

Taverns in “Serra da Estrela” region: an opportunity for gastronomy tourism or rural tourism?

Tabernas na região da Serra da Estrela: uma oportunidade para o **turismo gastronómico** e para o **turismo rural**?

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Abstract | The outdoors' consumption of food and beverages but also the practice of commensality, happened in Portugal, for a certain period of history, in the taverns. Tracing this model back to ancient Mesopotamia, those facilities were mostly dedicated to the consumption of wine and snacks, known in Portugal as “petiscos”. As places to exercise sociability, taverns were relevant institutions of communities' daily life. In Fornos de Algodres, Gouveia, and Seia municipalities (Portugal), besides the alcoholic drinks and food, prepared and influenced by local foodways, they were important hubs for social and territorial cohesion and development. As the roots of the Portuguese “tascas”, they are now going through a touristic and identitarian recuperation process. The main goal of this study was to identify the main characteristics of taverns in the mentioned municipalities, mostly limited to the 20th century. This work was based on a qualitative methodology where bibliographic and archival research was conducted, alongside a questionnaire to identify taverns characteristics and territorial penetration. The results reveal that, at least, 157 taverns were open in the three municipalities, during the 20th century, offering – beyond wine and “petiscos” – additional services such as groceries selling and media access.

Keywords | Petisco, wine, taberna, portuguese food identity, habitus

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Resumo | O consumo de alimentos e bebidas fora do domicílio, bem como as práticas de comensalidade, ocorreram em Portugal, durante um período da história, nas tabernas. Num modelo originário na antiga Mesopotâmia, estes estabelecimentos eram principalmente dedicados ao consumo de vinho e petiscos. Como locais de sociabilidade, as tabernas eram instituições relevantes no curso do quotidiano das comunidades. Nos municípios de Fornos de Algodres, Gouveia e Seia (Portugal), além das bebidas alcoólicas e alimentos preparados, influenciados pelos hábitos alimentares locais, as tabernas constituíam-se também como importantes centros de coesão social, territorial e de desenvolvimento. Como antecessoras das "tascas" portuguesas, encontram-se atualmente em processo de recuperação identitária e turística. O principal objetivo deste estudo foi identificar as principais características das tabernas nos municípios mencionados, principalmente durante o século 20. Este trabalho foi baseado numa metodologia qualitativa, que incluiu análise bibliográfica e de arquivo, e um questionário para identificar as características das tabernas e a sua penetração territorial. Os resultados revelam que, pelo menos, 157 tabernas se encontravam abertas nos três municípios durante o século 20, oferecendo, para além de vinho e petiscos, serviços adicionais como a venda de mercearias e o acesso a meios de informação.

Palavras-chave | Petisco, vinho, taberna, identidade gastronómica portuguesa, habitus

1. Introduction

Portugal was mostly a rural country during the 20th century. By the middle of the century, almost 75% of the country lived out of cities, mostly in the countryside. Between 1950s and 1970s, a big outbound migratory wave was about to unveil over the interior of Portugal (Portela, 1997) leaving the countryside emptied of people and of traditional routines (Mónica in Portela, 1997). Back in those days, severe demographic changes started to shake the everyday life of Portuguese small villages and towns (*idem*) alongside with other exogenous societal transformations associated with globalization and technological advancements.

The centrality of sociability places and practices in small territories (either small villages or small towns) was interrogated in only one or two generations. Due to technological modifications, the community oven, the washing tanks, and even churches were put into an interval that ranged from abandonment to reconfiguration. Up to then, across the entire country, taverns also assumed a special status within the local sociability scene and

lifestyle frameworks (despite of their location or existence reason). Indeed, the Portuguese word for tavern ("taberna") is still collectively codified and its significance stills to be collectively shared by Portuguese people, which semantic understanding goes way beyond the selling of alcoholic beverages.

This expanded significance, densified by the complementary status of taverns not only as the places of food and beverages alternance but also with the services they provided (such as groceries selling, postal services, and so on), was verified in most of Portuguese villages and towns, expressing their economic and social importance in local communities. This was verified until the moment when the rural exodus and other – mostly technological – societal modifications like the conversion of agriculture hand force pushed them to a massive transformation process, leading to an expressive collective closure.

In this article, the authors aim to provide an overview of the reality of Portuguese taverns, as places of sociability and bonds making and stabilization. The research aims to answer to the following research question "What characteristics did

the taverns in the municipalities of Seia, Gouveia, and Fornos de Algodres possessed?". The authors embark on this research with the following research hypothesis: "The taverns in Gouveia, Seia, and Fornos de Algodres were spaces that focused on selling wine and "petiscos", where processes of sociability and leisure activities took place at various times of the day, especially during the commute to and from work". The article is based on a qualitative methodology that incorporates techniques such as bibliographic and archival research, interviews and a questionnaire applied in Fornos de Algodres, Seia, and Gouveia, three municipalities in the centre east of Portugal, in the western slope of Serra da Estrela region, a mountain range found in this part of the country. Those municipalities are part of NUT III "Beiras e Serra da Estrela", are considered as low-density territories, and are an integrative part of the "Estrela UNESCO Global Geopark" as well.

2. Theoretical context

2.1. Chronology

The historical evolution of taverns in Europe follows a similar societal, economic, and anthropological pattern across several European countries, including in the Mediterranean region, France, and Germany (Desportes, 2001). Taverns were not only as places for selling wine but also provided services related to food, lodging, animal feeding, and financial transactions (Campos, 2013; Peyer, 2001). This business model has been documented for at least four thousand years (Joannès, 2008).

In the ongoing processes of transformation that affect both its object and sociological dimensions, it is noteworthy to consider the current trend of revitalizing the identity of taverns as touristic resources. This is especially relevant for contemporary businesses, particularly those that emphasize

author's cuisine. Despite these changes, the fundamental configuration of a tavern appears to have retained its primary purpose and business model: the sale of alcoholic beverages accompanied by occasional food consumption. Furthermore, taverns continue to hold a prominent position in the everyday lives of the general public (Andrade, 1988; Lousada, 2009).

"Tabernas" (also known in Portugal as "tascas", "vendas" or "bodegas", taverns in English) were commercial establishments serving alcoholic drinks and also some food. They also provided additional services to the public, such as communication, games, entertainment, lodging, and other activities relevant to their historical and social context (Peyer, 2001).

The ancestry of taverns can be traced back to ancient Mesopotamia, Classical Rome, and Athens, and even to the medieval period. It is known that their aspects, rituals, and configurations have changed little from then until today, despite the adaptation of tavern spaces to class configurations, legal requirements, among others (Andrade, 1988; Joannès, 2008). However, in Portugal, no similar applied work has been previously done. With effect, theoretical contributions from this paper will robust the research on taverns, from the lenses of Social Anthropology, contributing to better understand socialization and everyday practices, specifically regarding the taverns within the studied region.

2.2. Taverns, myths, and habitus

Some of the practices registered in the *old* taverns and brought into the *new* taverns (the ones brought to contemporary cuisine trends, such as the "Isacas de porco") configures an opportunity to be semiotically analysed from the perspective of *myths* by Roland Barthes (Barthes, 2009) or in the perspective of *habitus* of Bordieu (Souza, 2014), both encompassing the embodiment of routines,

social behaviours, class, gender, and power.

The mythification of a dish, to a certain point presented by Barthes as a second language, is an expression of a symbolic part of a community that has plenty social norms attached (Alonso, 2010) which would be for Bordieu a “collective product, appropriated collectively” (Bordieu in Souza, 2014, p. 142). The relationship between a denotation on what has been an empirical practice, gives room to a connotation process and to the appearance of a practice, mythification based on a relationship between a signifier (the context) and a signified (the dish), originating a connotated language and widespread second interpretation used for dish consumption and promotion (Gaines, 2001).

Besides, with the lens of Bordieu, one could also use the *habitus* approach to decode its resurgence and related practices on what they intend to promote: class of origin, codes of lifestyle, etc. (Souza, 2014).

If for Bordieu the dish or the taverns could be a *habitus* in the sense that they resume *taste* practices of a given class, we find in Barthes’ mythification concept the idealism behind the dish that permits it to arrive to a “new” tavern business in the 21st century as part of a renewed identity formulation, which is the ultimate goal of a collective memory process (Wertsch & Roediger, 2008).

2.3. Portuguese taverns – a literature review and public policy analysis

Taverns’ popularity waned with the emergence of cafes, which appealed to the growing bourgeoisie’s interest in more elitist dynamics (Andrade, 1988). This shift occurred in Portugal as well, particularly after the 1755 earthquake, as cafes became intellectual and cultural spaces for political and cultural discussions (Almeida, 1993). Historically,

taverns were establishments where fermented date alcohol was consumed as well as locally harvested food products (Joannès, 2008), while in Rome, “popina” and “tabernae” specialized in different business models¹ (Corbier, 2008). During the medieval period, taverns expanded their business to provide accommodation, offering not only alcoholic beverages but also basic food items like bread, cheese, and meat (Desportes, 2001; Peyer, 2001).

Literature produced in Portugal on these establishments generally focuses on the sociological aspects associated with taverns’ patrons, focusing on the aspects of masculinity and the embodiment of Bordieu’s *habitus* in tavern attendance (Andrade, 1988, 1991; Magalhães, 1996, 2017; Villa-Lobos, 2002) and it is, broadly speaking, centred analysis between the 15th and 20th centuries. From the conducted studies, it is evident that taverns served as daily gathering places and support for human life, as spaces for socializing, bohemian, and the strengthening and stabilization of bonds among primary groups (colleagues, neighbours, friends, family). They acted as meeting points where the burdens and responsibilities of work, home, and leisure spheres were temporarily set aside (Andrade, 1988; Serra, 2004). Similarly, the literature distinguishes taverns from cafes, “casas de pasto” (eating houses), and restaurants by the predominant focus on selling wine and the rustic and humble nature of the first.

Conceptually a tavern is defined as a “modest place, with a popular type of patrons where wine and other drinks by the glass were consumed, alongside with “petiscos” [small portions of food to be shared] and where people would socialize in a simple way” (Pereira & Pericão, 2015). On the legal domain, it was an “establishment for selling wine by the glass and spirits”², developing to be understood in 1991 like “the place

¹ *Tabernae* primarily focused on the sale of beverages, although they also offered some fast-food items. *Popina*, on the other hand, were more similar to restaurants where cooked and hot food was served (Corbier, 2008).

² Decree no. 15.602 of June 18th, 1928, available at <https://tinyurl.com/mrxyh3k3> (accessed on July 15th, 2023)

where wine, other beverages, and food are sold or served (...) similar to an ordinary eating house (...), distinguishing itself from a restaurant only by the qualitative difference in the service provided (...)"³. There were multiple taverns profiles. Taverns could be wine producers themselves or located near a wine production area. They could be strategically positioned at key transportation hubs or be situated within specific human geographic contexts such as villages, neighbourhoods, rural areas, or cities (Andrade, 1991; Magalhães, 2017; Villa-Lobos, 2002).

Among the physical and sensorial aspects of taverns identified in the literature, one prominent feature is an enclosed space with a connecting door to the street (Almeida, 1993); typically furnished with tables and benches on each side of the room, a continuous or peninsula wooden counter (that could have a section reserved for displaying "petiscos" for consumption), with a trapdoor or discontinuous entrance for the tavern keeper to access the service area and the public area, with wine casks or storage containers behind the counter, and shelves frequently full of glasses and other non-wine beverages for customer consumption as well as a water well that served to cool wines, beers, and other products (Ferreira, 2011); a "cowboy" door and the characteristic smell of wine, often masked with a branch of laurel, that would become an identifying feature of a tavern (Leite, 2012; Pinto, 2007).

The sociological analysis of taverns reveals

their embodiment of Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*, as they absorb and reflect the class characteristics and social events of their patrons and surrounding environment, shaping their practices and meanings (Andrade, 1988, 1991; Magalhães, 1996; Villa-Lobos, 2002). Trust is also a crucial element in taverns, as they serve as sites for the generation or loss of "social capital" (Andrade, 1988). While accusations of fraud have historically been associated with tavern keepers, instances of trust-building and relationship stabilization were into force, such as allowing customers to buy on credit ("pedir *fiado*"), manage their pensions, exchanging costumers checks in money, also exist (Andrade, 1988, 1991; Lousada, 2009; Magalhães, 2017; Villa-Lobos, 2002). Nevertheless, a social role of moderation and social harmony is recognized for both the tavern establishment and the tavern keeper (Magalhães, 2017). In the 1960s, periods of emigration and the colonial war, the tavern became a trustworthy ally for the population on reading and writing communication pieces (Ferreira, 2011).

Close Government control over taverns was evident (Andrade, 1988; Joannès, 2008; Peyer, 2001) either because of operating hours⁴ (Brito, 2003), service performed near public spaces⁵, patrons' age, among others, including administrative control over hygiene aspects⁶. It would, however, be with the Portuguese Hotel Law in 1986⁷ that the designation of taverns ceased to exist in the nomenclature of catering and beverage establish-

³ *Acórdão* no. 30946 from the Court of Appeal of Lisbon, of October 17th, 1991, available at <https://tinyurl.com/bdweh2zy> (accessed on July 15th, 2023).

⁴ Also regulated by Decree-Law no. 38421 of September, 12th 1951, available at <https://tinyurl.com/mrxfcyzd> (accessed on July 15th, 2023), Decree-Law no. 102/75 of March 5th 1975, available at <https://tinyurl.com/wc8chn6y> (accessed on July 15th, 2023)

⁵ For measures on location and underaged access to taverns *vd.* Law no. 1547 of February 26th, 1924, available at <https://tinyurl.com/msa8ysbe> (accessed on July 15th, 2023)

⁶ The Portaria no. 6065 of April 11, 1929, introduced the requirement of a sanitary license permit for new "*tabernas*" to be established in cities, towns, and urban areas. This regime remained in place until the 1990s. Its origins can be traced back to the Law no. 1453 of July 26, 1923, which granted the authority to issue license permits to municipal councils for establishments included in the "Regulations and General Instructions for Hygiene, Sanitation, and Safety in Industrial Establishments." Taverns were encompassed within this framework, which was published under the Decree no. 8364 of August 25, 1922.

⁷ Decree-Law no. 328/86 of September 30th, available at <https://tinyurl.com/yas8nhv7> (accessed on July 15th, 2023).

⁸ Through Decree-Law no. 327/95 of December 15th available at <https://tinyurl.com/mr2mk8m4> (accessed on July 15th, 2023)

ments. However, the possibility of using the name “taberna” was reintroduced in 1995⁸ as long as they use tavern in its business name and had, cumulatively: a) dedicated areas to food preparation; b) areas for customer service; c) refrigeration facilities for freezing, preservation, and cooling of food and beverages and d) air heating and cooling systems. Those conditions – *sine qua non* to remain operating – alongside with the observed social phenomena of economic tertiarization, rural exodus, urbanization, coastal development, and the increase in purchasing power of the middle class in Portugal (Andrade, 1988; Costa, 2022; Magalhães, 1996), seem to have been some of the contributing factors to its decline.

In contemporary times, numerous new taverns and “*tascas*” restaurants have emerged across the country, aiming to revive the essence of the traditional taverns by offering “petiscos”, Portuguese cultural shared fast food, and incorporating nostalgic decorative elements reminiscent of the historical tavern atmosphere and identity (C. Moura, 2019).

Also, in July 2023, AHRESP (Association of Hotels, Restaurants and Similar of Portugal), within the scope of the Taste Portugal project, in partnership with Tourism of Portugal, the National Touristic Authority, set up a diaspora Portuguese restaurants branding program called “Tasca. Authentic Portuguese Restaurants”⁹, labelled as the international identity of Portuguese cuisine. In a previous conference, held in 2022, AHRESP stated that “Unlike what happens in France with the Bistrot, in Spain with the taberna, and in Italy with the trattoria, there is no specific concept of a Portuguese restaurant”¹⁰. The aim is to bring forth the full symbolism of the concept of “tasca” to brand, by extension, the international identity of Portuguese cuisine.

2.4. Taverns’ services – wine, “petiscos”, and much more

The tavern provided an opportunity for consuming food and beverages outside home, primarily attracting men to consume wine, a politically protected product during the Estado Novo regime (Lamas, 2016). Alongside wine, they also offered inexpensive small portions of food, such as “petiscos”, which could be prepared on-site or brought (Lousada, 2009). Some taverns also had a dual business model, offering wine and snacks as well as selling a variety of goods, often in bulk (J. Rodrigues et al., 2020). The culinary preparations in the tavern were historically associated with improvisation, making use of the available resources of the patrons’ classes (Villa-Lobos, 2002). The “petiscos” were low-cost and included sandwiches, “pataniscas” (cod fish fritters), “pastéis de bacalhau” (codfish savoury cake), fried and boiled fish, such as codfish (fried in big chunks), mackerel or sardines, and pork liver, evolving to more substantial meals as time went by (Lousada, 2009; Magalhães, 1996). Taverns were mainly frequented in the morning for breakfast (“dejejum”) or “mata-bicho” (a morning light meal with spirits) on the way to work, and in the evening (Serra, 2004). Taverns would also welcome fishermen or hunters to bring their catch to be transformed and consumed on-site (Lousada, 2009; Villa-Lobos, 2002), a practice already mentioned in the Middle Ages (Peyer, 2001).

Taverns also provided opportunities for entertainment. Games based on skills mastering, gambling, or strength-based games were common in taverns as well as music (Andrade, 1988; Serra, 2004). Some of the examples on the connection of taverns with music are found in Alentejo’s “cante” and “fado”, that appeared through “landum” in Lisbon’s taverns (Andrade, 1988; Leite, 2012; Lousada, 2009; Magalhães, 2017; Pinto, 2015; Sal-

⁹Available at <https://tascaportuguesa.pt/> (accessed July 15th, 2023)

¹⁰Available at <https://tinyurl.com/4a5hpcju> (accessed July 15th, 2023).

vado et al., 2019; Serra, 2004; Villa-Lobos, 2002).

The business model would be the same in the entire country. Taverns provided important secondary services to communities, such as media access, either TV, radio, newspapers, and magazines (Villa-Lobos, 2002), as well as assistance with writing and reading letters, telegrams, and similar correspondence for the population, especially during the period of Portuguese emigration and mobilization for the colonial war, particularly from the 1950s to the 1970s (Ferreira, 2011). Their role was also relevant in supporting rationing programs during World War II (Ferreira, 2011) or in guaranteeing workforce for agricultural works, since the tavern was also the place for agreements making and contracting of workforce for agricultural works (Abrantes, 1993). Other offered services included barber, public telephones, and post office (Abreu & Santos, 1993; Ferreira, 2011).

2.5. Taverns in Serra da Estrela region: Fornos de Algodres, Gouveia and Seia

The analysed literature on taverns, in the studied municipalities, is primarily of a monographic nature, including some archaeological and essayistic perspectives that complement the general literature produced (Costa, 2022; Guerrinha, 1984; Mendes, 1999; Ramos, 2022; Rosa, 2006). Archaeologically, there is a focus on investigating the potential presence of Roman taverns in these municipalities, particularly in transit areas¹¹ (Peyer, 2001) which is also studied in the 19th century, particularly regarding the food and lodging of muleteers in Gouveia (Neto, 2001).

¹¹Roman era *tabernae diversoriae* can be mirrored on the modern inn's, as part of a facilities network available to travelers that helped in their trips throughout the dense road network of the Empire, identified also in Gouveia Municipality (Correia, 2021).

¹²That has been found in the Archives through "Posturas Municipaes para o regimen do Concelho de Cea colligidas, reformadas, e acrescentadas pela Câmara de 1843", published in 1844 and "Edital do Presidente da Câmara Municipal de Seia" of March 28th 1942, the "Postura sobre pesos e medidas" from 1939 that regulated prosecution aspects regarding opening hours, game control, fraud practices on the mixture of wine and water, weights and measures, taxes on the sold items at the taverns, among others. As an example, the Municipality of Seia would tax each kilo of rice by 10\$ (escudos), a liter of olive oil, 10, *akiloofcodfish*, 10, sardine, horse mackerel, mackerel, box, 1\$, etc.

¹³According to interviews

Sociologically, references are made to the situations of violence that arise from taverns' attendance (M. Moura, 1996; Veloso, 1980). Other businesses along with tavern are mentioned such as butcher, grocery, fish shops, and drugstores (Costa, 2022; Ramos, 2022). Moura's studies on Gouveia and Seia during the 20th century reveal that, as previously mentioned, taverns were primarily spaces for male socialization, usually from to the lower class also mentioning the authorities' administrative controls, as mentioned before¹² and the problematic of children's alcohol consumption (M. Moura, 1996, 1997).

The gastronomic offer in the taverns of Gouveia¹³ was based on products produced in the region and/or prepared using culinary preservation techniques such as mackerel in "escabeche", an olive oil, onion, and vinegar sauce. The menu featured "enchidos" (cured sausages), fried cod, and cheeses. It was common for customers to also bring something to eat in their pockets while tavern keepers would sell the drinks.

It is also relevant to mention the work conducted by Serra in Beiras region, regarding the games and leisure activities in the taverns, including the previously mentioned aspects of gambling, skill-based games, music, and verbal arts such as storytelling or telling jokes, which were commonly observed in these establishments (Serra, 2004).

Gastronomic culture as a touristic product and the development of gastronomy tourism routes has been discussed already as carrying an added value to the region (Salgado & Leitão, 2011).

3. Methodology

A qualitative methodology was employed, utilizing techniques such as bibliographic analysis and primary sources obtained from archives search. Municipal Archives of Gouveia and Seia were searched. It should be noted that the Municipal Archives of Gouveia, which are not indexed, did not yield any valuable information. On the other hand, the Municipal Archive of Seia, which was consulted on April 20th and 21st, 2023, proved to be more fruitful. During the research process, in which taverns authorization or sanitary regulations were sought, the following dossiers were examined: "Taxas"(Taxes), "Licenças"(Licenses), "Editais do Presidente da Câmara"(Announcements from the Mayor), and "Posturas Municipais"(Municipal Regulations), albeit without codification. In addition to these sources, a database provided by the Municipality of Fornos de Algodres was also utilized.

An exploratory ethnographic approach was adopted to gather supplementary information on the operations of taverns. Thirteen unstructured

interviews were conducted with the dual research objectives of: 1) Identifying additional taverns and their offerings within the specified region; and 2) Describing the food and beverage products served in these taverns. Out of the thirteen interviews, ten were carried out in Seia, one in Gouveia, and two in Fornos de Algodres (ten men, three women with an average age of 54 years).

A questionnaire survey was conducted to preliminarily identify the taverns and their characteristics in the three municipalities under analysis. The questionnaire consisted of closed and open-ended questions and was validated through a pilot test, which feedback was included in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was sent via email to the Presidents of the 49 parishes that belong to the three Municipalities. A Google Forms link containing the same content was also provided, to ease data collection. Three follow-up contacts were made by the authors via phone and email to non-respondents. The response period lasted from March 8, 2023, to May 15, 2023. The questionnaire was as follows:

Table 1 | Dimensions, indicators, aspects, questions, and response typology of the applied questionnaire

Dimensions	Indicators	Aspects	Answer
1 – Socio demographic data	1.1. Identification	1.1.1. Parish	Closed
		1.1.2. Municipality	Closed
		1.1.3. Date	Closed
	1.2. Respondent data	1.1.4. Respondent name*	Closed
		1.1.5. Direct contact	Closed
		1.1.6. Respondent age	Closed
2 – Taverns	2.1. Please list all the taverns you remember existing in your Parish, preferably those that operated in the 20th century (1901-1999). You can also mention any that you know existed in the 19th century (1801-1899) and even in the 21st century (2001-present). Provide a description of each. Please include the approximate address as it will be used to create a map.		Open
	2.2. Provide, to each tavern, as much information as possible.		Open

Source: Authors' elaboration

Note: * "Respondent name" and "direct contact" were collected with the sole purpose of a direct contact to clarify any provided data.

4. Results

Twenty-one responses were collected from forty-nine questionnaires sent (response rate of 43%, average age 46.7 years old), covering twenty-eight localities¹⁴. Of these, fifteen presented valid data for analysis, distributed across the dimensions of tavern dispersion and their characteristics (Figure 1). Six surveys were excluded as they did not provide any information nor identification of taverns and/or their description. Fifty taverns were

identified through the questionnaires. Also, through bibliographic/archival research, and oral collections, sixty-three more taverns were added. The database provided by the Fornos de Algodres Municipal Council (referred to as "CMFA") included forty-two taverns. In total, 157 taverns were identified distributed according to figure 2, which summarized results could be found in Table 2¹⁵. Georeferencing was performed in Iberian context (Figure 3) and in the region (Figure 4).

No. of questionnaires received per Municipality

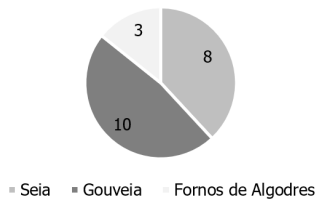


Figure 1 – Number of questionnaires received per Municipality Source: Authors' elaboration.

Tabernas identified in the three Municipalities

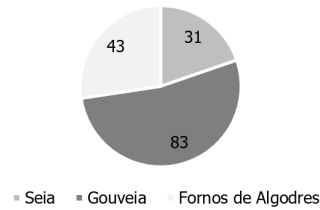


Figure 2 – Number of taverns identified in the three Municipalities. Source: Authors' elaboration.



Figure 3 – Georeferencing of taverns in Portugal. Source: ESRI ArcGIS, authors elaboration.

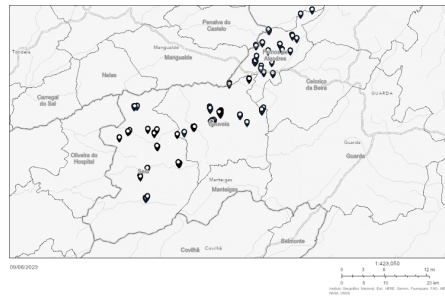


Figure 4 – Georeferencing of taverns in Serra da Estrela region. Source: ESRI ArcGIS, authors elaboration.

No. of taverns identified per source

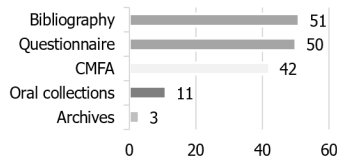


Figure 5 – Number of taverns, per source. Source: Authors' elaboration.

Distribution of taverns' services

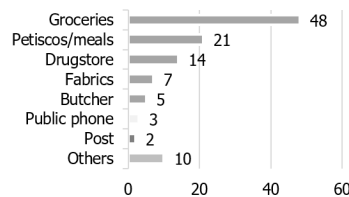


Figure 6 – Distribution of taverns services. Source: Authors' elaboration.

¹⁴The 2013 administrative reform (Law No. 11-A/2013, of January 28th), merged some parishes.

¹⁵The authors acknowledge the possibility of some duplicated locations due to informal transfers or sale.

5. Discussion

Table 2, figure 5 and figure 6 presents the studied reality that has been able to gather through the aforementioned research techniques. The answers will be analysed in the following dimensions: Chronology, Patrons, Social codes, Characteristics, Leisure, Services, Gastronomy, Tavern keeper and Metamorphosis.

5.1. Chronology

Despite the difficulties in obtaining information about the start of operation and closure of activity of the majority of taverns, and in those cases where it was possible to collect data, a considerable inaccuracy was observed this study corroborates Costa (2022) and Rosa (2006) when they state that the golden era of taverns was around 1960s and 1970s since the majority were open around those years and most would close until the 1990s, probably corroborating the aforementioned difficult to perform with new sanitary rules.

5.2. Patrons

Taverns' patrons are mostly made by man (G5; S6; S7 and Z. Rodrigues, 2017) which confirms the literature. However, it is important to denote that many times taverns' names mention a female name, in allusion to the female tavern keeper that would also cook.

It is also possible to confirm the selection of taverns based on class and profession principles just like what happened in "*Taberna do Quim Martinho*" (Gouveia) to which operators from the "Bellino&Bellino" factory would go (Ramos, 2022). Also, in Sabugueiro (Seia), it was possible to identify through oral collections that some taverns were attended by shepherds and others by workers, including displaced workers that were working

in Serra da Estrela' hydroelectric plants (between 1907 and 1937).

5.3. Social codes

The convivial role of the tavern ("the circle of friends") and social interaction ("*taberna as the place of*) (...) *the opportunity to speak about the incidences and happenings of the city and of the Country*") and its role in the everyday life is referred on questionnaires G4 and G5. Besides, questionnaire G3 identifies that children would have access to wine since the respondent, as a child would go to "*Taberna da Tia Maria*" (Melo, Gouveia), and the tavern keeper would offer him a glass of wine. The taverns are mentioned as "*places of temptation*" (G4), proved by the excesses of drinking, bringing heavy burdens to families, alluding to the violence and the money spent at the tavern, which was already very limited (G4). Both confirm the aforementioned notes from Moura (M. Moura, 1996).

In Gouveia, the taverns were known as "Apeadeiros"(railway halts) or "Capelinhas"(little chapels). In the first case, this designation refers to the successive incursion of the patrons into the taverns along a specific route, metaphorically representing the path taken by the regional train on the Beira Alta line, stopping at each "apeadeiro". Hence, this is the reason for having a taverns called "Estação Velha"(Gouveia) and another nicknamed "Zé da Pampilhosa"(Ramos, 2022). The second case refers to a pagan event, that is still made in Gouveia Municipality on the Thursday's catholic procession, prior to the Good Friday of the Catholic Easter. Despite the fully alienation of this local taverns culture event, there is a deviation from what is written in the literature, since those burlesque ceremonies are associated, mostly in Northern and Central Portugal, with St. Martin day and festivities (November 11th), and to the celebration rituals of the new wine:

These processions parody religious processions in a bacchic version and often have at their core a more or less consistent burlesque brotherhood - the "Order" or "Confraternity" of St. Martin - whose members were recruited among the most renowned drinkers, according to the hierarchy of their annual feats: the greatest drunkard in town would be the "Judge, Steward," or "President," followed by the "Secretary," the "Treasurer," the "Vocalists," and so on (Oliveira, 1995, p. 195).

All this organization took place in the tavern until the day of the procession. The "devotes" would run the "Capelinhas" (chapels), a popular name for taverns (Goes, 2007). In each establishment they stopped, they would dedicate a verse and have a glass of wine. This resulted in the drunken state of all the participants, which gave it its name.

Besides, the practice of asking for credit ("pedir fiado"), was also identified (G5).

5.4. Characteristics

The vast majority of taverns' names refer to their owner, who is also the tavern keeper. In many cases, nicknames of the owners are used to name the tavern. Physically speaking, the long benches put alongside the taverns' rooms were identified (S6, G2), while others would have articulated tables that would be deployed in case of need and to "save space" (G2). A wood trapdoor in the counter is referred (S6). In one tavern the cowboy door was detected ("*Taberna da Tia Maria*", Melo, Gouveia). The characteristic smell was referred in questionnaire S6. The majority of the tavern were present in populated areas, near residential areas or roads.

5.5. Leisure

To "*kill time*", card games are referred (Z. Rodrigues, 2017), in games like "sueca" and "truque" (G2). Domino (G4, S6) and "fito" game (G2) was also referred. In Lapa dos Dinheiros (Seia) an evening encounter at the tavern is referred in which anecdotes are shared (Z. Rodrigues, 2017), confirming theory from Serra (2004).

Also, in the exterior space adjacent to the tavern, various games were played, including those that needed more space. If Serra (2004) referred this Ramos (2022) demonstrates that it was indeed the case, as in the example of the "*Taberna do Quim Martinho*" (Gouveia), where football was played outside after its patrons finished their shifts at the "Bellino&Bellino" factory, with the owner joining in but remaining attentive to the potential arrival of customers to serve.

There are accounts of routines experienced in the tavern (such as listening the game narration on radio on Sundays, G4), but also listen to some music on the radio (S2; S6). Still on the media access, accounts were made regarding exceptional moments lived in the tavern by the respondents, namely through the television "[It was in the tavern], that I saw the 1966 World Cup and that famous game 5-3 against Korea" (G2) or when the TV of "*Taberna do Sr. Joaquim Neves*" (Lapa dos Dinheiros, Seia) would be put outside so that people could watch the "Eurovision Song Contest" or the "Fatima ceremonies, on May 13th" (Z. Rodrigues, 2017).

5.6. Services

Confirming literature, the most referred service in the questionnaires (and in interviews) is the grocery store. Taverns would sell rice, pasta, sugar, "products that the land provided", pulses like beans or broad beans, codfish, bread, cookies, dried figs, tableware, and fabrics (F1, G1, G2, G5, S2, S7)

(Mendes, 1999; Z. Rodrigues, 2017). Bulk selling of food, like flour, is also identified (G5, S2, S7).

The second largest provided service was “petiscos” (G4, G1). Public phone is also mentioned (G2, G6) as well as post office (G2, G6). Some taverns would have a butcher shop (S2, G7) (Ramos, 2022; Rosa, 2006) and tobacco selling (*idem*). One tavern was identified as taxi provider (G6). Animal feeding was also sold in taverns (G7, S2).

One tavern was identified with raffles selling (Ramos, 2022). Through interviews was possible to identify that Sabugueiro taverns were also a place to negotiate wolfram at the taverns’ table, mainly during World War II. Here the miners from the village would come to sell their ore, collected in Serra da Estrela, and the tavern keepers would, in turn, sell it in Minas de Sazes and Vila Franca da Beira (Oliveira do Hospital Municipality).

Finally, it was possible to identify in the literature additional services of taverns: a distillery, wine press, bread oven, carpentry, building materials, furniture (Costa, 2022).

5.7. Gastronomy

The consumption of wine and brandy is mentioned several times (e.g., F1, G4, G5), referring to brandy in the morning and wine in the afternoon (G2), or white wine in the morning and red wine in the afternoon (S2). There is a response that states that the wine sold in the village’ taverns was locally sourced (G7), something that also happened in Ancient Mesopotamia (Joannès, 2008). Selling of beer and sodas is referred (G7, S6).

The most sold “petiscos” at the tavern would be those that went along with a glass of wine. Some of them would be consumed directly from the package (canned sardines or tuna) with a specific bread called “trigo de quartos” (G2) but also a dish called “iscas de fígado” (fried pork liver) was identified (G4, G7), alongside with ham, “chouriça” (pork meat smoked sausage), cheese (G4),

river fish (G7) and “enchidos” (sausages in general) (G7).

It is also mentioned in questionnaire G4, which accompanies the interviews conducted, that tavern-goers would often carry a piece of bread, a chunk of salted cod, or olives in their coat pockets to individually accompany the drinks consumed in the tavern. This introduction of food into the tavern is accompanied by response G7, which mentions the possibility of bringing cured meats to the tavern to be prepared there, with the tavern keeper being responsible for selling the beverages that accompany the meal. (G7). This fact recalls the practice already mentioned by Peyer (2001).

It was identified, through interviews, a dish called “requeijada” served in Fornos de Algodres’ taverns. Similarly, it was identified that in “*Taberna do Ti Albano*” (Gouveia), they served homemade pork rinds cooked in a pot, “ovos verdes”, pork “bifanas”, chicken feet, “ossos da assuã”, “iscas de fígado”, fried codfish, “pica pau”, breaded sardines, sardines in escabeche, among others. The sausages consumed in this tavern, as well as the ham, were made by the tavern owner’s wife. One tavern in Figueiró da Serra was identified to invest on an advertisement that said “When the sun rises it is for everyone: good “petiscos” and good “petisqueira” only at Zé Coelho’s house” (Mendes, 1999).

5.8. Tavern keeper

The questionnaires’ responses confirm the balance mentioned regarding trust vs. mistrust of the institution and the tavern keeper. While on one hand, the figure of the tavern owner was cherished, as reported in G3, where it mentions...“(. . .) [I remember to] take a flowers bouquet or only a flower to Tia Maria (. . .) [since] that to go to Tia Maria and not taking a flower was something like to go to Rome and don’t see the Pope”. Fraud episodes are also accounted when the glass, after being

washed, would keep an amount of water that would be mixed with wine, so that wine would be “more profitable” (G3).

Regarding the economic position of tavern owners, it was possible to identify through interviews that in Sabugueiro (Seia), taverns were owned by people from affluent families. This condition has been previously presented by Desportes (2001).

There are reports in literature of the bad character of some tavern keepers, such as *Tia Noémia* in Gouveia, especially when it came to collecting overdue debts (“o fiado”), something that also Desportes (2001) has described.

5.9. Metamorphosis

The tavern spaces underwent modifications over time. Some ceased to exist to make way for new constructions and businesses (G4, S5), others gave rise to new businesses, however within the hospitality/tourism industry (G4, G2, S2, S5). Indeed, the observed changes primarily stem from population migration to urban areas, resulting in the abandonment of these spaces’ original intended purpose of serving the population’s needs. From a tourism development standpoint, the establishment of gastronomic routes and the re-creation of tavern-like atmospheres can serve as appealing food tourism attractions (and eventually linked with rural tourism). This is especially true considering the positive perception associated with such themes, as exemplified by the aforementioned Tourism of Portugal project.

6. Conclusions and implications

Taverns have been, since their genesis, pivotal in local development, allowing for social and territorial cohesion and the reduction of inequalities, as evidenced by the social networks and capital they generate and maintain, as well as the development

of services they have provided in response to the needs of the population. In our study, primarily focused on the 20th century, we were able to identify 157 taverns through the application of research techniques such as questionnaires, bibliographic research, primary sources from archives, interviews, and documents provided by public authorities. In a study area of approximately 867.7 square kilometres, the existence of approximately one tavern per 5.5 square kilometres clearly demonstrates their penetration rate and importance within the territory. This is further illustrated by the development of ancillary services related to the primary purpose of the taverns, which were provided to the population.

Due to the lack of data, it was challenging to precisely determine the starting and ending dates of the taverns under study. However, some taverns do have certain chronological references (“at least, already functioning in...,mid-...”). It is important to note that these references are not robust enough to draw definitive conclusions. Nevertheless, the authors approximated the average lifespan of the taverns for which data was available and found that they had an average operational period of 37 years (some lasting over 90 years, while others only a few years). As a predominantly family-oriented business, running a tavern was a lifelong commitment.

As described, the heyday of taverns appears to have been in the 1950s and 1960s, coinciding with a time when rural villages had considerably larger populations compared to the present day. Demographic factors such as rural exodus, coastal migration, emigration, the emergence of more modernized businesses (such as cafes and breweries), the lack of adaptation of taverns to sanitary and food safety regulations, and public health concerns regarding alcohol consumption seem to have contributed to the decline of these establishments.

The consumption of wine, spirits, as well as improvised and occasional meals (“making do with food”) primarily by men, placed taverns at the in-

tersection of various dichotomies, including formal and informal, rural, and urban, trust and distrust. Many of the dishes and snacks mentioned earlier have made their way into contemporary Portuguese cuisine, indicating that Portuguese culinary heritage has, to some extent, originated or at least been reproduced in “tabernas”.

The study emphasizes taverns as catalysts for local development and social/territorial cohesion, advocating for a transdisciplinary approach that integrates socioeconomic significance, social networks, cultural heritage, historical analysis, and public health considerations. To address a comprehensive analysis, demographic challenges, rural-urban dynamics, and public health concerns should be observed.

Tourism industry could look at taverns as historically significant places with the necessary interpretations that would frame them in the development of partnerships, namely for the benefit of rural tourism. Also, investing on research is advisable so that the created narratives reflect the true dynamics of such businesses to be told to tourists.

6.1. Theoretical implications

The study emphasizes taverns as places of “myth” and “habitus” embodiment. From those lenses, taverns can operate as catalysts for local development and territorial cohesion, advocating for a transdisciplinary approach that integrates socioeconomic significance, tourism development, social networks, cultural heritage, historical analysis, and public health considerations. To address a comprehensive analysis, demographic challenges, rural-urban dynamics, and public health concerns should be observed.

6.2. Managerial implications

Tourism industry could look at *tabernas* as historically significant places with the necessary in-

terpretations that would frame them in the development of partnerships, routes, and touristic products namely for the benefit of rural and gastronomy tourism. Also, investing on research is advisable so that the created narratives reflect the true dynamics of such businesses to be told to tourists.

6.3. Implications for Policymaking

The circumstances of taverns that have been presented pose additional challenges for policymakers in the sense that the recuperation of such businesses to form up a national restaurant business could not be made in an empty, decontextualized way. As seen, taverns were part of a broader social-economic-demographic momentum of time in which their societal (and others) role was very clearly. To recuperate this concept, a major fieldwork on cultural heritage, a rural interpretation has to be made to sustain policy making decisions and not based on “memory” constructions explored at a board meeting.

6.4. Limitations and further research

The authors believe that the usage of other research techniques could have led to additional taverns discovery. Additionally, the authors are fully aware that memory bias could impact the results of our study. Our main limitations concerns reside on the fact that taverns that were located outside of urban areas could have not been officially registered, according to Portaria no. 6065 of March 30th, 1929. To address such limitation impacts, the authors decide to cross research techniques, with bibliographic research and primary sources research in the Municipal Archives.

The authors propose the need for a comprehensive and interdisciplinary study that delves into the broader context of taverns, their characteristics, and their societal roles in a larger geographic

area. Such a study would provide insights into the dispersion of taverns throughout the territory and their specific social functions within the region they belong to, considering them as valuable assets of Portuguese society. Additionally, it is essential to explore their enogastronomy dynamics, acknowledging their significance in the culinary traditions of the region.

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