

F.15. THE INFLUENCE OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON TRADITIONAL EUROPEAN CUISINE

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Abstract. Climate change is one of the most important challenges of the 21st century, with significant effects on the environment, economy and culture, including the gastronomic heritage of Europe. Traditional European cuisine, known for its diversity and authenticity, is closely linked to local climatic conditions, seasonality and available natural resources. Climate changes, such as increasing temperatures, changing rainfall patterns and the frequency of extreme events, directly influence agricultural production and, implicitly, the basic ingredients of traditional dishes. In Mediterranean regions, for example, drought and high temperatures affect olive, grape and vegetable crops, essential elements for cuisines such as Italian, Greek or Spanish. In Northern and Central Europe, climate change is causing changes in cereal, potato and dairy crops, affecting traditional dishes such as bread, hearty soups or cheeses. Thus, some ingredients become rarer, more expensive or even unavailable at certain times of the year. Another important effect is the change in the agricultural calendar and the seasonality of food. Many traditional recipes are linked to specific seasons or holidays, and climate change disrupts this balance. For example, earlier or

later harvesting of some products can lead to the adaptation or reinterpretation of certain culinary dishes. At the same time, biodiversity is affected, leading to the disappearance of local plant varieties or animal breeds, essential for the authenticity of traditional cuisine. Climate change also influences food production and distribution practices. Farmers are forced to adopt methods that are more resistant to extreme conditions, such as efficient irrigation, drought-resistant crops or modern technologies. These changes can modify the characteristics of ingredients, influencing the taste and quality of dishes. In addition, increasing dependence on imports can reduce the regional specificity of European cuisines. However, the challenges brought by climate change also generate opportunities. Chefs, local producers and communities are rediscovering forgotten traditional ingredients, more resistant to difficult conditions, and promoting sustainable practices. The concept of “slow food” and the emphasis on local and seasonal products are becoming increasingly important in protecting culinary identity. In many European countries, there are initiatives that support organic farming and the conservation of biodiversity, thus contributing to the maintenance of gastronomic traditions.

Keywords: Traditional European cuisine, climate change, gastronomic heritage, essential elements for cuisines, cereal, potato, modern technologies.

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