

# Creating Value from Local Food: Gastronomy Tourism and Rural Entrepreneurship

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Etelä-Savon  
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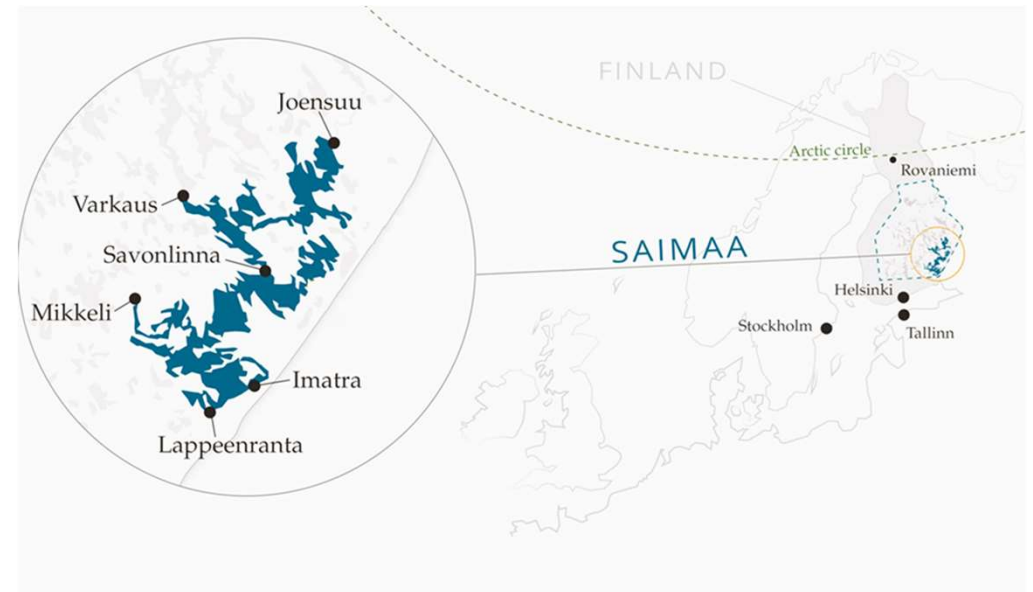
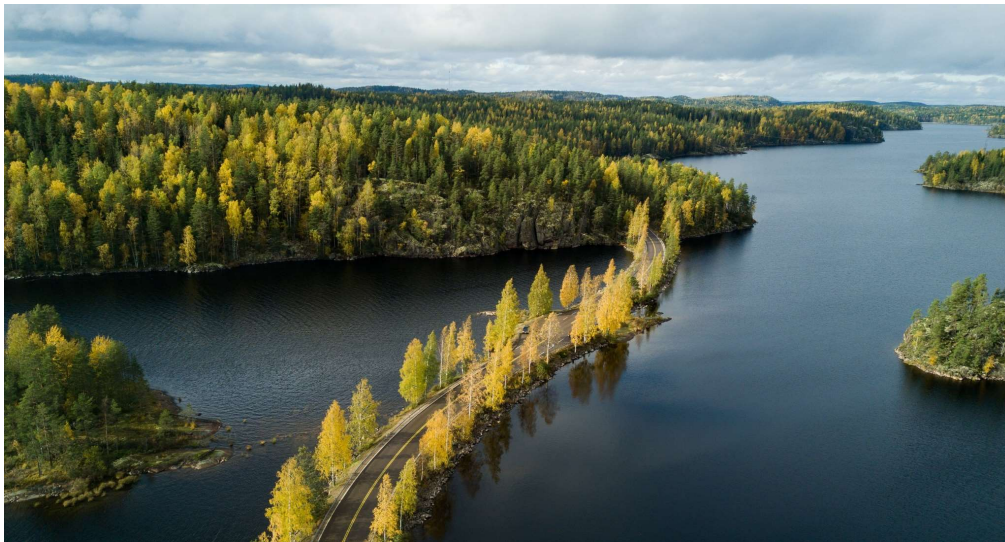
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D.O.Saimaa ja Saimaa Academy of Gastronomy – Network development and learning



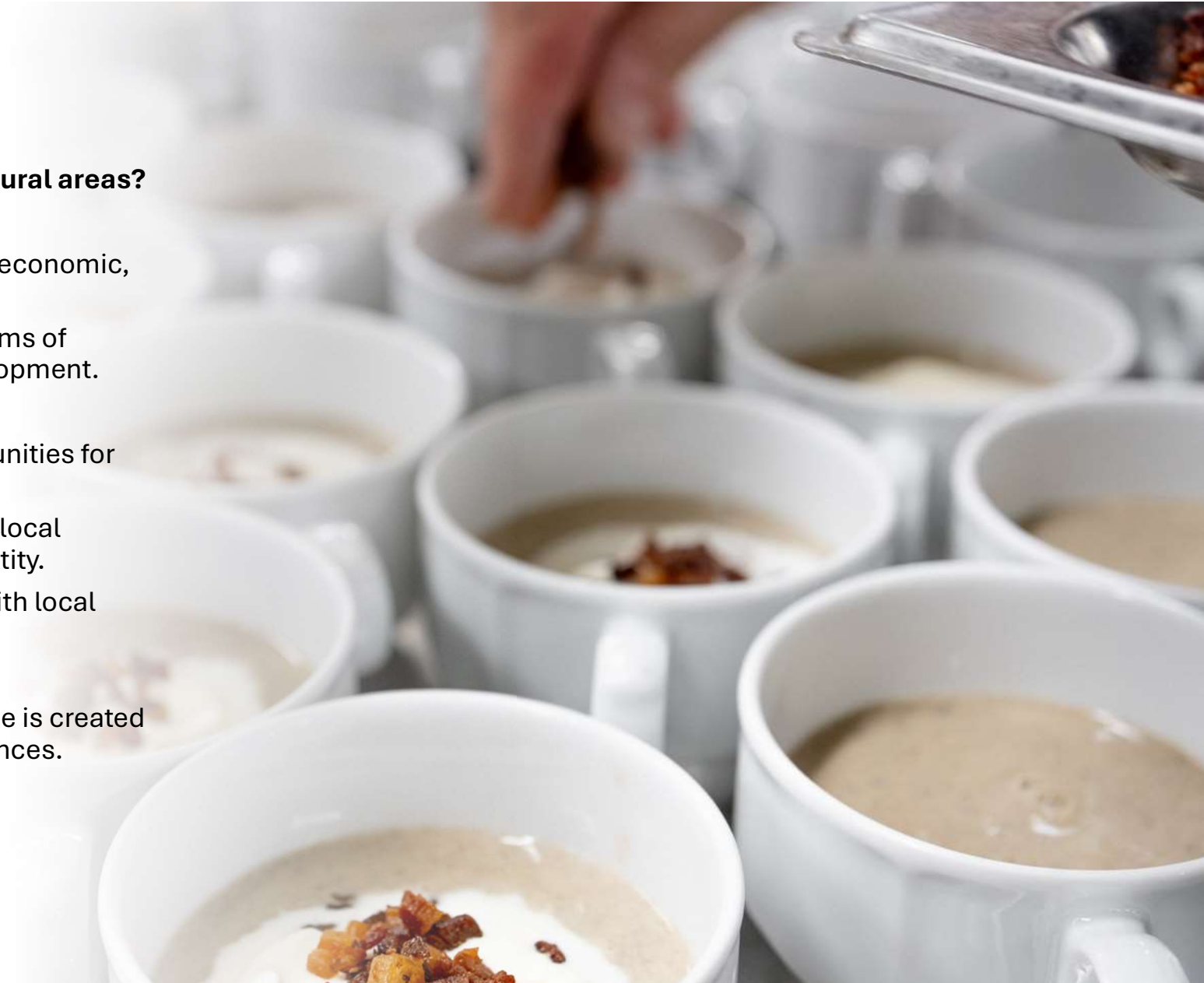


- <https://www.dosaimaa.fi>



## Why gastronomy tourism matters for rural areas?

- Rural areas are facing demographic, economic, and sustainability challenges.
- Rural areas are searching for new forms of entrepreneurship and regional development.
- Gastronomy tourism creates opportunities for small rural businesses
- Gastronomy tourism can strengthen local visibility, networks, and regional identity.
- Food experiences connect visitors with local culture, landscapes, and producers.
- This raises questions about how value is created through gastronomy tourism experiences.



This presentation is based on the analysis of two gastronomy tourism cases:

### Case 1: French food bloggers

Visit to the Saimaa region organised under the D.O. Saimaa initiative, including producer visits, a cooking workshop, shared meals, and group discussions. Analysis based on observations, quotations, and post-visit reflections.

### Case 2: Local food tour

Food tour for domestic participants, including a market visit, organic farm, brewery visit, and local food tastings. Analysis based on survey feedback (18 responses) and qualitative reflections.



# The local food tour

## A visit to Nilkko Brewery

### Target group

- local residents,
- second-home owners, and
- domestic tourists.

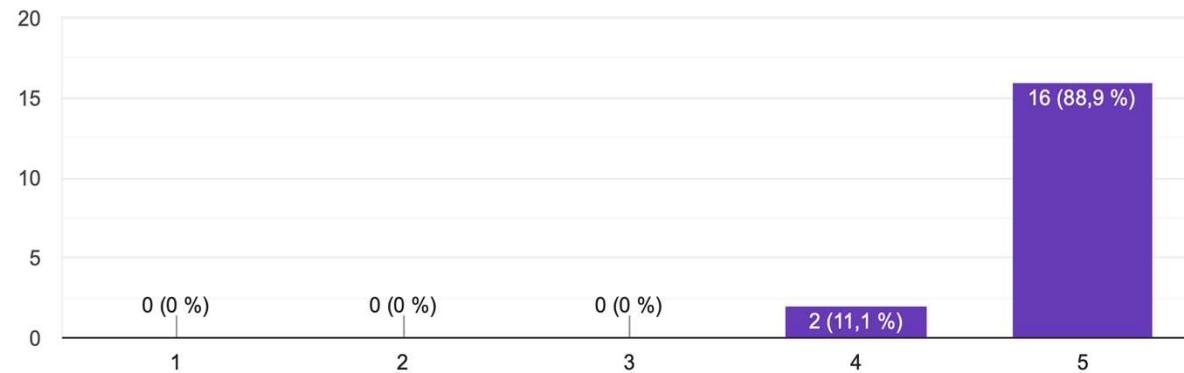
### STRENGTHS

- Very knowledgeable, enthusiastic and personable presenter.
- The tasting was diverse and well-curated, featuring more unique beverages, which encouraged discussion and questions.
- Appropriate length of the tour, with a relaxed and engaging atmosphere.
- Pleasant and stylish interior; a genuine passion for brewing was clearly conveyed.



### 2.3 Nilkon Panimo

18 vastausta





A visit to Nilkko Brewery  
French bloggers

- “At Nilkko, we just visited and tasted – we didn’t really see anything.”
- “Even if the process takes several days, we could still carry out at least one phase ourselves.”

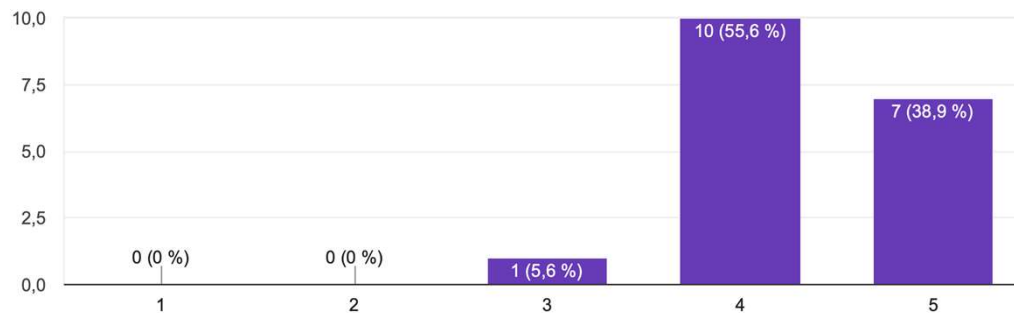
# Organic farm Siiriäinen Local food tour

## STRENGTHS

- Warm and authentic welcome; watching the animals and hearing the cows' calling sounds were particularly memorable.
- The hot dogs were tasty and made from local ingredients produced on the farm.
- Opportunity to purchase products directly on-site.
- The environment was clean and atmospheric; the combination of art and agriculture was especially interesting.

### 2.2 Luomutila Siiriäinen

18 vastausta



## Organic farm Siiriäinen

### Meeting Anna

French bloggers

“Anna” was mentioned several times during the discussion. Her personality and presence made a strong impression. Bloggers highlighted her enthusiasm, empathy, and the time she dedicated to visitors — answering questions, engaging in open conversation, and introducing them to the animals.

- “Anna was very kind and passionate. She had time for us.”
- “She shared her experiences and her life with us – it was touching.”

The encounter demonstrated that in gastronomy tourism, people themselves can become an important part of the experience and value creation process. Personal interaction strengthened perceived authenticity, emotional engagement, and visitors’ connection to local food culture and rural life.

### Key insight

Personal interaction can create experiential value that strengthens the distinctiveness and authenticity of rural tourism businesses.



## Conclusions

- The value of gastronomy tourism is created not only through food itself, but through participation, interaction, and storytelling.
- Human interaction and emotional engagement strongly shape how visitors perceive authenticity and meaning.
- The same gastronomy tourism activity may create different forms of value for different visitor groups.
- Experiential design plays an important role in the competitiveness and distinctiveness of rural tourism businesses.

**Gastronomy tourism can transform local food from a product into a source of experiential value, rural entrepreneurship, and place-based development.**

