A Cultural, Gastronomic, and Touristic Asset: The Kuşadası Oleatrium Olive and Olive Oil History Museum Case

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Abstract

Museums, which hold a significant place in cultural tourism, are interaction points which symbolize the cultural perspective of the cities they belong to and where culture is transmitted to visitors. The aim of the present study is to highlight the importance of gastronomy museums as a means to protect, preserve and promote the cultural heritage, to contribute to gastronomy tourism, and to add to the economic value of a country's cultural heritage. The study focused on The Oleatrium Olive and Olive Oil History Museum. The data for the study were collected through a semi-structured interview with the museum director and on-site observations in the museum. In the museum, the history of olive oil making is chronologically presented from the Archaic Period up until today through archeological/ethnographic artifacts and simulations of the developed olive oil-making technologies and common use areas of olive oil. The museum consists of 11 different sections, each of which is connected to another with archways. Also, each of the sections has a door opening to the courtyard. In the courtyard, terracotta pithos and stone works of art belonging to different periods are exhibited. The museum sheds light on the past through exhibitions of tools and equipment for olive oil making; on the present through providing its visitors with various experiences; and on the future through educational activities intended for children.

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