

Research paper

Tourism and gastronomic offers as a product for the local development of the Chone canton, Ecuador

El Turismo y las ofertas gastronómicas como producto para el desarrollo local del cantón Chone, Ecuador

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the research is to design a gastronomic tourist circuit in the Chone Canton, in the province of Manabi, Ecuador. The methodology used to develop the circuit consists of four phases, which begins with the conduction of a market research, with the identification of the supply, demand and competition, obtaining an updated profile of potential customers. In the second phase of work, a situational analysis with an assessment of the tourist and Manabian gastronomic attractions, in the canton, is carried out. The third phase of work includes the design and description of the gastronomic circuit, the pricing, control activities and monitoring. In the fourth phase different marketing strategies focused on positioning and distribution of the proposed circuit are proposed. Finally, the design and implementation of gastronomic tourist circuit in the Chone canton is a contribution to the enhancement of the values of the Manabian typical food and a boost in strengthening tourism in the development of new destinations in Ecuador.

Keywords: *tourist circuit; marketing; diagnosis, market research, gastronomic*

RESUMEN

El trabajo tuvo como objetivo diseñar un circuito turístico gastronómico que contribuya al desarrollo local del cantón Chone, de la provincia de Manabí, Ecuador. La metodología empleada para el desarrollo del circuito, consta de cuatro fases, que inicia con un estudio de mercado, la identificación de la oferta, la demanda y la competencia, obteniéndose un perfil actualizado de los clientes potenciales. En la segunda fase del trabajo, se realiza un diagnóstico con la valoración de los atractivos turísticos y gastronómicos típicos manabitas en el cantón. La tercera fase del trabajo, comprende el diseño y descripción del circuito turístico gastronómico, el establecimiento del precio y actividades para el control y seguimiento del mismo. En la cuarta fase, la de comercialización se propone diferentes estrategias centradas en el posicionamiento y la distribución del circuito propuesto. Finalmente, el diseño e implementación del circuito turístico gastronómico en el cantón Chone constituye un aporte al realce de los valores de la comida típica manabita y un impulso en el fortalecimiento de actividades turísticas en el desarrollo de nuevos destinos del Ecuador.

Palabras clave: Palabras clave: circuito turístico, comercialización, diagnóstico, estudio de mercado, gastronomía

INTRODUCTION

With the phenomenon of globalisation and the revolution of technologies, tourists demand more and better products and services, increasing competition among tourist destinations (Valadez and Conde, 2011). For this reason, interest can not only be of an individual nature, but to focus on obtaining results as a team. The development of gastronomic activities moves the distribution of income, the possibility of employment, the increase of tax collections, stimulates agricultural production and the creation of better living conditions for the community (Mascarenhas and Gândara, 2010; Ibarra, Alvarado and Viveros, 2014).

From the culinary activity in combination with the tourist phenomenon, the Tourist-Gastronomic product emerges, which is oriented to cover the needs and expectations that a tourist seeks in a destination and with the aspiration of a balance in the interrelations generated among visitor, environment tourism and the local community, as the authors state: (Yépez, 1995, Blanco y Riveros, 2004, Kivela and Crotts, 2004 and Rodríguez, 2012). Therefore, a tourist could travel and forget a certain place or places, but a tourist needs to eat in a trip (Clemente, et al., 2008). For Hernández et al., (2017) gastronomy might have a significant influence on the visitors' experience and be consequently an alternative for the emergence of those destinations with no benefits of mass tourism or for the reactivation of others who suffer a critical stage or stagnation in its life cycle.

Destinations have been affected by numerous factors and push them towards a new era of tourism. The demand is segmented and specialized. The society seeks to satisfy hobbies and concerns through tourism and demands a complete package of dynamic and interrelated activities with the environment.

According to Jiang (2012) a comprehensive itinerary of gastronomic tourism should offer tourists a good opportunity to experience culinary culture from the primary, secondary sector to the preparation of dishes.

Ecuador is a country with a high biological diversity, cultural, landscape, where its gastronomy is one of the elements related to the tourism sector, travel and hospitality, which generates attraction of visitors who would like to try new dishes in a specific community, site and / or country in general (Cassis, 2010).

The Tourism Development Plan of Ecuador (PLANDETUR 2020), among its objectives, proposes the generation of sustainable and competitive tourism, boosting human, natural and cultural resources, with technological innovation applied to the infrastructure, equipment, facilities and services components to guarantee a comprehensive tourist experience of national and international visitors (Ministry of Tourism, 2007: 128). So, the creation of new tourist circuits works as direct agents of development and advancement in the Ecuadorian tourist destinations, possibilities for decision-making, in terms of competitiveness and expansion in the offer, responds to the expectations of customers and changes in the tourism market.

Manabi province is considered very active in the development of agricultural activities, which added to the existing cultural traditions and diversity of local ecosystems turned this place as one of the ideal scenarios for the development of tourism activities directed at rural areas. (Doumet and Morretta, 2014). In this province, its gastronomy is considered privileged due to the existence of a large number of places to show the customers culinary benefits. In spite of the recognition of the typical Manabitan food by its inhabitants, there are cultural elements that are not used in the tourist activity, without taking into account that the most important gastronomic aspects of this region are based on its culture.

Chone canton is located in the northern centre of Manabí. It possesses a wide potentialities and tourist attractions, which are recognized inside and outside the province. This place also has an exquisite culinary culture, which needs a boost in its offer to tourists who visit it. However, there are some problems in the provision of services, because of poor sanitary control, non-compliance with basic food safety standards, little training and specialization in tourism and gastronomic processes of the employees and lack of local and national ordinances that regulate the development of the culinary and tourist activity in the canton.

If the gastronomic activity is accompanied by an added value taking advantage of the tourist potential of the canton, this will make it easier to publicise the resources, local tourist and gastronomic attractions, involving sites of tourist interest linked to the tasting of typical food.

OBJECTIVE

Taking into account what has been described above, this

work presents as a general objective: to design a gastronomic circuit based on the typical Manabitan food that contributes to the tourist development of Chone canton in Ecuador.

METHODOLOGY

To select an instrument that allows the design of a gastronomic touristic circuit, adapted to the characteristics of the object of study, a revision of the literature of various authors in the national and international context related to the subject under study was done. Derived from this, the methodology of Oliveira, (2011) was taken into account in the background and elements for the consideration of a destination for gastronomic tourism.

Other works consulted were: Thiel (2008); Schlüter and Thiel (2008), who provided general guidelines about motivations,

profile of the visitors and the characteristics of the offer in a gastronomic touristic circuit. To make an inventory of the tourist and gastronomic lined up with the current legal framework, the index card by the Ministry of Tourism of Ecuador were used. (Ministry of Tourism, 2004). In addition, Ricaurte (2009) was consulted as a guide within the tourist diagnosis phase in the characterization and current situation of the attractions taken into account in the object of practical study. In the case of the work of Navarro and Schlüter, (2010) the inclusion of a situational analysis and the proposal of aspects related to the control of the circuit was taken as a point of interest.

Result of the proposals analysed, a methodology that responds to the development of the research and the achievement of the proposed objective was reconsidered in the design of a gastronomic touristic circuit in Chone canton, Manabí province in Ecuador. A summary of its structure is shown in table 1.

Table 1. Methodology for the design of a gastronomic touristic circuit in Chone canton.

PHASES	STAGES	ACTIVITIES	TECHNIQUES AND INSTRUMENTS
I. MARKET STUDY	1. Analysis of the competitive offer A	1. Identification of the tourist and gastronomic offer.	Scientific observation, Matrix of potentialities,
	2. Analysis of demand	2. Elaboration of the competitive profile.	Competitive profile matrix
		3. Determination of sample size.	Surveys,
		4. Analysis of the survey.	Free interviews.
		5. Characterisation of the customer profile and market segmentation.	
II. DIAGNOSIS OT THE CURRENT TOURISM AND GASTRONOMY	3. Characterisation and delimitation of the area under study	1. Description of the current situation and characterisation of basic services and infrastructure.	Descriptive, Field research, Directed interview.
	4. Inventory of touristic and gastronomic resources	2. Inventory of tourist resources.	Inventory card,
		3. Inventory of gastronomic resources.	Matrix of potentialities
		4. Collection and register of information.	
		5. Evaluation and hierarchy.	
5. Situational analysis	6. Elaboration of the SWOT matrix. 7. Description of the general strategic problem.	Brainstorming Scientific observation and free interviews.	
III. DESIGN OF CIRCUIT	6. Design of product	1. Design of circuit.	Interviews, Brainstorming.
		2. Description of circuit.	
		3. Preparation of tourist packages.	
7. Definition of price	4. Preparation of cost cards.	Cost cards, Brainstorming	
	5. Control and monitoring measures		
8. Control of circuit		Interview.	
IV. MANAGEMENT OF THE COMMERCIALISATION OF THE CIRCUIT	9. Positioning	1. Positioning strategies	Direct Observation Brainstorming
		2. Marketing strategies	
	10. Selection of distribution channels	3. Define communication and dissemination channels.	Descriptive Direct Observation Brainstorming

Source: Authors

Then a brief description of the most relevant aspects of the methodology used in the work is made, taking into account the context where it was applied.

Phase I. Market study

This phase covered the study of the most relevant elements in the tourism market: supply, demand and competition with emphasis on the gastronomic activities in Chone canton. Among the tools used in getting primary information, surveys and direct observation stand out.

Stage 1. Analysis of the competitive offer

The identification of the tourist services establishments in Chone canton was carried out, in particular those responsible for offering typical Manabitan food. An inventory was made for the selection of the places that formed the tourist circuit, mainly comprised of restaurants, leisure and recreation centres, farms, etc.

In the competitive aspect, the tourist offer with similar characteristics in the area was analysed. A competitiveness matrix was drawn up to determine the possibilities and advantages of creating a gastronomic tourism circuit in the market.

Stage 2. Analysis of demand

The study of demand was conducted through the use of a survey that included the main variables related to tourism products in the conditions of the study area. The determination of the sample size was carried out, taking into account what was proposed by Aguilar (2005), following a statistical criterion and assuming an infinite population, according to this equation:

$$n = \frac{Z^2_{\alpha/2} * p * q}{d^2}$$

For the determination of the sample used, a confidence level of 95.5% was established, an estimated proportion of the population of 50% (p = 0.5) and its complement in equal proportion (q = 0.5) and was estimated a margin of error (d = 0.45). In the application of the sample surveys, a simple random probabilistic sampling was used.

Phase II. Diagnosis of the current tourism and gastronomy

The development of this phase was conceived to deepen into the most relevant elements linked to the typical tourist and gastronomic activity in Chone. A current situational analysis was carried out, which constituted the antecedent and basis of the design of the circuit. Techniques such as: interviews, brainstorming and field work with descriptive cards, were used mainly.

Stage 3. Characterisation and delimitation of the area under study

The geographic-spatial location of the study area, its delimitation and the main attributes related to the subject were carried out.

Stage 4. Inventory of tourism and gastronomic resources

In this stage of inventory of tourism and gastronomic resources, a descriptive sheet was applied, which took into account aspects focused on the updating of tourist data about the canton. The use of the cards provided general information, category of the resource, type and subtype, as well as the intrinsic and extrinsic value, the infrastructure and basic services with which it is counted, the road access and the state of it, state of conservation of resources and tourist attractions of the canton and its association with other nearby attractions. When the resources and tourist attractions of the canton were classified and registered, they were also evaluated for the hierarchy in different levels.

Stage 5. Situational analysis

Through the use of techniques such as scientific observation, brainstorming and interviews, the strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats related to the design of tourism products and the typical gastronomy of the place were analysed. Once the external and internal factors that influence the analysis were identified, the level of importance of each one was evaluated. A strategic problem was defined, as well as its solution and a strategy was developed to take advantage of existing opportunities and minimise weaknesses.

Phase III. Design of product

This phase constituted the core point of the work. The main tool in the elaboration of the design was field work, with tours and visits to tourist places and gastronomic sites linked to the main attraction of this circuit, the typical Manabitan food in Chone canton.

Stage 6. Design of the gastronomic circuit

In this stage, the layout and identification of the routes included in the circuit was carried out with the proposal of the tourism program, which included details on the time spent in the sites, routes and services. The characteristics of the selected establishments that are identified with the typical gastronomy in Chone canton were defined.

Stage 7. Definition of price

In the definition of the price of the touristic circuit, the visitor profile previously determined in the province was taken into account, with analysis of expectations and needs. The cost per pax, the equilibrium point of the circuit, was considered, depending on the places of visits included. In addition, the costs and expenses of each of the activities included in the circuit, minimum and maximum value of the typical dishes of the place, travel and / or transportation, accommodation in recreational tourist sites, support and assistance and supplements were estimated. For the determination of the commissionable price of the circuit, what was proposed by Martín (2010) for the quotation of tourist programs was followed, according to the following equation:

$$\text{Commissionable Price(PVP)} = \frac{\text{Costs+Expenses}}{(\text{Own margin} + \text{Commission})}$$

Stage 8. Feedback

The follow-up and feedback of the circuit was determined by the measurement of the satisfaction and the optimal fulfilment of each one of the programmed activities within the tourist circuit. The instruments that should be used mainly are the establishment of associated indicators, with the use of surveys, suggestion and opinion systems, and management of continuous and incremental improvement.

Phase IV. Management of circuit marketing

The development and implementation of the circuit designed in the previous phase is carried out according to the characteristics of the identified consumers. For this, techniques and tools related to the commercialization of products and services were used with the insertion of the proposed circuit in the tourist market and in harmony with the development of tourist offers in Chone canton.

Stage 9. Positioning

Strategies associated with the design of the circuit's brand were elaborated, including a representative logo and a slogan as elements of representativeness. A detail of some strategies related to the marketing mix, the diffusion, promotion and publicity of the circuit was conducted.

Stage 10. Selection of distribution channels

In the last stage, the most relevant diffusion channels were determined. Several alternatives and forms combined with traditional and current methods for the knowledge and commercialization of the circuit were taken into account, as well as a varied and optimal use of different media such as: radio, television, press, personal communication, public relations, social networks, websites and promotional brochures.

RESULTS AND DISCUSION

The development and implementation of each of the phases, stages and activities described in the methodology used in the design of the tourist circuit of typical Manabitan gastronomy in Chone canton is presented.

Phase I. Market study

Stage 1. Analysis of the competitive offer

Considering the tourist and gastronomic infrastructure existing in Chone canton, a study of the establishments that provide services related to the purpose of the present study was carried out. The establishments or entities that are recognized in the last land registry made by the Direction of Tourism of the Autonomous Decentralized Government (GAD) of Chone are taken into account. Table 2 presents summary information of the offer.

Table 2. Tourist and gastronomic offer registered by MINTUR in Chone canton.

Type of tourist and/or gastronomic establishment	Number	Total
Accommodation	9	288
Restoration	26	466
Leisure centres, Swimming pools, Recreational farms, Events hall	5	214

Source: Provincial Government of Manabí (2015)

The study of the offer, considered in detail the information of each of the establishments, in order to propose the sites to be included in the circuit to be designed.

Another activity that was also developed during this stage was the analysis of the competition, through the creation of a competitive profile matrix, which took as a reference the direct competitors near Chone. In the evaluation the following classification was considered: (1) low importance; (2) medium importance; (3) considerable importance and (4) high importance. The application of the matrix is summarized in table 3.

Table 3. Competitive profile matrix of Chone canton.

Key factors of success	Criterion Pond.	Chone canton		Bolívar canton		Flavio Alfaró canton	
		Classif	Result.	Classif.	Result.	Classif.	Result.
Accessibility	0,10	3	0,30	3	0,30	2	0,20
Tourist demand	0,15	3	0,45	3	0,45	2	0,30
Tourist offer	0,10	3	0,30	2	0,20	3	0,30
Tourist promotion	0,20	2	0,40	4	0,60	3	0,60
Culinary quality	0,10	4	0,40	3	0,30	3	0,30
Recreational activities	0,10	3	0,30	3	0,30	3	0,30
Natural environment	0,15	3	0,45	3	0,45	3	0,45
Security	0,10	3	0,30	2	0,20	2	0,20
Weighted total result	1,00		2,90		2,80		2,65

Source: Authors

Stage 2. Analysis of demand

In the study of the demand, the survey was used as a technique, with the application of a questionnaire to people in different sites from those previously included in the study of the offer, which in this case was 475 clients. With

the results obtained from the surveys, a customer profile was drawn up with a representative potential in demand, according to the characteristics of the circuit proposed. A summary is presented in table 4.

Table 4. Profile of client with potential demand in Chone canton.

Variables (demographic and psychographic)	Results
Sex	Male (53%) - Female (47%)
Predominant age range	21- 40 years
Origin	Regional - National
Occupation	Workers
Estimated monthly income	\$500 - \$1000 USD
Reason for trip	Leisure and recreation

Stay	1- 2 days
Accompaniment	Friends and family
Expense availability	\$10 - \$60 USD / pax
Tourist and gastronomic interest	High
Interest in tourism modalities	Gastronomic - Nature
Identification with typical food	High
Preference for typical dishes according to gastronomic inventory	Fried Chame - Tonga-Creole chicken soup - Ceviches - Encebollados -Sal prieta - Bolón- Hornados.

It is necessary to point out that one of the items included in the questionnaire applied was: Interest in the presentation of a circuit or tourist product that takes into account elements of nature and typical gastronomy in Chone canton, obtaining 67% of the surveyed a high interest, while 31% expressed a medium interest in a proposal of this type. In a general sense, this is very positive.

Phase II. Diagnosis of the current tourism and gastronomy: Stage 3. Characterisation and delimitation of the area under study

Chone is located on the Ecuadorian coast, north of the province of Manabí, with an approximate area of 3 570 square kilometres. It limits to the north with the province of Esmeraldas and Pedernales canton; to the south with the cantons Pichincha, Bolívar and Tosagua; to the east

with the cantons El Carmen, Flavio Alfaro and the province of Los Ríos and to the west with the cantons Sucre, Junín, Jama and Pedernales.

Stage 4. Inventory of tourism and gastronomic resources

The cards of the Ministry of Tourism of Ecuador were used for the inventory of tourist resources, (Ministry of Tourism, 2004). Those resources with the greatest potentialities were registered in a matrix of potentialities, which is based on a qualitative assessment of character: Cultural (C), Environmental (E), Landscape (L) and Recreational (R) of the site and with attributes that are valued by: Dynamics (D); Utilization (U), Accessibility (Ac) and Tourism equipment (Te): it was evaluated as (1: moderate, 2: important, 3: very important). The results obtained in Chone canton are shown in table 5.

Table 5. Matrix of tourist potentialities of Chone canton.

Attractive and/or resource	Character				Attributes				Total	Potentiality
	C	A	P	R	D	U	A	E		
Café Color Tierra	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	23	Greater potential
Cantiles El Jobo	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	15	Emerging potential
Piedra-Cueva La Dibujada	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	1	20	Greater potential
Humedal La Segua	2	3	3	2	3	3	3	2	21	Greater potential
Bosque San Ignacio	1	3	3	1	2	2	2	1	15	Emerging potential
Comuna Convento	3	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	19	Greater potential
Cascada La Guabina	1	2	3	2	2	1	2	1	12	Emerging potential

Source: Authors

With the results obtained from each site of interest, work was prioritized with the most potential attractions, which are given as: score higher than 15 points, higher potential, while those with a score equal to or less than 15 points are

considered with emerging potential. In the design of the gastronomic touristic circuit, three of the most relevant places were selected, which in this case correspond to Café Color Tierra, Humedal La Segua and Piedra -Cueva La Dibujada.

In addition to the above, an inventory of typical Manabitan food in Chone was made, taking into account criteria such as: type of dish, demand and temporality. The result of this inventory is presented in table 6.

Table 6. Summary of a gastronomic inventory of typical food from Manabí in Chone canton.

Gastronomic Inventory, Place: Chone, Province: Manabí							
Name of the dish	Type	menu	Demand			Temporality	
			High	Medium	Low	Regular	Always
Cuajada	Typical	Starter	x				x
Sal prieta	Typical	Starter	x				x
Verde asado	Typical	Starter	x				x
Ceviches	Typical	Starter	x				x
Longaniza	Typical	Starter	x				x
Morcilla	Typical	Appetiser	x				x
Bollos	Typical	Appetiser		x		x	
Hayacas	Typical	Appetiser		x		x	
Humitas	Typical	Appetiser		x		x	
Empanadas de verde	Typical	Appetiser	x				x
Corviches	Typical	Appetiser		x		x	
Bolón	Typical	Appetiser	x				x
Tortillas de maíz	Typical	Appetiser		x		x	
Caldo de gallina	Typical	Soup	x				x
Suero blanco	Typical	Soup		x		x	
Caldo de choclo	Typical	Soup			x	x	
Caldo de pata	Typical	Soup		x		x	
Caldo de plátano	Typical	Soup			x	x	
Caldo de haba	Typical	Soup			x	x	
Aguado de gallina	Typical	Soup	x				x
Arroz colorado	Typical	Main course	x				x
Chame asado/frito	Typical	Main course	x				x
Viches	Typical	Main course	x				x
Guatita	Typical	Main course	x				x
Encebollados	Typical	Main course	x				x
Gallina horneada	Typical	Main course		x		x	
Tonga	Typical	Main course	x				x
Seco de gallina	Typical	Main course	x				x
Natillas	Typical	Dessert		x		x	
Troliches	Typical	Dessert	x				x
Pan de almidón	Typical	Dessert	x				x
Torta de choclo	Typical	Dessert		x		x	
Torta de verde	Typical	Dessert			x	x	
Chucula	Typical	Drink			x	x	
Rompope	Typical	Drink			x	x	

Source: Authors

Stage 5. Situational analysis

In this analysis the internal and external elements were considered, through a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses and Threats), related to binding points in tourism and gastronomy. The results are shown in table 7.

Table 7. Summary of the internal and external analysis associated with tourism and gastronomy in Chone canton.

Strenghts	Opportunities
Potential tourist area. Variety of gastronomic offer. Wide gastronomic infrastructure Presence in the area of raw material for the preparation of dishes Distinctive and typical products of the place Recognition of the Manabitan gastronomy in Chone, with an attendance of customers	Local support by educational entities and the municipal GAD. Promotion of the gastronomic and tourism sector by the GAD. Growth of the gastronomic tourism market. Recognition of the Manabitan gastronomy. Ability to expand the tourism.

Strenghts	Opportunities
Lack of knowledge of tourist and gastronomic resources by visitors. Weak development of the gastronomic tourism product in the area. Insufficient promotion and dissemination of referenes of gastronomy. Deficiencies in sanitary control in the handling of food and beverages under food safety standards. Lack of innovation in the launch of new products and tourist circuits.	Emigration of people specialized in the preparation of typical food. Increase of the competition in the tourist and gastronomic sector in the territory. Loss of interest in the culinary culture by the inhabitants of Chone.

Source: Authors

Taking into account, the elements previously analysed by the authors, two fundamental problems associated with the weaknesses were detected and they are related to

gastronomic tourism in the canton, but there is capacity for action on them. These are:

- Elaboration of products to develop the tourist activity in the canton.
- Deficiency in sanitary control in the handling of food and beverages under food safety norms.
- As well as facing the main threat that the canton has in relation to this aspect is:
- Increased competition in the gastronomic tourism sector in the area.

It is essential to mitigate the problems detected, take advantage of the main strength of the site, which is its varied Manabitan gastronomy that exists in Chone, as well as the opportunity for the growth of the tourist market in the gastronomic field. In addition to the solution to the problems previously mentioned, the authors of this work, made the proposal of a tourist circuit based on the offer of typical Manabitan gastronomy in the canton.

Phase III. Design of product: Stage 6. Design of the gastronomic circuit

For the design of the gastronomic circuit in Chone, the parishes: Canuto, Chone, Ricaurte and San Antonio were chosen because of the most potential tourist resources and the most outstanding gastronomic sites for their typical Manabitan food in each place. This circuit has duration of two (2) days in the canton, staying overnight. The itinerary is previously conceived and adapted to the demands of the clients. This design is basically focused on the promotion of typical Manabitan gastronomy, combining its routes with visits to natural tourist attractions, according to the route shown in Figure 1.

The design of the circuit considers six (6) fundamental points, linked to the line of tourism products of gastronomy and nature. In addition, the inclusion of another complement site was valued positively, which can be included in the expansion and diversity of the current proposal, depending on the preference of the clients, in case that accommodation services are requested. Each of the places or sites included or to be included in the circuit are briefly described in table 8.

Figure 1. Gastronomic touristic circuit designed in Chone canton.



Table 8. Description of the sites and attractions of the tourist circuit.

Site/ Attractiveness (line)	Description of site and activities to be performed	Length of stay
1. Centre of Chone city Bolón Patacón (Gastronomy) Restaurant	Start and end of the circuit. It is located in the centre of Chone on Washington and Salinas streets. In the establishment you can taste typical food such as plátano verde, salprieda, bolones as specialty of the house, humitas, hayacas, etc. Here clients are welcome, the itinerary program is commented. Breakfast with a pleasant description of the ingredients and ancestral dishes of Manabí.	Day 1 8:30 - 9:50
2. Humedal la Segua (Ecotourism & Gastronomy)	It includes 1742 hectares and a RAMSAR reserve. The place is part of Chone River estuary. There is a great diversity of flora and fauna species. There are water rides in canoes through the wetland, hiking, bird watching. Also, lunch with one of the most popular typical national dishes of Chone, the Chame fish. It also includes a tasting of Chone's most famous typical sweets. It has services of restoration, nautical and guide.	Day 1 10:00 - 13:45

3. Quinta Thalía (Gastronomy-Accommodation-Recreation)	Located at 11.5 km from the centre of Chone city. Recreation centre where you can enjoy its swimming pools, sports courts and natural areas. They offer typical foods and sweets of the area. It has accommodation, catering and guidance services. Recreation activities are carried out. This place hosts the clients of the circuit, including dinner, musical night and Manabitan breakfast.	Day 1 14:00 - Día 2 8:00
4. Piedra y cueva La Dibujada (Ecotourism-Adventure)	It is located on the Chone-Quito via to the Chagualú site, several kilometres north of the Recreational El Tecal. On the site there is a huge rock with special carvings and to the north there is a cave with rock engravings related to past times, which was considered a place of worship. Both sites have been little explored. They do not have facilities. You walk a path from the cave to the stone, to take pictures.	Day 2 8:30-10:30
5. Café Color Tierra (Ecotourism-Adventure)	Tourist centre of the most visited places in Chone. It is located about 12 km from Chone city, in Rumelia of Mosquito site. You can taste the typical gastronomy from Chone and Manabi. It has an accommodation service with two cabins. People can also go camping. There are 13 waterfalls and a museum, you can observe and acquire handicrafts made by the owner and. On this site, lunch is held at noon and recreational activities to be performed.	Day 2 10:45- 14:45
6. Cabañas El Toto (Ecotourism-Gastronomy)	It is an ecological recreational centre 1.5 km via La Chorrera and a few kilometres from the Canuto parish. It offers typical meals; it has a fluvial spa, ecological cabins, green areas and a recreational area. Their services are linked mainly to restoration and recreation. Small feast of typical Manabitan food.	Day 2 15:00- 18:00
7. Centre of Chone city	Distinctive souvenir delivery related to the circuit. Comments on experiences and satisfaction of the participants are made. Farewell and finalization of the circuit Los Sabores Choneros.	Day 2 18:10- 18:30

Source: Authors

Stage 7. Definition of price

In the definition of price, a cost card was carried out with the main items associated with food, accommodation, transportation and guidance fundamentally. An estimate of the costs was made with an initial operation between 10 and 15 pax, as shown in table 9. The sale price varies in relation to the clients and the services that are included will be varied to generate greater attractiveness in customers.

Table 9. Estimated costing card of the tourist circuit

Items/Servicios	Unit value USD	Total (10 pax) \$USD	Total (15 pax) \$ USD
Service Guide 2 days	40,00	80,00	80,00
Bus 2 days	80,00	160,00	160,00
Canoe	2,00	20,00	30,00
Typical break and appetisers	2,00	20,00	30,00
Typical breakfast	2,50	50,00	37,50
Typical lunch	5,00	100,00	150,00
Typical dinner	5,00	100,00	150,00
Accommodation	13,00	130,00	195,00
Tickets	2,00	20,00	30,00
Food for guide / driver	40,00	40,00	40,00
TOTAL	191,50	720,00	902,50
General expenses		72,00	90,25
TOTAL Fixed Costs + Variable Costs		720,00	902,50
Total operating budget		792,00	992,75
Predicted profit		118,80	148,91
Total final budget operations		910,80	1141,41
Public Sale Price without taxes		91,80	76,09
PSP taxes included (I.V.A = 12%)		102,72	85,22
Public Sale Price (FINAL PRICE)		102,75	85,25

Source: Authors

In addition, at this point the information obtained in the study of the demand was taken into account according to the profile of the client identified as potential consumer in the circuit. The price to be proposed must consider the accessibility of the clients, the effectiveness of the service to be provided and the profitability to be obtained. In this case, an analysis of the price of the competition was not taken into account due to the fact that in the canton and the province there is not a tourist product with these characteristics. Different establishments offer dishes of typical Manabitan food, but it is not a circuit or a route of tourist nature, it is an isolated operation.

Stage 8. Feedback

The degree of compliance with the objectives of the circuit must be taken into account as the activities are performed. A feedback instrument was proposed that works on customer satisfaction and solutions to maintain control of the circuit program, which is presented in table 10.

Table 10. Feedback about the gastronomic circuit

Objectives	Activities	Registers	Time	Responsible
Promote food safety in the places included in the gastronomic circuit.	Training in good hygiene practices and health certifications.	Periodic health control in gastronomic sites. Updated health records.	According to programme	Health authorities in the canton. Health Surveillance and Control National Regulatory Agency
Record the results of the tours.	Customer satisfaction report.	Visitor registration. Surveys.	Weekly-monthly	Tourism Department GAD Chone
Comply with itineraries and services offered in the product.	Training for service providers. Verification of information.	Photographs. Meetings. Activities itinerary.	Weekly-monthly	Tourism Department GAD Chone

Source: Authors


Phase IV. Management of circuit marketing: Stage 9. Positioning

Once the circuit has been designed, the most important thing is its launch and positioning, according to the characteristics of the identified customer profile and thus the segment to whom the circuit is directed was determined (Flavián and Fandos, 2011). In the specific case of the management of the circuit, its development is conceived by local tourism entities and businessmen belonging to Chone canton and which at this moment present their offer without an interconnection. As a result, those interested in the circuit were mostly groups of friends and families, of both sexes, of internal regional origin and with a one-day stay.

The design of a tourist brand was used as a positioning strategy, with the characteristics that distinguish the circuit. For the definition of the commercial name of the circuit, the characteristics and ideas to be shown to the

clients were taken into account, mainly focused on the gastronomic tourism modality. The name proposal was made: "Los Sabores Choneños", considering the culinary recognition of this canton in the province of Manabí and at the level of the country destination Ecuador. The description of the brand is presented in table 11.

Table 11. Representation of the tourist brand designed for positioning the gastronomic touristic circuit of Chone canton.

Proposal	Description
	<p>Its base is green as a sample of the landscape of nature and rural environment in Chone. The design is made up of a set of forks that support the meaning of typical Manabitan gastronomy and the position of the canton's mountains, joining gastronomy with tourist resources. It includes a design that responds to the tasting of dishes and satisfaction. Finally, the name of the circuit and its theme are included.</p>

Source: Authors

Once the tourist circuit is designed, dissemination and advertising strategies are proposed for its commercialization, which took into account the presentation of the circuit to the market, through strategies to be developed in the marketing mix, product, price, place and promotion, which are:

Product strategies

- Combine attractions and facilities identified in the circuit.
- Guide to promote interpretation for a better connection of tourists with environmental and cultural elements.

Price strategies

- Propose flexible price rates according to the period, market reference values and competition.
- Determine payment facilities and feedback with the client.

Place strategies

- Create alliances with travel agencies and tour operators in the province and the region.
- Determine times of dissemination of the circuit.

Promotion strategies

- Communicate benefits of the offer.

- Emphasise on the brand created from the offer.
- Public relations.
- Disseminate of the circuit in mass media and at related trade fairs.

Stage 10. Selection of distribution channels

The use of a short marketing channel to promote the circuit was taken into account because it was designed mainly for the domestic tourism segment. In addition, the circuit is inserted in the travel agency offers of Ecuador, tour operators of the province of Manabí and the Department of Tourism of the GAD Chone, with the use of means such as: web pages, billboards, brochures, leaflets, commercial advertisements, social networks and fairs.

CONCLUSIONS

The market study carried out allowed the identification of interests, needs and the design of a profile of the potential visitor that corresponds to the gastronomic touristic circuit to be proposed based on the diagnosis made of its main tourist and gastronomic attractions and the identification of associated problems, to the little development of tourist proposals that enhance their typical gastronomy and deficiencies in the sanitary control of the handling of food and beverages under norms of innocuousness.

The gastronomic circuit designed, is a totally relevant proposal, as a contribution to the appreciation of the typical Manabitan gastronomy and its implementation in an organised way according to the tourist development of Chone. The commercialization of the gastronomic touristic circuit in Chone, takes into account the positioning of itself, with the design of a logo and the proposal of a unique commercial brand, promoted by private sector entities. In addition, a short channel was identified for its distribution and fundamentally the use of media such as: web pages, billboards, brochures, leaflets, commercial advertisements, social networks and fairs.

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