How gastronomy can encourage creativity and influence the economy development.

INTRO:

Creativity is an action of mind, a revelation of imagination; through food, it calls on 4 of the 7 senses, as sight, smell, taste and touch.

Slide 2: Food styling

Yes, food styling and food designers inspire creativity but it is already above most of the citizen's conception on creativity. It is not just about what we can eat and how food can affect our creativity, or how we can present the food nicely on a dish as shown on these pictures , but it is really about how gastronomy can be creative and how this creativity can be use for enhancing sustainable urban development. Creativity through food should be available to all; when based on the city assets, it is easier to reach; then, if you may allow me, I will now show to you how the assets can be a "support lever" for creativity, sustainable urban and economy development.

But in order to understand why Gaziantep has been designated by UNESCO, you need to know about Gaziantep.

Slide 3. Where is Gaziantep?

Gaziantep is located at the western tip of the south-eastern region of Anatolia and at the north-western tip of Mesopotamia. The city is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world. It has a history dating back to the Paleolithic Period and is home to Hittite, Roman, Byzantine, Seljuq and Ottoman layers.

Today, with a population of more than 2 millions, Gaziantep has become a regional centre and the top ten fastest growing cities in the world with its strong cultural, agricultural and commercial structure as well as its young and educated population.

Slide 4: City of Traditions (video)

Slide 5: Industry, Culture and gastronomy.

As you have seen in this video, traditions are still ongoing in Gaziantep and remain very popular among the inhabitants and the tourists.

The city counts many museums notably the Zeugma Mosaic Museum, the city's top tourist attraction; it became on opening the world's largest mosaic museum.

This rich cultural life of the city is also a driving force of development and the current economic structure of the city relies, just like it did throughout history, on the trio of agriculture, commerce and gastronomy.

Slide 6 : Gaziantep and the food culture

Gaziantep has a strong reputation in Turkey in all culinary areas. The city counts no less than 400 registered dishes and the Gaziantep Branch of Turkish Federation of Chefs works to promote this specificity and to increase this number as well as the promotion of these dishes at a national and international level.
Gaziantep cuisine has combined countless different cultures just like the city itself. It is not only made up of food. Cooking methods, the material used, agricultural and animal ingredients as well as the heating of the food are all its separate cultural elements. It is based on the grains and livestock of Mesopotamia, on local fruits, vegetables, spices and herbs of the region and of course pistachio.

Gaziantep baklava is the only Turkish foodstuff to have achieved the honour to be labialized by the European Union as a PGI (designation of origin).

Benefitting from these assets, how the city uses them as a “support lever” for creativity and sustainable urban development?

Slide 7: **Branding**

A sustainable urban and economy development must involve branding. Gaziantep branding mark has been created almost at the same time that the nomination of Gaziantep as a member of the UCCN to value all the sectors of Gaziantep, its knowhow, its traditions, its creativity. The branding project has 3 objectives:

1. To position Gaziantep as a city worth visiting
2. To make the city more liveable
3. To inspire and encourage business and creativity

Slide 8: After rounds of explorations, we brought the brand to life by designing a logo based on geometric patterns, design chosen as a metaphor representing the productivity and union of Gaziantep’s people. The different colour schemes represent different categories as pistachio, transport, kebab, baklava, zoo, handcrafts and organic food. The logo’s variations are planned to be used in various places such as airport terminal, public and ground transport, municipal centres, local chambers, etc.

Slide 9: Another important support lever for creativity based on Gaziantep’s assets are the Food Festivals.

Gaziantep counts several festivals as the Annual International Gaziantep Pistachio Culture and Art Festival which involves the participation of many different countries. The pistachio, also called “green gold” is celebrated during 2 or 3 days and is one of the most popular events of the year in Gaziantep. As another results of the UCCN designation this year, the festival will be extended as an International Gastronomy Festival bringing together Gaziantep’s sister cities, all the UCCN Gastronomy Cities, gourmets, academics, food writers, etc.

Slide 10: As a consequence of the UNESCO designation, the city emerged on the international scene as a new destination for foodies of the world. Then, Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality organized its first Gaziantep Bulgur Festival in May 2015 and received a notable success, with the coming of foodies, gourmets and journalists from Turkey and abroad. Why a bulgur festival in this city? Because Gaziantep produces 70% of Turkey's annual output of more than 1 million tons of bulgur; serving as a processing centre

for wheat grown in the region. The weekend festival promoted bulgur in the best possible way: by letting people eat as much as they could. The opening display of 101 bulgur dishes attracted a lot of people and it was as well a good opportunity for bulgur manufacturers to talk about their products and offer generous tastes, tastes that can be shared as well in Gaziantep's culinary training centres.

Slide 11: Courses and culinary centres.

Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality Culinary Arts Training Centre (MUSEM) and Art and Vocational Training Course Centre (GASMEK) provide a support for scientific studies conducted by Gaziantep University. On the other hand, these centres are the driving power in the studies such as dissemination and extension of information and transferring Gaziantep food culture to the new generation. MUSEM and GASMEK have a wide education and research capacity which provides an access into information for every segment of society.

In GASMEK, all courses for citizens are out of fee and besides other activities, gastronomy courses have been given.

- Out of fee
- 4 centres
- 17 different courses in the gastronomy field

In preparation of its designation as UNESCO Creative City Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality created in 2013 the MUSEM Culinary Art Learning Centre; it provides different kind of courses and events are organized for the youth, children, chefs, students, housewives, shortly for all kind of people in order to remind the forgotten dishes of Gaziantep traditional food, to ensure the transmission for the future generations, to improve well-known aspects of the regional kitchen and to teach the unknown parts of the dishes. This centre aims to promote and transmit in a sustainable way the gastronomic cultural heritage of the city, to keep alive the intangible cultural heritage that represents Gaziantep's gastronomy and to introduce it to the largest audience at a local and international level. This initiative belongs to a larger policy as Gaziantep carries out different programs to sustain its development.

- Organized with Public Education Centre
- Approved by the Turkish Ministry of Education
- 264 hours courses
- Trimester courses
- 72 hours training programs (at week-ends)
- 3 instructors (chefs and food engineer)
- Certificates of Course completion approved by the Turkish Ministry of Education

These centres host training sessions on many different topics such as nutritional value, organic food, food technologies, history of food and civilization, culinary arts, originality in Gaziantep Cuisine, waste management, etc.

Slide 12. At the international

In addition to promoting Gaziantep's brand and creativity into the city, through various activities and workshops, and following the designation of Gaziantep as a UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy, the city participated since 2 years on numerous events abroad. These activities are as varied as festivals (here at the GolaGola Festival in June 2017), **slide 13** "chefs challenge" (Bélem, Brazil), **slide 14** symposiums (Macao, China, January 2018) – where we have been presenting 2 important projects involving several creative cities or for Annual Meeting **slide 15** (the last in Enghien-les-Bains, France July 2017).

Slide 16: **Gastro Tourism.**
Moreover, festivals, fairs and some culinary training centres as MUSEM create in the city an environment where Gaziantep cuisine is introduced and tasted. (**1**) This had greatly facilitated the ***gastro tourism*** in the city and it is then not a coincidence if Gaziantep has been awarded in 2015 from European Commission EDEN Award on "Local Tourism and Gastronomy". (**2**)

Nevertheless, it is not a new phenomenon as Gaziantep has been in the agenda of various cookbook writers and food journalists since the 80s. The Gastronomy Tourism has been initiating in 2012 through the impulse of Gaziantep Chamber of Commerce and the Silk Road Agency (IKA). (**3**) After these strategic efforts to enlarge the culinary potential of Gaziantep, public and private airlines have increased their flights to and from Gaziantep in order to bring more people who would like to experience traditional and healthy Gaziantep food. As shown here with one of the page of the *Culinary Backstreets* website (**4**) and with the *advertising* of a Turkish airline (**5**)

In fact, in recent years, a growing emphasis has been placed on tourism experiences and attractions related to food. Gastronomy is even becoming a leading element in attracting tourism and in many cases eating out while on holiday includes "eating the local heritage", comparable to what is experienced when visiting historical sites and museums. Interaction between tourism, gastronomy and nutrition is having an extremely positive effect in terms of promoting tourism and there is a strong relationship between globalisation, localisation and the use of gastronomy and the food as a source of regional and national identity and a source of sustainable development. In Gaziantep, we can say that gastronomy is considered to be the main touristic activity, maybe before the archaeological and cultural assets of the city.

Gastronomy tourism applies also to tourists and visitors who plan their trips partially or totally in order to taste the cuisine of the place or to carry out activities related to gastronomy; and, gastronomic tourism comprises many different subtypes that left to define.

Slide 17: The challenges are many for the city since it has been awarded in 2015 from the European Commission EDEN Award and recognized as a Creative City of Gastronomy by UNESCO. However, the city, supported by its assets and the innovative initiatives of its citizens and professionals of agricultural and food sector, assumes the obligations related to the UCCN membership.

By becoming a part of CCN, the city aims to:

- ❑Become more active in intercultural relations to share of know-how and experiences. Thus the city can better adopt the innovations in agricultural production, cooking, creative gastronomy,

- ❑Ensure an increase of gastronomy based commercial, scientific, cultural and social relationships by way of meetings, symposiums, workshop activities etc. among UCCN and Silk Road cities,

- ❑Be successful in attaining a variation of projects for the participation of women and socially disabled groups to social life,

- ❑Use the experiences of UCCN about the development of culinary tourism, thus discovering the different aspects of cultural development through tourism,

- ❑ To register, collect and archive the agricultural production methods, different food varieties, spice usages, cooking and preservation methods in a scientific manner.

Slide 18: Thank you for your attention