internet (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). The research group consists of the Instagram social media sharing platform photos of food presentations shared by Michelin-starred restaurants in Istanbul, in the period between 14.10.2014-11.03.2023. The obtained data were evaluated using content analysis method. Since content analysis was preferred in the research, the obtained data were analyzed in four stages: (1) coding the data, (2) finding themes, (3) organizing codes and themes, and (4) defining and interpreting the findings (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). In conducting content analysis, a closed coding system was applied, and the categories and codes created in the study titled "Historical Development of Plates Used in Pastry and an Examination on Presentations and Plates Used Today" by Cömert and Şahin (2021) were used as a basis for content analysis.

Another important aspect in qualitative research is ensuring the validity and reliability of the obtained data. To achieve validity and reliability in such research, the researcher needs to observe the facts related to the study impartially and verify the obtained data through methods such as triangulation, participant confirmation, and colleague confirmation. Credibility, one of the methods used to ensure qualitative validity, is tested through methods such as in-depth data collection, triangulation, prolonged engagement, participant confirmation, and expert examination (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). In this research, to ensure validity, the obtained data were presented to three experts for their opinions, and their approvals were obtained. To ensure reliability, consensus between coders is necessary during data analysis (Silverman, 2005; Creswell, 2016). Therefore, before using the obtained data, three authors examined them separately in detail and prepared them for use in the study.

### **Findings**

The literature review of the research has focused on the relationship between food and art, plate design-presentation, and the concept of the Michelin Star. In order to assess the current status of Michelin-starred restaurants, photographs of food presentations shared on Instagram, a significant social media platform, between 2014 and 2023 have been analyzed. Information regarding the design and presentation of these dishes is provided below.

**Table 1. The Findings Regarding Plate Designs of R1**

Categories	Codes	N	%
Shape of the Plate (n:40)	Round	35	87,5
	Oval	3	7,5
	Square	1	2,5
	Other	1	2,5
Color of the Plate (n:40)	White	16	40
	Brown	8	20
	Black	8	20
	Gray	4	10
	Cream	2	5
	Charcoal	1	2,5
Pattern-Model Condition of Presentation Utensils (n:40)	Wood	1	2,5
	Flat-Flat	17	42,5
	Patterned-Concave	14	35
	Patterned-Flat	5	12,5
Size of the Plate (n:40)	Flat-Concave	4	10
	Standard	39	97,5
	Other*	1	2,5

\*Other: It covers materials used in food presentations other than plates.

Source: Table created by the authors.

The findings regarding the plates used in the posts related to R1 are presented in Table 1. The table contains categories and codes concerning the presentation posts attributed to R1. Accordingly, the category of plates used in the presentation consists of four sub-codes: plate shape, plate color, plate pattern and design status, and plate size. Among the 40 plates used in the presentation posts for R1, 87,5% were round plates, 7,5% were oval plates, 2,5% were square plates, and 2,5% were plates in other categories. When examining the colors of the plates, it is observed that 40% were white, 20% were brown, 20% were black, 10% were gray, 5% were cream, 2,5% were charcoal, and 2,5% were wooden in color. Regarding the pattern and design status of the plates used in the presentations, it was found that 42,5% were flat, 35% were patterned/concave, 12,5% were patterned-flat, and 10% were flat/concave plates. Finally, when the plates were examined in terms of size, it was determined that 97,5% of the plates were in standard measurements, while 2,5% were in different measurements categorized as "other."

**Table 2. Findings Regarding Plate Presentations for R1**

Categories	Codes	N	%
Presentation Quantity (n:40)	Single Portion* Presentation	35	87,5
	Multiple Portions Presentation**	5	12,5
Presentation Composition (n:40)	Whole Presentation***	28	70
	Sliced Presentation****	5	12,5
	Individual Presentation*****	7	17,5
Presentation Utensils and Equipment (n:40)	Plate	34	85
	Natural Stone	4	10
	Wood	2	5

\* Single Portion Presentation: Includes presentations prepared for a guest.

\*\* Multiple Portions Presentation: It includes products that exceed one serving on a plate.

\*\*\* Whole Presentation: It covers the whole presentation of the main product on the plate.

\*\*\*\* Sliced Presentation: It covers the sliced presentation of the main product on the plate.

\*\*\*\*\* Individual Presentation: It covers the presentation of a dish as a single bite on a plate and small serving utensils.

Source: Table created by the authors.

Information regarding the photo shares related to the presentations on the Instagram pages of Michelin-starred restaurants in Istanbul from 2014 to 2023 is provided in Table 2. When the presentation quantity category is examined, it is determined that 87,5% of the presentations were single servings, while 12,5% were multiple serving presentations. Regarding the composition of the shared photos, it is observed that 70% were presented as whole dishes, 12,5% were sliced, and 17,5% consisted of individual/special presentations. Finally, when the

presentation tools and equipment of the shared photos are examined, it is found that 85% were on plates, 10% were on natural stone, and 5% were on wood.

**Table 3. The Findings Regarding Plate Designs of R2**

Categories	Codes	N	%
Shape of the Plate (n:82)	Round	77	94
	Rectangle	2	2,4
	Ellipse	2	2,4
	Other	1	1,2
Color of the Plate (n:82)	White	28	34,1
	Black	24	29,2
	Light Blue	11	13,4
	Alice Blue	3	3,7
	Brown	3	3,7
	Red	3	3,7
	Gray	2	2,5
	Lime Color	2	2,5
	Baby Blue	1	1,2
	Powder Blue	1	1,2
	Navy Blue	1	1,2
	Yellow	1	1,2
	Green	1	1,2
	Moss Green	1	1,2
Pattern-Model Condition of Presentation Utensils (n:82)	Flat-Flat	62	75,6
	Flat-Concave	9	11
	Patterned-Flat	8	9,7
	Patterned-Concave	3	3,7
Size of the Plate (n:82)	Standard	81	98,8
	Other	1	1,2

Source: Table created by the authors.

The findings regarding the plates used in the posts related to R2 are presented in Table 3. The table contains categories and codes concerning the presentation posts attributed to R2. Accordingly, the category of plates used in the presentation consists of four sub-codes: plate shape, plate color, plate pattern and design status, and plate size. Among the 82 plates used in the presentation posts for R2, 94% were round plates, 2,4% were rectangular plates, 2,4% were ellipse plates, and 1,2% were plates in other categories. When examining the colors of the plates, it is observed that 34,1% were white, 29,2% were black, 13,4% were light blue, 3,7% were alice blue, 3,7% were brown, red, 2,5% were gray and lime colors, baby blue, powder blue, navy blue, yellow, green, and moss green colors each comprised 1,2%. Regarding the pattern and design status of the plates used in the presentations, it was found that 75,6% were flat, 11% were flat/concave, 9,7% were patterned-flat, and 3,7% were patterned/concave plates. Finally, when the plates were examined in terms of size, it was determined that 98,8% of the plates were in standard measurements, while 1,2% were in different measurements categorized as "other."

**Table 4. Findings Regarding Plate Presentations for R2**

Categories	Codes	N	%
Presentation Quantity (n:82)	Single Portion Presentation	82	100
Presentation Composition (n:82)	Whole Presentation	63	76,8
	Sliced Presentation	6	7,3
	Individual Presentation	13	15,9
Presentation Utensils and Equipment (n:82)	Plate	79	96,3
	Wood	2	2,5
	Tree Leaf	1	1,2

Source: Table created by the authors.

Information regarding the photo shares related to the presentations on the Instagram pages of R2, an important social media platform, is provided in Table 4. When the presentation quantity category is examined, it is determined that 100% of the presentations were single servings. Regarding the composition of the shared photos, it is observed that 76,8% were presented as whole dishes, 15,9% were sliced, and 7,3% consisted of

individual/special presentations. Finally, when the presentation tools and equipment of the shared photos are examined, it is found that 96,3% were on plates, 2,5% were on wood, and 1,2% were on a leaf of a tree.

**Table 5. The Findings Regarding Plate Designs of R3**

Categories	Codes	N	%
Shape of the Plate	Round	42	100
	White	18	42,9
	Gray	8	19
Color of the Plate (n:42)	Black	7	16,7
	Light Blue	5	12
	Moss Green	3	7,1
	Log Color	1	2,3
	Flat-Flat	17	40,5
Pattern-Model Condition of Presentation Utensils (n:42)	Flat-Concave	11	26,2
	Patterned-Flat	11	26,2
	Patterned-Concave	3	7,1
Size of the Plate (n:42)	Standard	38	90,5
	Other	4	9,5

Source: Table created by the authors.

Findings regarding the plates used in the shares related to R3 are presented in Table 5. The table includes categories and codes related to the presentation shares made by R3. Accordingly, the category of plates used in the presentation consists of four sub-codes: plate shape, plate color, plate pattern and design status, and plate size. Of the 42 plates used in the presentation shares of R3, 100% are composed of round plates. When the colors of the plates are examined, it is observed that 42,9% are white, 19% are gray, 16,7% are black, 12% are light blue, 7,1% are moss green, and 2,3% are log colors. When the pattern and design status of the plates used in the presentations are examined, it is determined that 40,5% are flat-flat, 26,2% are flat/concave, 26,2% are patterned/flat, and 7,1% are patterned/concave plates. Finally, when the plates are examined in terms of size, it is found that 90,5% of the plates are in standard dimensions, while 9,5% are in different dimensions in the other category.

**Table 6. Findings Regarding Plate Presentations for R3**

Categories	Codes	N	%
Presentation Quantity (n:42)	Single Portion Presentation	41	97,6
	Multiple Portions Presentation	1	2,4
Presentation Composition (n:42)	Whole Presentation	35	83,3
	Sliced Presentation	7	16,7
Presentation Utensils and Equipment (n:42)	Plate	36	85,7
	Natural Stone	6	14,3

Source: Table created by the authors.

The information regarding the photo shares related to presentations on R3's significant social media platform Instagram is provided in Table 6. Upon examination of the presentation quantity category, it was determined that 97,6% of the presentations were single portions, while 2,4% were multiple portion presentations. When the composition of the shared photos is examined, it is observed that 83,3% are presented as whole, while 16,7% are sliced presentations. Lastly, upon examination of the presentation tools and equipment in the shared photos, it was determined that 85,7% were on plates, while 14,3% were on natural stone.

**Table 7. The Findings Regarding Plate Designs of R4**

Categories	Codes	N	%
Shape of the Plate (n:47)	Round	42	89,4
	Rectangle	3	6,4
	Ellipse	2	4,2
Color of the Plate (n:47)	White	22	46,8
	Gray	8	17
	Black	7	14,9
	Light Blue	5	10,7
	Moss Green	3	6,4

	Log Color	2	4,2
Pattern-Model Condition of Presentation Utensils (n:47)	Flat-Flat	17	36,2
	Flat-Concave	13	27,6
	Patterned-Flat	11	23,4
	Patterned-Concave	6	12,8
Size of the Plate (n:47)	Standard	43	91,5
	Other	4	8,5

Source: Table created by the authors.

The findings regarding the plates used in the shares related to R4 are presented in Table 7. The table includes categories and codes related to the presentation shares made by R4. Accordingly, the category of plates used in the presentation consists of four sub-codes: the shape of the plate, the color of the plate, the pattern and model status of the plate, and the size of the plate. Among the plates used in the presentation shares of R4, 89,4% are round plates, 6,4% are rectangular plates, and 4,2% are ellipse plates. Looking at the colors of the plates, it is seen that 46,8% are white, 17% are gray, 14,9% are black, 10,7% are light blue, 6,4% are moss green, and 4,2% are log colors. When the pattern and model status of the plates used in the presentations are examined, it is determined that 36,2% are flat-flat, 27,6% are flat/concave, 23,4% are patterned-flat, and 12,8% are patterned/concave plates. Finally, when the plates are examined in terms of size, it is determined that 91,5% of the plates are in standard sizes, while 8,5% are in different sizes in the other category.

**Table 8. Findings Regarding Plate Presentations for R4**

Categories	Codes	N	%
Presentation Quantity (n:47)	Single Portion Presentation	43	91,5
	Multiple Portions Presentation	4	8,5
Presentation Composition (n:47)	Whole Presentation	40	85,1
	Sliced Presentation	4	8,5
	Individual Presentation	3	6,4
Presentation Utensils and Equipment (n:47)	Plate	5	10,6
	Natural Stone	42	89,4

Source: Table created by the authors.

Table 8 presents the information regarding the photo shares related to the presentations on Instagram pages of R4, an important social media platform. When the presentation quantity category is examined, it is determined that 91,5% of the presentations are single servings, while 8,5% are multiple servings. Upon examining the composition of the shared photos, it is observed that 85,1% are presented as whole, 8,5% are sliced, and 6,4% are individual/special presentations. Finally, when the presentation tools and equipment of the shared photos are examined, it is found that 10,6% are on plates, while 89,4% are on natural stone.

**Table 9. The Findings Regarding Plate Designs of R5**

Categories	Codes	N	%
Shape of the Plate (n:165)	Round	156	94,5
	Ellipse	5	3
	Rectangle	1	0,6
	Other	3	1,9
Color of the Plate (n:165)	White	67	40,6
	Gray	23	14
	Light Blue	18	11
	Midnight Blue	18	11
	Black	14	8,4
	Cream	12	7,2
	Aqua	10	6
Pattern-Model Condition of Presentation Utensils (n:165)	Other	3	1,8
	Patterned-Flat	49	29,7
	Flat-Flat	45	27,3
	Patterned-Concave	43	26
	Flat-Concave	25	15,1
Size of the Plate (n:165)	Standard	158	95,7

Other	7	4,3
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Source: Table created by the authors.

Table 9 displays the findings regarding the plates used in the shares attributed to R5. The table includes categories and codes related to the presentations made by R5. Accordingly, the category of plates used in the presentation consists of four sub-codes: the shape of the plate, the color of the plate, the pattern and model status of the plate, and the size of the plate. In the shares related to plate presentation by R5, it is observed that 94,5% of the 165 plates used are round, 3% are ellipse, 0,6% are rectangular, and 1,9% are from other categories of plates. When looking at the colors of the plates, it is determined that 40,6% are white, 14% are gray, 11% are light blue, 11% are midnight blue, 8,4% are black, 7,2% are cream, 6% are aqua, and 1,8% are from other categories of colors. Upon examining the pattern and model status of the plates used in the presentations, it is found that 29,7% are patterned/flat, 27,3% are flat/flat, 26% are patterned/concave, 15,1% are flat/concave, and 1,9% are from other plates. Finally, when the plates are examined in terms of size, it is observed that 95,7% of the plates are in standard measurements, while 4.3% are in different measurements from other categories.

**Tablo 10. Findings Regarding Plate Presentations for R5**

Categories	Codes	N	%
Presentation Quantity (n:165)	Single Portion Presentation	158	95,7
	Multiple Portions Presentation	7	4,3
Presentation Composition (n:165)	Whole Presentation	147	89,1
	Sliced Presentation	4	2,4
	Individual Presentation	14	8,5
Presentation Utensils and Equipment (n:165)	Plate	162	98,1
	Glass Flask	3	1,9

Source: Table created by the authors.

Table 10 provides information regarding the photo shares related to presentations on Instagram pages attributed to R5, an important social media platform. According to the analysis of presentation quantity category, it was determined that 95,7% of the presentations were single servings, while 4,3% were multiple servings. Upon examining the composition of the shared photos, it is observed that 89,1% were presented as a whole, 2,4% were sliced, and 8,5% were individual/special presentations. Finally, when the presentation tools and equipment of the shared photos were examined, it was found that 98,1% were on plates, while 1,9% were in glass flask.

### Conclusion and Suggestions

With the increasing demand for out-of-home dining, there has been a rise in the number of food and beverage establishments. In order to sustain their presence in the evolving and competitive environment, these establishments need to capture a loyal customer base, differentiate themselves from competitors, and increase customer satisfaction rates. This is because customer satisfaction is the focal point of the service sector. It is possible that a customer who purchases goods or services from an establishment and is not satisfied may not revisit the establishment in the next purchasing process and may not recommend it to potential customers. Therefore, it is necessary to ensure customer satisfaction. There are many ways to achieve customer satisfaction, and one of them, especially for food and beverage establishments, is the design and presentation of the products they offer. This aspect is crucial for businesses. Therefore, within the scope of the research, the plate design and food presentations of five Michelin-starred restaurants operating in Istanbul were examined. The portion quantity used in plate presentations, presentation composition, utensils used in presentation, plate shapes, colors, and the pattern status of presentation utensils were analyzed. It was found that the most commonly used plate shape among all establishments was round, the plate colors were predominantly white, the pattern and model status of the plates were flat/flat, and their sizes were standard across all establishments.

When examining the portion quantities, presentation composition, and presentation utensils, it is observed that single servings are served whole on the plate. It was found that the majority of the utensils used in presentation in only one restaurant (R4) were made of natural stone, and the pattern and model of the plates in (R5) restaurant were determined to be patterned/flat. A study examining changes in plates used in pastry and presentation techniques found that the plates were round, white, and standard in size, and they were served as single servings, on the counter, or on the plate, which is consistent with the findings of this research (Cömert



and Şahin, 2021). Another study on plate presentation found that innovative presentation techniques could increase acceptance rates among customers (Uçuk et al., 2022). In international literature, a study investigating the shape and color of plates used in presentation found that customers perceive a white plate as delicious/sweet and a black plate as bitter (Chen et al., 2018). Additionally, another study shows that people often prefer balanced and visually appealing compositions (Velasco et al., 2016).

Based on the data obtained within the scope of the research, it is predicted that food and beverage establishments in the industry could achieve success in food presentation and plate design by adopting the use of round plate shapes, preferring white color, and paying attention to the use of flat and standard-sized plates in Michelin-starred restaurants. This is because referencing Michelin-starred restaurants in terms of food presentation and plate design would be an important approach, considering that these restaurants undergo a comprehensive evaluation process, are inspected, and are considered successful establishments. Like any research, this study also has some limitations. It focuses only on the examination of food presentation and plate designs of establishments that have been awarded Michelin stars between 2014 and 2023. Subsequent research could focus on restaurants that received Michelin stars in 2024. In addition, in future studies, the presentation of the food and the design of the plates in the Michelin Guide restaurants in different cities of Turkey can be analysed. In future studies, quantitative and qualitative research could be conducted to measure the level of satisfaction with the food presentation and plate designs of Michelin-starred restaurants and those listed in the Michelin Guide by surveying customers who visit these establishments.

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