



Region of South Aegean



“If you deconstruct Greece,
you will in the end see an olive tree,
a grapevine, and a boat remain.
That is, with as much, you reconstruct her.”

Odysseas Elitis, Nobel Prize Poet.



*Let thy food be thy medicine
and your medicine become
thy food"*

Hippocrates, 4th Century B.C

From the time of Arcestratus to this day, the Southern Aegean Islands' gastronomy makes up some of the most ancient cuisines of the world that are famously documented and has never lost its unique, authentic flavour.

From brilliant descriptions in Homer to the lavish symposia of classical Antiquity and the Deipnosophistae, from Hippocrates' 'On Diet' and Plato's 'Symposium' to Andrew Dalby's "Siren Feasts", all register an exciting historic gastronomic narrative. They are part of an unperturbed continuum from Prehistoric times to present, running through Roman times, Byzantium, the Franks, the Venetian Era and the Ottoman rule. The culinary traditions of the South Aegean are an integral feature of traditional Hellenic hospitality.

For at least three thousand years, this region's cuisine has had its own primary ingredients that create simple recipes that have come to typify the best of Greek national cuisine and generated many of the features of the modern-day European diet. For the South Aegean, gastronomy is not just about food, it is about the very essence of wellbeing, a true social and cultural event: it is a philosophy and a way of life.

Fifty inhabited islands and hundreds of more desert islets, come to make the South Aegean unique, each island boasting of its own gastronomic identity and all of them composing the culinary culture of the Archipelago.

Quality ingredients are at the heart of our islands' gastronomy. These ingredients are shaped by a varied landscape, our microclimate, the sun, the air and the salt of the sea breeze. Through the endless, golden olive groves, the perennial, historic vineyards, the gastronomic and winemaking tradition of the Archipelago is an invaluable gem in the timeless mosaic of the Hellenic Civilization, and of the culture of Europe as a whole.

By submitting its candidacy for the title of European Region of Gastronomy 2019, the Region of the South Aegean intends to reach our long-term goals as well as highlight the history of our gastronomy in what could be an immense symposium, a context within which to share its millennial secrets with our visitors to this exciting tour of flavours meant to stimulate all of the five senses.

George Hatzimarkos, *Governor, Region of South Aegean*

The Team

The European Region of Gastronomy Award is an important challenge for us in the Region of South Aegean. The process of preparing the application for the Award, so far, has already shown good, positive teamwork, as we managed to achieve so much in so short a time.

We had only 40 days to meet our stakeholders spread throughout our 50 islands. We had only 40 days to communicate with our supporters to come, cooperate and participate in this big story for our region and for our country as well. We had 40 days to write this application, this Bid Book which includes our islanders' experiences, stories, needs, as well as their hopes and dreams for the future.

A team of 10 motivated people, most of who were never previously involved in a European project came together to prepare and coordinate this process in 40 days. During this time, usual daily duties and responsibilities within departments still needed to be carried out. We all did our best, spending nights and weekends exchanging mails and calls, debating, and coming up with ideas, full of strong will and dedication to the common goal.

We managed through hard work, discipline, concrete dialogue and conversation to prove that teamwork is the most important value to achieve success, even when time limits are short, distances are far, and difficulties are big. Together, we managed the challenges of the application process so far, the experience has made us determined and full of hope for a positive result, not only to receive the Award, but that the whole process leading up to 2019 and beyond will ultimately leave a legacy for the Region.

Heidi Lazani, *Head of the Executive Committee Board*





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The Region

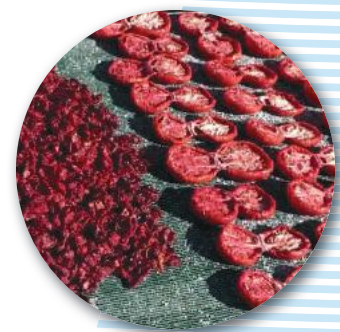
The Region of the South Aegean extends over an immense marine zone, from the island of Makronisos (off the coast of Attica) to the island of Kastelorizo, a stone's throw away from the Turkish coastline, comprising 50 inhabited islands and a further 669 smaller islands and rocky islets. Accounting for 5.286 square kilometres (4% of the Hellenic national territory), the Region of South Aegean hosts 308.610 inhabitants (according to data yielded as of the latest census, dating from 2011). The Region is further divided in 13 Regional Units comprising a total 34 Municipalities, essentially encompassing the territory that had in the past consisted of the Departments of Cyclades and the Dodecanese.

The Dodecanese

The Dodecanese extends over an area of 2.714 square kilometres and is home to 190.770 people. Named by order of size, the islands constituting this insular complex are: Rhodes, Karpathos, Kos, Astypalaea, Kalymnos, Kasos, Tilos, Symi, Leros, Nisyros, Patmos, Halki, Lipsi, Megisti (aka Kastelorizo) and Agathonisi. Further to these islands, there is a multitude of islets, the most important of which being Pserimos, Levitha, Alimiá, Arkoi, Saría, Telendos, Kinaros, Ofiouse, Syrna, Armathia, Farmakonisi, Kounoupoi, Nimos, Ro, Astakida, Sesklío. Rhodes, the largest of all the Dodecanese islands and fourth in order of size amongst all Greek islands, after Crete, Euboea and Mytilene (aka Lesvos), proudly hosts the capital city of the complex, and has become the most important hub of organized tourism activities in the country.

The Cyclades

The Cyclades complex extends over an area of 2.572 square kilometres, with a population of 117.840. Listed by order of size, these are the main Cycladic islands: Naxos, Andros, Paros, Tinos, Milos, Kea, Amorgos, Ios, Kythnos, Mykonos, Syros, Santorin (aka Thira), Serifos, Sifnos, Sikinos, Anafi, Kimolos, Antiparos, Folegandros, Iraklia, Therasia, Schinoussa and Koufonisia, followed by several other smaller and bigger islets, like Makronisos, Gyaros, Despotiko, Delos, Polyaegos, Karos, Renea, Donousa, Annanes, Falkonea, Anydros, Strongylo, Tragonisi, Seriphopoulo, Karavi, Palaea and Nea Kammeni Syros is the capital island of the Region of South Aegean, having evolved into a hub of city-break style tourism after a bright presence as an important centre for shipping, industry and culture in the once fledgling Hellenic State.



The Region

Main Domains of Professional Activities in the Region of South Aegean



Tourism

Tourism is by far the most dynamic sector in the array of opportunities for economic development in the Region of South Aegean, hence the leading position of this region in Greek tourism. Typical of the dynamism of the sector is the fact that for 2015, the Region of South Aegean accounted for 2076 accommodation facilities – 21% of the overall national capacity – translating in 195.648 beds (24.9% of the overall national capacity). Thirty-one point seven percent (31.7%) of the total number of hotel facilities, 29.2% of the total number of rooms and no less than 29.7% of the total number of beds available at 5-star Hotels in Greece are indeed to be found within the Region of South Aegean (as per data supplied by the Hellenic Chamber of Hoteliers on 31.12.2015).

Fishing

The Region of South Aegean is one of the 3 Hellenic Regions to have been formally classified as Regions Depending on Fishing; there are 11 Regions in Europe to have in total been classified as such. No wonder, therefore, that this is considered to be a crucial sector for the economy of the Region, all the more since fishing is greatly contributing to the preservation of the economic and social tissue within insular communities whilst helping maintain a base of production, especially on islands where possibilities for tourist or agricultural development remain limited. As estimated by the Fisheries Service departments around the Region of South Aegean, there are some 4700 people currently active in the sector of professional fishing, yielding an overall production of 6000 tons in catches. Out of such volume, more than 400 tons account for Swordfish, 280 for Long-Finned Tuna and about 120 tons for Bluefin Tuna, all such quantities being almost entirely exported. A considerable proportion of population on the islands of



Amorgos, Kythnos, Milos, Paros, Iraklia, Schinoussa, Kalymnos, Kasos, Karpathos, Kos and Lipsi are professionally active in fishing-related activities that most of the times also constitute a family trend from one generation to the next.

Agriculture

Agriculture is a traditional sector of economic activity throughout the Region of South Aegean. The highest concentration of farming activities may be found on the more sizeable islands of the Region, namely Rhodes, Santorini, Paros, Naxos, Kos, Andros and Tinos. When it comes to specific domains in farming, the highest interest for the Region of South Aegean is placed on wine-producing grapes, citrus and most and above all, olive groves. In terms of tonnage, the yearly production volumes for the Region of South Aegean (source: General Direction of Regional Agricultural Economy and Animal Health, 2015) were:

- Olive oil: 3.433 tons
- Grapes: 6.000 tons
- White and Red Wine: 3.440 tons (the greatest part of wines produced in the Region are PDO or PGI certified)
- Citrus Fruit: over 11.000 tons produced

Animal Husbandry

Livestock breeding fares first amongst the various domains of economic activity in the primary sector, its role being all the more pronounced in the Cyclades. The most important areas for animal husbandry are in Amorgos, Andros, Kythnos, Naxos, Tinos, Kasos, Karpathos and Kos, the highest interest being placed on ovine and caprine breeding, swine raising and cattle breeding. Dairy production is also quite important.

In terms of tonnage, the yearly production volumes for the Region of South Aegean (source: General Direction of Regional Agricultural Economy and Animal Health, 2015) were:

- Ovine and Caprine: 69.778 carcasses
- Swine: 5.276 carcasses
- Cattle: 4.370 carcasses
- Poultry: 64,8 tons of meat
- Eggs: 38.325 000 units

Apiculture

Apiculture is yet another important domain of activity for the Region of South Aegean. There were 96.211 beehives registered in 2015 and 1.088 tons of honey produced (source: General Direction of Regional Agricultural Economy and Animal Health).

The Concept

Our Region can be easily described as the Archipelagos of Gastronomy, Culture, History and Religion. A sea full of adventures, experiences, myths and reflections. Reflections of the sun, of the islanders lives, of its endlessness...

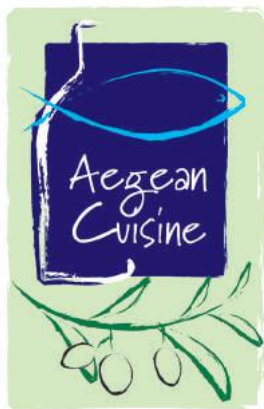
"If you deconstruct Greece, you will in the end see an olive tree, a grapevine, and a boat remain. That is, with as much, you reconstruct her."
Odysseas Elitis, Nobel Prize Poet.

This is our DNA and the narrative of the Aegean Archipelagos. These three elements, deeply rooted in tradition for millenia, from Ancient Greece until now, are the embryo of our economy and trade, of our evolution, and our future.

The Region of South Aegean is a palette of fifty islands, of fifty cuisines, of fifty cultures. Each of them has different identities, colours, flavours, smells, and characteristics. The combination of these fifty islands give us the unique Aegean Cuisine, a cuisine with fifty dimensions that let you decide the one that fits your appetite the best. The basic elements remain the same but the cultural influences transform the food of every island into a new gastronomic experience. This diversity along with the variety of the terroir, the uniqueness of the ingredients, the multi traditional recipes, give the Aegean Cuisine the synonym of Gastronomy.



The Aegean Cuisine



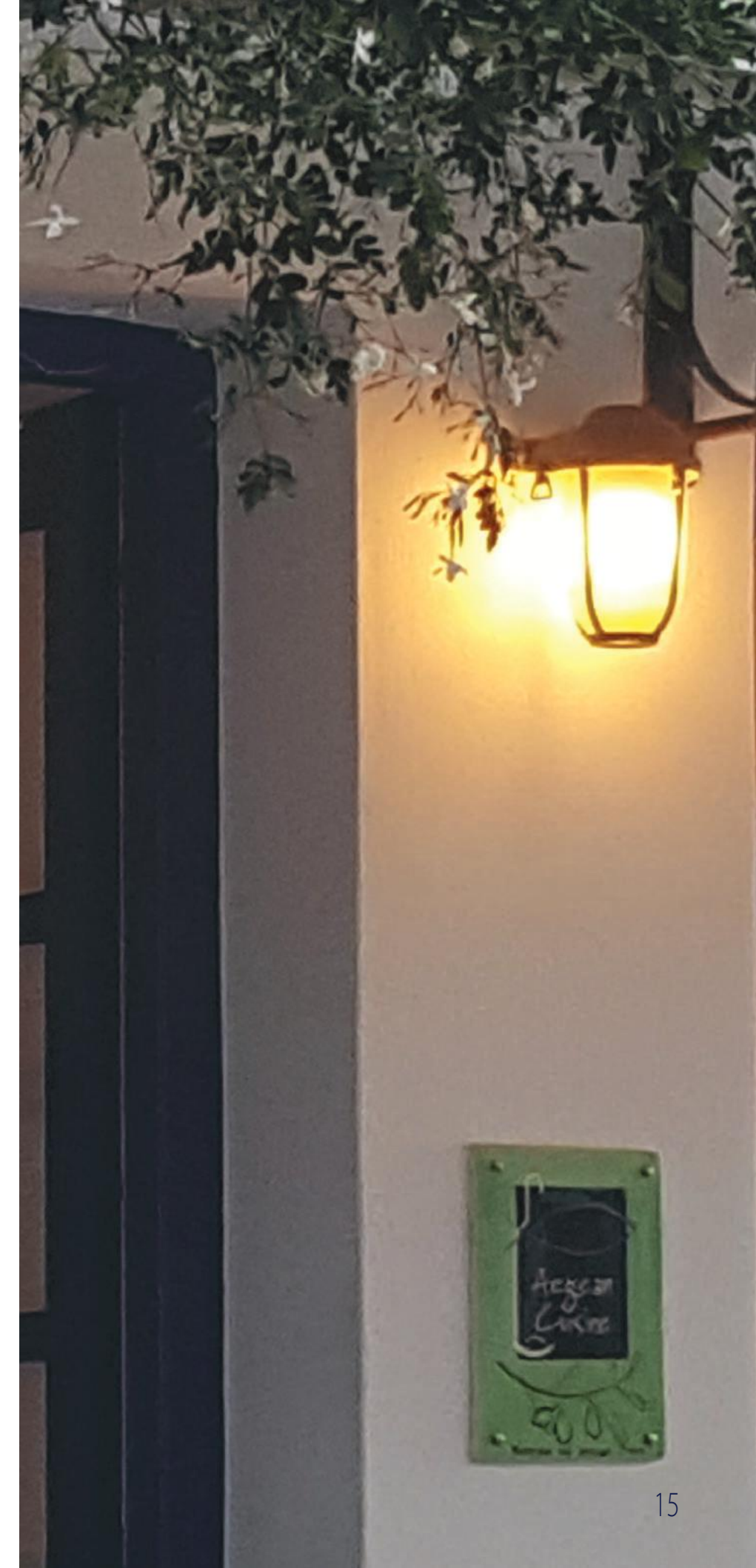
Aegean Cuisine was initially a project carried out by the Centres of Entrepreneurial and Technological Development (KETA) of the South Aegean in cooperation with the Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the Dodecanese and Cyclades (CCIDC), in order to highlight and promote the cuisine of the Aegean Sea and the locally produced products of the Region of South Aegean . Aegean Cuisine is a network of businesses in the South Aegean Islands, whose aim is to offer visitors the Aegean experience. It was founded in 2008 to utilize and exploit the wealth of the Aegean oenogastronomy, highlight local products and wines and to promote thematic tourism in these islands.



The goal was to create a network through synergies amongst local producers, local restaurants and sellers of local products in order to make it easy for visitors to learn about local products, to get to taste them in certified local restaurants and to find out where to buy them and take a bit of the Aegean back home.

Through a complex mechanism, and following years of consultation with the majority of specialists in the field of gastronomy in Greece (chefs, oenologists, journalists, trend-setters), and also with all relevant key stakeholders on a local level (local producers, local restaurant owners, local owners of local products shops), KETA produced a manual for the South Aegean.

This inclusive manual was designed according to a set of criteria, the first being the origin of the products/raw materials used. Other criteria included a set of quality standards such as hygiene, service, recipes etc. The Cyclades Chamber of Commerce, making full usage of the acquired know-how, optimised the manual and created a mixed system of control in collaboration with TUV Hellas for technical/technocratic matters, and with a team of acknowledged experts in gastronomy for matters of taste.





A plethora of actions for the South Aegean islands followed, including thematic events, participation in fairs/exhibitions, publication of the bilingual recipe book “Aegean Cuisine” etc. Today, the project is run by the Dodecanese and Cyclades Chambers of Commerce with the support of the Region of South Aegean. Aegean Cuisine’s official website www.aegeancuisine.gr contains all information about the network in both Cyclades and Dodecanese, and is regularly updated and enriched with fresh content.

Certification started in 2011, according to particular quality criteria, which gave, to specific restaurants in the Prefecture of the Dodecanese, an opportunity to promote the Aegean Cuisine idea. Since then, the criteria has been updated according to the needs and perspectives which emerged. In 2015, a new phase of certification of restaurants was completed in cooperation with TUV HELLAS.



This means that these restaurants meet certain quality criteria with regard to the legal operation of the organisation, hygiene, food safety, origin of the raw materials, the quality of the products, services and recipes they offer and also incorporates facilities and decoration.

Part of the CCIDC’s action is to promote these enterprises by all appropriate means including a strong technological strategy. Digital promotion through the network’s official website www.aegeancuisine.gr has information and promotional material of each restaurant.

Finally, and in order for the two Chambers of Commerce (Dodecanese and Cyclades) to be able to implement actions for the promotion of Aegean Cuisine internationally, a new application to register the Aegean Cuisine trademark at a European level was submitted to the EUIPO.



Objectives

The Region of South Aegean has set five objectives on which we have built our process and will be the basis for evaluation for the European Region of Gastronomy 2019.

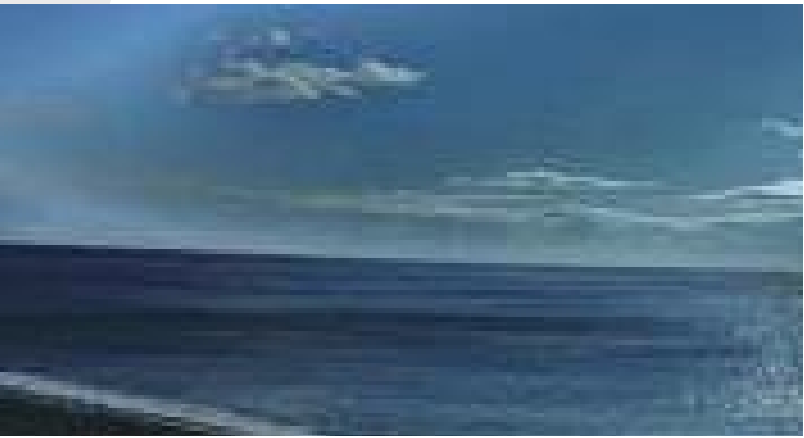
Our objectives are :

- 1 Upgrade the Region of South Aegean to a gastronomic tourism destination.
- 2 Increase the number of labelled and certified key local products.
- 3 Create local products from local produce to be used throughout the tourism chain.
- 4 Manage a better cooperation and collaboration throughout the food chain, from the producer to the end consumer.
- 5 Incentivise and motivate people to recognise the opportunities in remaining and returning to their homeland.

Governance Structure

A well-structured governance plan for such an ambitious project is key to success.

Through the application process we learned that discipline and cooperation are a necessary path whilst it is extremely important to respect diversity. Successful teamwork is already a legacy we have gained from this process and we are now ready to go to the next phase and are all set for new challenges.



South Aegean Candidacy
European Region
of Gastronomy 2019



The Political Committee Board

The Political Board takes all the appropriate final decisions regarding the project. It consists of five members and representatives of the three main institutions which are The Region of South Aegean, The Regional Development Fund and the Region's Development Agency.



Head of the Board is the Governor of South Aegean, who is also President of the Regional Development Fund and President of the Region's Development Agency,
Mr. George Hatzimarkos.

The members are:



Mr. George Leontaritis
Vice – Governor of Cyclades



Mr. Filimon Zannetidis
Vice-Governor of Primary Sector and Regional Policy



Mr Louis Soroniatis
Managing Director of the Regional Development Agency



Mrs Heidi Lazani
Head of the Executive Committee Board

The Executive Committee Board

The Executive Board is made up of ten committee members who are organizing and managing the whole project, debating with the stakeholders and structuring the bid book. It consists of people who work with the three Institutions mentioned above. Head of the Board is **Mrs Heidi Lazani**, the Governor's Scientific Consultant and Office Director.

The members are:

- **Mr Ioannis Paschalides**, Director of the Tourism, Culture and Sports Department
- **Mrs Tania Roussou**, Head of the Department of Local Products Promotion of Dodecanese
- **Mrs Konstantina Vlahou**, Head of the Department of Local Products Promotion of Cyclades
- **Mrs Suzanna Triantafyllou**, Culture Department
- **Mr Miltiadis Haristis**, Head of the Department of Electronic Governance
- **Mr Nikolaos Renesis** Director of the Regional Plant Nursery
- **Mr George Minatsis**, Financial Analyst



Ambassador



Argiro Barbarigou

CHEF OF PAPADAKIS RESTAURANT

Greek celebrity chef Argiro Barbarigou has designed a life and career from the Greek kitchen. If ever a human being can bottle and export the essence of Greek food and the spirit it embodies, it is Argiro. Known throughout Greece as the “First Lady of Greek Cuisine,” Argiro has devoted her life’s work to sharing the secrets from the Greek kitchen — modern and ancient — with her audience and fans around the globe.

She was born in Paros, the Aegean Sea island, nestled between Mykonos and Santorini. She was raised among smells and flavours, pure Greek pictures and a family that had the hospitality and the family lunch as a very special characteristic.

In her own words...

“I believe that Aegean Cuisine deserves her own high position in the world’s gastronomy. Aegean Cuisine is so much more than souvlaki and tavernas. Our cuisine is as pure and refined as our spirit, not unlike our philosophy or theatre. I am determined to share my love and knowledge of it throughout the land. My motto, when I first started out, was that there are NO SECRETS in cooking. At least there weren’t with me.

I am so very proud of the Greek cuisine and our whole ingredients. I always cook with pure Greek produce to accompany my philosophy of an Aegean diet. That means healthy local products – easy and fast to make – with a flavour that allures everyone who tries them, but also, everyone who watches them on my show.

I am ready to carry ‘the Olympic torch’ of Greek Cuisine...on behalf of the Greek people and my beloved country. For the good Greek food, our unique ingredients and most important, the spirit of Greece that it captures and sends”.





Stakeholders

All the stakeholders participating in our meetings, showed great enthusiasm which was very important to the process as we gathered in a very short time many of the representatives of the main institutions from all around the Region.

The meetings which took place are the following:

- **Rhodes**, 30th of June 2016
- **Leros**, 5th of July 2016
- **Syros**, 6th of July 2016 – teleconference with the islands of **Tinos, Andros, Paros, Mykonos** and **Milos**
- **Kos**, 8th of July 2016
- **Kalymnos**, 11th of July 2016
- **Patmos**, 11th of July 2016 – skype conference
- **Naxos**, 15th of July 2016 - teleconference with the island of **Santorini**



Leros

- HOTELS ASSOCIATION OF LEROS
- NEFELI HOTELS GROUP
- CRITHONI PARADISE HOTEL
- MPLEFANTI RESTAURANT
- ALINTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OF LEROS
- GENERAL HOSPITAL OF LEROS
- COMMERCIAL ASSOCIATION OF LEROS
- “LEROS ACTIVE” OWNER
- INDEPENDENT REPRESENTITIVES- HOTELIERS, RESTAURANT OWNERS, DOCTORS, NUTRITIONISTS FARMERS AND BREEDERS



Naxos - Santorini

- GOURMET RESTAURANT OWNER (SELENE) SANTORINI
- AGRICULTURAL PRODUCER (MADE IN SANTORINI)
- ARGYROS WINERY – SANTORINI
- HERB PRODUCER (ORGANIC ISLANDS) – NAXOS
- ALOE VERA PRODUCER – NAXOS
- HERB PRODUCER AND RESTAURANT OWNER – NAXOS
- RESTAURANT OWNER
- AGRICULTURAL PRODUCER (HEROUVIM ESTATE) – NAXOS
- WINERY OWNER – NAXOS
- RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION – NAXOS
- PASTRY SHOP OWNER – CHEF – NAXOS
- MARMELADE PRODUCER (MELIMILON) – NAXOS
- CULINARY TOUR COMPANY (VIOMA) – NAXOS
- CURTURE AND SPORTS ASSOCIATION – NAXOS
- HOTEL OWNER – NAXOS
- HONEY PRODUCER
- HOTELLIERS ASSOCIATION – NAXOS
- BREEDER - NAXOS
- UNION OF AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES OF SANTORINI



Patmos

- PATMOS MUNICIPALITY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
- PATMOS TOURIST ACCOMMODATION OWNERS CLUB
- FESTIVAL OF TASTE AND TRADITION
- PATMOS HOTELS ASSOCIATION
- PATMOS CULTURAL CENTER
- TRADERS ASSOCIATION
- “AKTIS” CHEF
- “ASTIVI” CHEF
- “VEGGERA” CHEF
- “MPENETOS” CHEF
- “TARSANAS” CHEF
- “GINGER” CHEF

Stakeholders

Rhodes

- UNION OF AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS
- CHEF'S CLUB DODEKANISSOS & KYKLADES
- "SIANNA" PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION
- MEDICAL ASSOCIATION OF RHODES
- ASSOCIATION OF DODECANESE AGRICULTURISTS
- COMMERCIAL ASSOCIATION OF RHODES
- DODECANESE PRIMARY EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION
- DODECANESE SECONDARY EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION
- DODECANESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
- DEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (DETAP)
- SCHOOL OF HIGHER TOURISM EDUCATION (ASTER)
- WOMEN'S AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION "APOLLONIATISSES"
- DODECANESE FEDERATION OF TOURIST ACCOMMODATIONS
- SYMBOSSIO – GREEK GOURMET TOURING
- CULTURAL ASSOCIATION "APOLLON"
- CULTURAL ASSOCIATION "PANAGIA KATHOLIKI"
- CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF KALAVARDA "KAMEIROS"
- CENTRAL ENVIRONMENTAL TRAINING OF PETALOUDES
- PRIVATE SCHOOL "KOLEGIO RODOU"
- CULTURAL ASSOCIATION "EMPONA"
- PRIVATE SCHOOL "RODION PAIDEIA"
- DODECANESE FEDERATION OF CULTURAL ASSOCIATIONS
- HOTELS ASSOCIATION OF RHODES
- UNION OF DODECANESE NUTRITIONISTS
- RHODES TRAVEL AGENCIES ASSOCIATION
- RHODES RESTAURANT OWNERS CLUB
- SCHOOL OF TOURISM TRAINING (IEK)

Kalymnos

- "MELICATESSEN" HONEY STANDARDIZATION COMPANY
- "VOUROS" PASTRY SHOP OWNER
- BREEDERS ASSOCIATION
- MYRTIES BOUTIQUE APARTMENTS
- KALYMNOS TOURIST ACCOMMODATION OWNERS CLUB
- "MICHALARAS" PASTRY SHOP

Syros

- MYKONOS GASTRONOMY CLUB
- CHEF'S CLUB DODEKANISSOS & KYKLADES
- TRADE, PROFESSIONAL AND INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION TINOS
- MUNICIPAL COUNCILLOR OF TOURISM AND DEVELOPMENT OF ANDROS
- CYCLADES REGION OFFICE – MINISTRY OF TOURISM
- SYROS TOURIST LODGEMENTS ASSOCIATION
- CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF CYCLADES
- "TERPSIHORI" ASSOCIATION
- REGIONAL DIRECTORATE OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION OF SOUTH AEGEAN REGION

Kos

- CHATZINIKOLAOU WINERY
- TRIANTAFILLOPOULOU WINERY
- MORE WINERY
- PAKONSTANTINOU ZACHARIAS WINERY
- KOS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE DEPARTMENT
- CHEF COOKING COACHING – KALAPODAS IOULIOS
- CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF GASTRONOMY "ASKLIPIOS"
- INTERNATIONAL IPPOKRATIS FOUNDATION
- LYCEUM CLUB OF GREEK WOMEN – DEPARTMENT OF KOS
- CULTURAL ASSOCIATION "IPPOKRATIKI FLOGA"
- WOMEN WITHOUT BORDERS – KOS REPRESENTATIVES
- ANKO – PRIVATE TOURISM SCHOOL
- KOS HOTELS ASSOCIATION
- KOS BREEDERS ASSOCIATION
- KOS RESTAURANT OWNERS CLUB
- DIAKANASTASIS NIKOS OLIVE OIL STANDARDIZATION
- PAPADIMITRIOU OLIVE OIL STANDARDIZATION
- DIAKANASTASIS EYAGGELOS STANDARDIZATION OF ORGANIC OLIVE OIL
- WOMEN ASSOCIATION EGE-KO
- PARENTS ASSOCIATION OF 7TH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OF KOS
- KOS FARMERS ASSOCIATION
- MEDICAL ASSOCIATION OF KOS
- GIANNOY PANAGIOTIS DAIRY INDUSTRY
- 1ST HIGHSCHOOL OF KOS
- INDEPENDENT REPRESENTATIVES OF NUTRITIONISTS AND FISHERMEN

Focus Areas

The South Aegean's ancient food traditions go back to the time of Hippocrates, the Father of Modern Medicine, who came from the island of Kos. Our local stakeholders have identified six Focus Areas that will enable us to reach our objectives. Together, through celebrating our diversity and overcoming the challenges of insularity, which characterize our Region, we are building the foundations of a process for a better way of life in our Islands.

Education in Gastronomy



Connecting and integrating gastronomy in education and vice versa was included in policy planning in recent years and requires support and cooperation between the public, private and education sectors.

In order to achieve positive results, these sectors need to work closely and intensively to successfully integrate information and knowledge that are important for local and regional Gastronomy. A fundamental aspect of this learning process is the dissemination of knowledge of the local context of Biodiversity with its flora and fauna which define its Gastronomy.

Education is an extremely important Focus Area for the South Aegean areas for which we are collaborating with many stakeholders, local, regional and international. This can be seen in the list of projects and include many target groups, from children to the elderly. We are also commencing cooperation projects with Rutgers University USA, Harokopio University in Athens and Bergamo University in Italy.

Supporting Small & Medium Enterprises (SME's)



From the products of the primary sector produced in Greece nothing gets wasted. A typical example is the vineyard, where from its fruit we get, besides wine, alcoholic drinks made from pomace such as *tsipouro raki* and *souma*. We use the vine leaves to make the unique *ntolmades giaprakia*. We produce olive oil, and also a residual oil from the kernel which is used as a combustible. The waste from the olive press is used for the production of detergents. Olive branches have been used to award champions in ancient times or as combustible in woodstoves throughout the ages. These products offer clean energy production and good use of vineyard and olive mill waste.

Agricultural land in the Region of South Aegean has led to the creation of small and medium size businesses for the processing and the standardization of agricultural products. These businesses are the backbone of our local economy. They are the main actors of our economic growth, innovation, employment and social integration.

The very first businesses of processing and standardization that appeared in the Region that substantially contributed to the local economy were the wineries. Wine is a fundamental aspect of our cultural heritage, closely related to its history and economy, associated with the customs and traditions of the South Aegean.

It is important to mention that the delimitation of the production areas resulting in the legal recognition of Product of Designated Origin (PDO) for Rhodes wines, Muscat of Rhodes and Santorini which were certified in 1971 with Royal Decree.

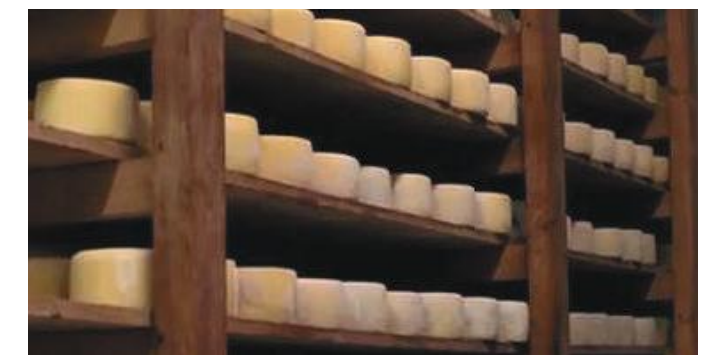
Most Greek vineyards were organic before the term 'organic' cultivation was invented. Animal manure and brimstone were the basic methods of cultivators, while the weeds were exterminated through tillage.

The combination of viticulture and winemaking, especially in mountainous areas, became a factor that urged residents from the countryside to work in agriculture, resulting in a less intense phenomenon of urbanism in the islands. This has also substantially contributed to the preservation of the agricultural family.

In 1994, the Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) Rhodos olive oil was legally recognized. In the South Aegean, 50 wineries, 47 oil mills and 22 olive oil packaging plants are currently operating. The olive oil production followed the creation of olive oil packaging plants in order to distribute olive oil, not only to the local and national, but mostly to the international market.

The South Aegean produces excellent quality honey from thyme, heather, pine honey and floral honey. The rich vegetation in thyme, pine trees, bee-keeping and aromatic plants provide an excellent and special aroma in the honey of the Region, as well as high nutrients, reinforcing its antioxidant, antibiotic and invigorating actions, enlisting honey in 'super foods'. The South Aegean has 20 honey packaging plants operating to date.

Equally important are other bee products such as royal jelly and pollen. Bee's wax is another versatile product used in the pharmacy industry, in production of wax decorations and for the production of candles.



Focus Areas

Digital Agenda



Living in the digital era means so many things in both a practical and theoretical way, especially in global markets and everyday life. The Region of South Aegean is bidding for the title of European Region of Gastronomy 2019 with a spotlight on 6 Focus Areas: Culture & Food Diversity, SME's, Education, Health, Sustainability and Digital Agenda. We are looking at the focus area of the Digital Agenda also as a cross-cutting theme, adding value to our projects and products through the use of technology.

This Focus Area will deal with a two-tier approach: one for the agricultural sector, which is at times isolated due to the remoteness and fragmentation that some of the islands face more than others. Therefore facing, for example, a difficulty in having internet connection which also leads to a lack of knowledge and use of technology in their work. Secondly, we are also looking

at the pros of digital communication and means of publicity as a really important means of reaching our objectives, especially in terms of branding the Region as a gastronomic tourism destination. Digital means, such as online presentation, email communication/newsletters, social media campaigns with closely selected content, can boost online education concerning Aegean cuisine and its special characteristics, to all interested citizens throughout the world.

From the marketing aspect, we will take advantage of the fact that 1 in 5 people in the world now own a smartphone, digital tools and methods that can reach a large target group with online content having lots of interactive features, pictures, audio, videos and of course strong social media platforms that effectively distribute the content worldwide.

From the agricultural aspect, through new technologies (mobile applications, web sites), farmers can access information that a few years ago was difficult or impossible. They need to have access to programmes that lead to economical benefits, up-to-date information on their crops (new production methods, treating sicknesses, suppliers, etc.). This access to technology will save time and money sometimes also because the farmer no longer needs to resort to a specialist, except where required, to find a solution to the problem.

Technology can be beneficial to all sectors from education to health, especially in a region like ours with so many islands that access key areas of the social chain is sometimes difficult.



Culture and Food Diversity



Our region consists of 50 inhabited islands all having their own traditions, customs, their way of life. Most of these are strongly connected with the local produce and resulting products. The main products of our region are wine, olive oil, a variety of cheeses, honey and a treasure of sea food, but every island and sometimes each village on the larger islands has its own unique local products. Examples include *Lopi*, a special bean type that is been cultivated in Kattavia village, Rhodes, a special type of oval-shaped tomato from Kos and a totally different type of tomato from Santorini. These products give a palette of flavours that always result in delicious dishes.

In addition to our unique local products, the colonization over millennia by different civilisations have left an impact and a rich and distinguished cuisine due to the development of trade routes and the migration of people from these different cultural backgrounds. Furthermore it is a common truth that our islands are at the edge of Europe and provide a gateway to the East and its consequent influence on us and the rest of Europe in terms of culture, food and eating habits.

You can taste *melekouni* a special sweet made from honey and sesame, which begun as a marital treat but now its fame has gone far beyond and *loukoumi*, a very popular delight from Syros. Another well known food, the savoury hors d'oeuvre known as *yapraki* which are vine leaves stuffed with rice and minced meat enriched with various spices dominated by cumin. Also, *Makarounes*, a special pasta made only in the Olympos village of Karpathos island in an original shape and unmatched taste.

Throughout the year, locals and visitors participate in numerous festivals and celebrations directly linked to our products such as the strawberry festival, orange festival, wine festival. There are also many special seasonal treats dedicated to specific religious celebrations, like *loukoumades*, a round donut drizzled with honey, cinnamon and nuts that are produced during the Saint Andreas feast. The islanders of South Aegean archipelagoes organise their own festivals that commemorate an important era of an island – like the 3 medieval festivals dedicated to the castles of Rhodes island. These take place in Rhodes town, and in the villages and Kritinia.

These festivals enable audiences to taste gastronomic treats from medieval times.

Hosting the European Region of Gastronomy 2019 will provide a much-needed motivation for local people and communities who are extremely proud of their cultural heritage.

There always has been and still is a strong convergence between our culture, our landscape and our produce that connect our region and eloquently demonstrate the importance of our unique gastronomy, our South Aegean cuisine.



Focus Areas

Sustainability



Sustainability is a key factor for the future of our Region, especially when it comes to activities related to gastronomy: the production and consumption of food should be done in a way that preserves our local natural resources without endangering or exhausting them. Also, the protection and preservation of our food culture and local culinary traditions is crucial for the sustainable development of our islands.

The Region of South Aegean, through the European Region of Gastronomy Award, aims at developing a more sustainable food production and consumption as far as tourism and gastronomy practices are concerned. An important first step has been made through the Aegean Cuisine initiative with the dining establishments and any business where the visitor is in direct contact with the flavours and dishes of the Aegean, since businesses eligible to participate are the ones offering or selling locally-made products, food and wine from the Aegean. Our aspiration is also to try and include in this initiative the large hotel complexes and resorts in order to boost the Region's sustainability and efficiency.



Health



One of the most important focus areas for the candidature of Region of South Aegean as European Region of Gastronomy 2019 is the promotion of healthy eating habits throughout the Region.

The latest available data from Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) places Greece in an extremely weak position. Obesity percentage for adults in Greece amounts to 19,6 % of the population, higher than the average of 19% for all OECD Countries. The biggest problem lies in the numbers of child obesity. Greece places first amongst all OECD countries with almost 4 out of 10 children overweight or obese (45% for boys, 38% for girls).

The Region of South Aegean will focus on activities to promote healthy eating for young people by organizing events at the schools with the cooperation of the local Chef Club, primary and secondary education administration, hospitals and nutritionists to help children learn about food, the benefits of healthy eating as well as healthy cooking.

The Aegean Region cuisine is directly linked to healthy eating habits. Our local dishes are based on olive oil, wine and pure agricultural produce which are at the heart of the Aegean diet in order to improve health, lose weight and live longer.

Another important challenge for the Region is the proper storage, transfer and preparation of the local produce and products. Due to the fragmentation of our Region which is made up of 50 islands, the transfer of these mostly perishable goods between the islands and outside the Region is often hampered by time-consuming transportation and also at the mercy of weather conditions.

The Region of South Aegean in cooperation with the local Chef Club, the Association of Restaurant Owners, nutritionists and other external experts, will organise workshops for local suppliers, restaurant owners and agricultural associations on how to store, transfer and distribute perishable goods.



Evaluation Indicators



The Region of South Aegean has developed the following key indicators matching the objectives to the Focus Areas. The indicators will assess the European Region of Gastronomy programme through a longitudinal approach, measuring its impact and therefore legacy.

SME's

- 1. How many SME's were involved in ERG related projects?
- 2. How many people were involved in ERG related projects?
- 3. How many private projects were developed during the ERG?
- 4. How many private and public partnerships were developed during the ERG programme?
- 5. How many new gastronomy related SME's have started following the ERG programme?

Education

- 1. How many public or private educational institutions in the region provide professional hospitality training courses?
- 2. How many new professional training courses developed during membership of ERG Platform?
- 3. How many additional students taking courses in hospitality, agriculture, culinary, tourism related courses?
- 4. How many partnerships involving Educational institutes were developed during the ERG programme?
- 5. How many children /teenagers have been touched by the ERG programme?

Culture and Food Diversity

- 1. How often did the region participate in international fairs under the banner of ERG?
- 2. How many cross island partnerships and projects were developed during the ERG programme?
- 3. How many projects were initiated regarding food diversity?

Health

- 1. How many minority groups/associations involved in projects?
- 2. How many projects related to the health effects of local gastronomy were developed during the ERG programme?
- 3. How many health related organisations or SME's were involved in the ERG programme?
- 4. How many certified products are there in the Region prior and after the ERG programme?

Sustainability

- 1. What was the total investment in gastronomy related projects, funded by private or public entities?
- 2. How many new investments in gastronomy related projects were developed during the ERG programme?
- 3. How many projects funded and developed through the ERG programme are sustainable and will continue after the programme ends?
- 4. How many people are in gastronomy related occupations prior and after the ERG programme?
- 5. How many projects were related to environmental effects of gastronomy?

Digital Agenda

- 1. How many TV broadcasts / Youtube videos providing publicity for the ERG and local gastronomy?
- 2. How many locally produced products and producers were promoted through the digital agenda of the ERG programme?
- 3. How many press announcements providing publicity to the regions gastronomy?
- 4. How many projects and how much funding was allocated to promoting local gastronomy?

Projects



Education

“Tools to Success” Seminars

The **Tools to Success Seminars** are management seminars aimed at helping producers to package, brand and market their products. The seminars will address the following:

- Packaging and standardization of materials produced: A series of seminars focusing on the packaging of small scale manufacturing units of local products directed towards stakeholders of commerce and food, as well as the most demanding markets.
- Creating a corporate profile: A series of seminars aimed at aiding small and medium units to build and introduce their identity and their products’ competitive advantage.
- A series of seminars aiming to underline the relevance and usefulness of new technologies in promoting their products and acquire a vital impact on purchasing behaviour of consumers.

“Aegean Gardener”

The **Aegean Gardener Seminars** will consist of weekly classes designed for children, aimed at giving them the opportunity to have hands-on experience in gardening and horticulture. These sessions will transform children into “Aegean Gardeners” by creating a backyard thus allowing them to be involved with local crops and methods of production. The project’s vision is to instill in tomorrow’s producers and chefs an awareness of what they eat while appreciating a healthy diet. In those cases where schools don’t own/have garden space we will cooperate with the local municipality to find an adequate place available for the school to be able to develop the project.

“Aegean mamas know best”

Informational meetings directed towards parents will be organized to promote the consumption of local products, underlining benefits not only in terms of healthy nutrition but also in terms of the local economic dimension. Parents will learn how to cook better and healthier foods using local products while children will get acquainted with the art of gastronomy, cooking, and eating well. At the same time, the project will be aiding the parental relationship with the children.



Projects



Supporting SME's

Clustering

A most effective way of supporting SME's is through clustering. Clusters can be composed of farmers and manufacturers in order to promote local products and support their dynamic incorporation to key points of sale. The Region of South Aegean will support a pilot-clustering programme, designed to bring together the Aegean Cuisine Restaurants and local producers (including farmers and manufacturers). The project – which will give restaurants the possibility to be awarded the European Region of Gastronomy logo – will require restaurateurs to indicate in their menus the names of producers that provide them with the products used for their dishes. This will give each product an individual identity and producers the recognition that they deserve.

Product Branding

Another relevant way forward is to use the existent Aegean Cuisine's project to extend the labeling from restaurants to producers. This will happen by default in terms of the criteria as defined in the standard certification for the producers of local products that are used in local gastronomy.

Aegean Cuisine Promotion Corners

The labeled products will be promoted through Promotion Corners located in prominent and frequently visited places such as malls, gateways etc.



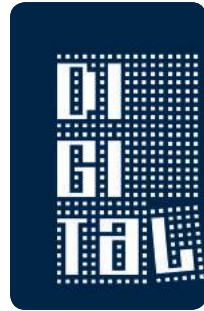
New institution for the local produce consumption

An institution will be set up in our Regional Units (13 in total), composed of one representative from each of the following authorities in the order listed below:

1. Chambers of Commerce (Cyclades and Dodecanese)
2. All the other stakeholders including Local Association of Hoteliers, Local Accommodation Union and Local Restaurateurs Union
3. Local Producers

The aim behind the setting up of the Institution is to keep track, through proper registration, of product consumption at the end of a season. This will give producers (farmers and manufacturers) a consumption breakdown of their products, thus allowing them to better project their production and quantities for the next period. An exhibition will be organized each year before the season's opening, (during the 2nd or 3rd week of March), giving producers a concrete framework to help them enter into agreement with the Hotel and Restaurant representatives in a more effective manner.





Digital Agenda

E-agrodimoprasi

An on-line auction (web and mobile application) in real time between the producer (farmers, fishermen, breeders) and consumers (hotel, restaurants, supermarkets etc). Producers can upload their product information (type, quantities and prices). In real time, consumers can view the offer and if they are interested in buying, they can place a bid within a limited timeframe. The consumer can also demand specific products and producers can respond by suggesting their available stock.

Agro-Aegean Platform

A webpage that will operate as a data bank for existing and future producers which will contain all the necessary information for them including how to deal with diseases, European funding and new ways of production. There will be an interactive map of all the Region of South Aegean islands where the visitor can click on any island and view information about the local products and their nutritional values, places to buy, producers, etc. Additionally we shall present a calendar with information about local products and the festivities and celebrations that are associated with product.



Projects



Sustainability

“Green-Eat” Award

The project consists of collecting food surplus from restaurants and/or hotels that will be donated to social soup kitchens, social institutions (e.g. orphanages) and schools, increasing the Region's social sustainability amidst the financial crisis. Participating businesses will get special mention or a social award aimed at reflecting, through advertising and marketing, their Corporate Social Responsibility.

The Aegean Seed Bank

The aim of this project is to protect the unique biodiversity of the Region by creating a seed bank for the conservation and preservation of local seeds. To do this we will collect, organize, and preserve all local varieties of plants (herbs, vegetables, trees, etc.), to make them available as an inherited vegetal and cultural wealth to future generations.

Bio-Cultivation Projects

The idea behind this project is to support and develop the bio-cultivation of local seeds in our islands. This will be achieved through seminars and consultancy in hotel resorts for the biological cultivation of local seeds.



Projects

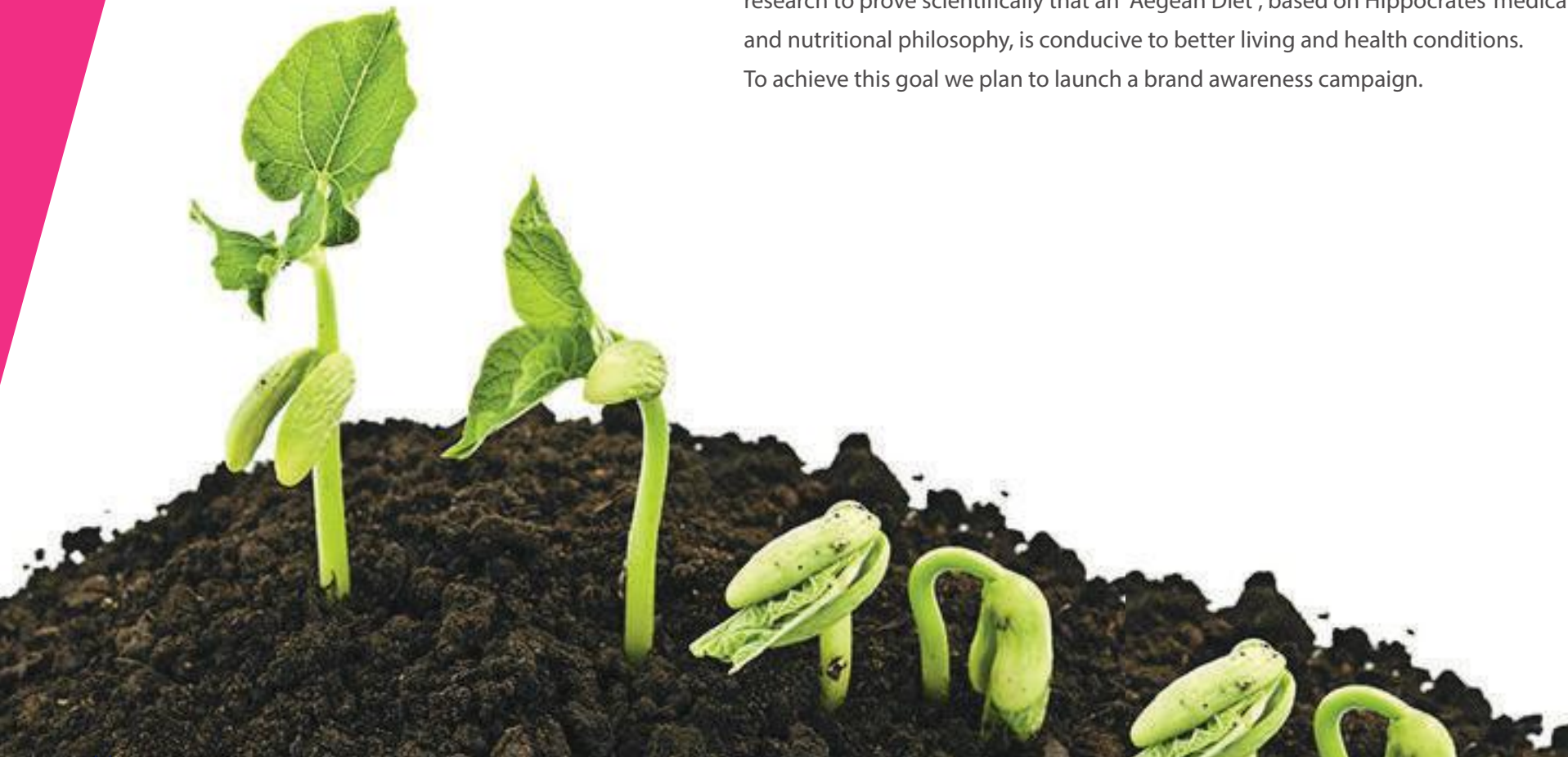
Health

Aegean Diet

One of the main aims of the Region of South Aegean is that of establishing the Aegean Diet. As a brand, the Aegean Diet reflects good living and wellness.

The South Aegean islands produce excellent vegetables, fruit, olive oil, honey, wine, herbs, and livestock products. Furthermore, the islands are surrounded by the resourceful Aegean Sea, providing them with a great variety of seafood which gives every product unique flavours and aromas. While the quality and nutritional value of these products is well known to locals, it still needs to be better communicated worldwide in order to be established as a brand name.

The Region of South Aegean will establish cooperation with the Greek Harokopio University and the American Rutgers University in order to conduct appropriate research to prove scientifically that an "Aegean Diet", based on Hippocrates' medical and nutritional philosophy, is conducive to better living and health conditions. To achieve this goal we plan to launch a brand awareness campaign.



"Super" Aegean Foods

Another important aspect of the project is to identify all the super foods that are currently produced in the Region of South Aegean. This will be done in cooperation with Academia, nutritionists and local producers.

A promotional campaign based on the outcomes of the scientific research outlined above, aimed at inserting regional super foods within the bigger network of the international super foods market next to world wide known super foods (goji berries, cranberries etc).

Access to this constantly growing market will boost possibilities for local producers to establish new channels via which they sell their products and increase sales. According to Mintel research published in May 2016 "in 2015 alone there was a 36% rise in the number of food and drink products launched globally featuring the terms 'superfood', 'superfruit' or 'supergrain'." The surge in launches comes as a result of strong consumer demand for highly nutritious products. Today, more than 7 in 10 consumers in France (72%), Germany (71%), Italy (73%), and Spain (72%) agree that health-promoting benefits of natural foods, including fruit and vegetables, are preferable to the added benefits of functional foods."



Projects



Culture & Food

The Aegean “Sympossio”

“Sympossio” is a Greek culinary journey being showcased in large European cities, promoting the gastronomy of our Region in the most vivid and experiential way. It is one of the most dynamic and extrovert promotional programmes ever set in motion, with the objective to establish the South Aegean as a distinct culinary destination on the world map.

“Sympossio” brings together a team of Greek chefs from the hospitality industry with a team of experts that include travel trade professionals such as transport services, travel agents, tour operators and Greek producers as well as representatives of local and international hospitality media. The purpose is to have them participate in a multi-faceted experience of preparing and tasting our Aegean’s special dishes.

By attending the “Sympossio” they will have the opportunity to learn about our unique local products, recipes and traditions and become the new culinary ambassadors of the Aegean islands.



Aegean Cuisine Seminars

Cooking events and cooking classes in our Region’s hotels. The guests will attend special events, where, with the help of experienced chefs, they will have the chance to learn how to cook traditional Aegean recipes using local products. a pilot programme includes four hotels (two from Cyclades and two from Dodecanese)

“Be a local”

Trips that will target families and also press to the islands of the South Aegean. These trips will include visits to local homes where visitors will be able to live like a local. This means that they will be able to cook using produce grown on the island by using authentic clay pots. They will taste traditional dishes that they will cook with the assistance of local qualified chefs. During this amazing experience the participants will have the opportunity to learn details about the ingredients, the history of each recipe and how to prepare it by themselves. Furthermore, they will have the chance to learn about the history of the buildings, architecture, furnishing, decoration and feel at home.

Aegean Cuisine Basket

The “Aegean Basket” is planned to be an alternative, eco, healthy and delicious meal served through the accommodation units of our Region. At first the project will be implemented at a local level but with the intention of going national and international in due course. In cooperation with our local network of hotels and family accommodation the “Aegean basket” will be promoted as a special treat to our guests and it will:

- be promoted as a unique idea to the internal and external exhibitions

that the Region of South Aegean participates every year.

- be proposed to the rest of the European Region of Gastronomy Platform.’



Projects

Cooperating with other European Regions of Gastronomy

The Region of South Aegean and the Region of East Lombardy will cooperate with each other in the following areas:

a) Analysis: Tracing the needs, expectations, and lifestyle of gastro tourists who choose to travel to a gastronomic destination. Carry out research on how people select a gastronomic destination, and how this will impact on the local economy.

It will be important to create a kind of syllabus that answers the following questions: What kind of entertainment do they enjoy? Do they like to visit primary and secondary producers of food? Do they participate in gastronomic festivals, food fairs etc?

b) Good Practices: Setting a new mind set for locals and stakeholders (such as producers, hotel owners). Instilling a new culture of doing things is a laborious and time-consuming effort but it is the key objective of our plan to establish our region as a gastronomic destination. To achieve this we need to introduce the locals to a series of arguments which will give them a sense of pride, whilst also realizing that financial and social benefits will be a result of this mentality change.



Calendar of events - Cyclades

Place	Name of Event	Description of Event
NAXOS ISLAND	Potato Festival	In July, the Union of Rural Cooperatives in cooperation with the cultural association of Saint Arsenios and the Region of South Aegean organise a fabulous potato festival. More than 4.000 people participate every year enjoying dancing with traditional music and tasting many recipes based on potatoes. Naxos is well known for its delicious potatoes, cultivating almost 17.000 tons every year and 1.500 tons of potato seeds.
NAXOS ISLAND - KOMIAKI VILLAGE	Wine Festival	Naxos is known also as the island of Dionysus. The residents cultivate 5.646 acres of vineyards producing tasteful and fragrant varieties of wines. At the end of every summer the Komiaki village takes on the whole procedure of wine production. The villagers collect the grapes, they squeeze them in the traditional grape mill and transfer the grape must using animals into the vats. Afterwards, everyone tastes the wine that had already being produced, as well as local delicacies whilst listening to traditional music.
NAXOS ISLAND - MONI VILLAGE	Raki Festival	During October all the traditional distilleries of the island prepare to produce raki. The fragrance of the produced spirits and the aromas of the baked goat meat and quinces spread all over the island. In late November, in the village of Moni the raki festival takes place where everyone is invited to watch the procedure of raki's distillation and taste the traditional spirit.
NAXOS ISLAND	Honey Festival	Because of its rich flora, Naxos has approximately 5.000 beehives, producing almost 50 tons of virgin thyme annually. The honey festival takes place during August having many educational activities focused on both children and adults. The villagers also reveal many recipes based on honey.
NAXOS ISLAND	Olive Oil Festival	Every start of the year, the olive oil festival brings many visitors to the traditional oil mill of Damalas village, to watch the traditional production of olive oil, and celebrate with the locals by tasting the delicacies made by the housewives of the village.
NAXOS ISLAND	Graviera Festival	Approximately 1.000 tons of the famous graviera cheese is produced every year on the island. the cheese is labelled as Protected Designation of Origin (PDO). Because of its rich flora and the perfect climate conditions, Naxos has about 4.500 bovines and 110.000 goats and sheep. The produced varieties of cheese and meat are well known for their excellent quality. The festival takes place in September, it is organized by the Union of Rural Cooperatives and aims to further promote this famous product.
NAXOS ISLAND - TOWN AND APOLLONAS VILLAGE	Fishermen's Festival	About 3.000 tons of fish are fished from around the waters of Naxos by the local fishermen fleet. The fishermen's festivals take place during the name day of Saint Nikolaos (in December), in the medieval settlement, known as Chora, and in early summer in Apollonas village.
SCHINOUSSA ISLAND	Broad Been/Fava Been Festival	Known as the gold of Schinoussa, its fava seeds and the knowledge of its cultivation were passed down through generations since the Middle Ages. It is a high quality and nutritional product consisting an important part of the famous Mediterranean diet. Many young and new farmers came back to their homeland in order to cultivate fava and Schinoussa became again a living island because of this product. Every year, the first Saturday of July, this local festival takes place consisting of fava, fish, wine and raki.
KOUFONISSIA ISLANDS	Fisherman's Festival	Every June, the Cultural Association, named as "Keros" in cooperation with the local fishermen and the residents, organizes a fest with traditional music, delicacies from fish, raki boiled with honey, wine which are offered to the guests. The fest begins from the sunset till the dawn.
AMORGOS ISLAND	Pasteli (Sesame Seed Candy) Festival	After the 15th of August, the traditional producers of pasteli offer to visitors delicious and nutritional candy on lemon leaves along with raki.
AMORGOS ISLAND - AEGIALI VILLAGE	Xerotigano Festival	Xerotigano is a traditional candy (baked bread with honey) and during this festival, the residents of Aegiali village, prepare it and offer it to visitors alongside the sounds of traditional music.
AMORGOS ISLAND - KATA-POLA	Raki Festival	On the 26th of July in Katapola village the raki festival takes place full of music, dancing and local delicacies.
SANTORINI ISLAND - PERISSA VILLAGE	Fisherman's Feast	The festival is held in Perissa village (the creek of Koladas) during the last weekend of August. The " Fisherman's Feast " refers to the representation of the traditional way of fishing in Santorini at the time that there were no mechanical means.
SANTORINI ISLAND	Vedema	It is celebrated during the first Saturday of August and organized by Santo Wines (the cooperative union of local products of Santorini). It is a celebration of the first day of the year's harvest and a representation of the traditional way of harvesting. It is accompanied by local songs and customs of the viticulture.

Place	Name of Event	Description of Event
SANTORINI ISLAND	Feast day of St. Averkios	The feast day of St. Averkios, who is patron saint of the Santorini Wines. The previous day, the wine makers open the barrels of the new harvest.
SANTORINI ISLAND	1st International Wine Tourism Conference (IMIC 2016, Wine Tourism)	
PAROS ISLAND - NAOUSSA VILLAGE	Sea Festival	From the 70's, every July, a festival takes place in Naoussa village dedicated to the sea. The local Women Association of the village which organizes this event, offers fresh fried fish, raki (named as "souma" in Paros) and wine to the guests. Many local traditional music groups take part in this festival.
PAROS ISLAND - PAROIKIA	Seine Fishing Net Festival	In Parikia village every July, the local authority of the island organizes this festival offering fresh fried fish, souma and wine to the guests. Live traditional music accompanies this event.
PAROS ISLAND - PRODROMOS VILLAGE	Chickpea festival	Revithada, a traditional recipe based on chickpeas is baked in old fashioned ovens (heated by woods and charcoals) in Prodromos village every August. The guests have the opportunity to watch the preparation of revithada, which is baked from Saturday night till Sunday morning and is served after the prayers in the village church. Many delicacies based on chickpeas are being offered to visitors accompanied by wine, souma and traditional music. There is also a photo gallery which consists of old photos showing the cultivation of chickpeas throughout the ages.
PAROS - ALYKI VILLAGE	Fish Festival	Takes place in Alyki village every August where the guests can taste fresh fish and wine.
PAROS ISLAND - LEFKES VILLAGE	Karavola's (local name for snails) Festival	Every first Saturday after the 15th of August, a well known festival dedicated to snails takes place in the mountain village of Lefkes. The traditional recipe, made up of snails baked with garlic, is served accompanied by wine and traditional music.
SYROS ISLAND - FINIKAS VILLAGE	Kakavia (bouillabaisse) Festival	Every August the fishermen of the island cook the delicious recipe of kakavia and offer it to guests along with wine.
SYROS ISLAND - POSEIDONIA VILLAGE	Sardine Festival	Every August on Agkathopes beach, a festival is held dedicated to the seine fishing nets and the sardines. Great quantities of sardines are baked on charcoal and served to guests and locals.
SYROS ISLAND - FINIKAS VILLAGE	Zucchini Festival	For the last 4 years, every June in the village of Finikas, this festival takes place dedicated to zucchinis. Traditional recipes based on this product are offered to locals and guests along with traditional music and wine.
SYROS ISLAND - VARI VILLAGE	Trigopati Fest	Visitors to this festival have the opportunity to watch the grapes being pressed.
SYROS ISLAND - HERMOUPOLIS	Shrimp Fest	Delicacies based on shrimps are served to visitors.
SYROS ISLAND - PAGOS VILLAGE	Pastelaria Fest	Pastelaria is a local candy, made by figs and sesame seeds.
SYROS ISLAND - POSEIDONIA VILLAGE	Traditional candies and liquers exhibition	Handmade confectionery and liqueurs made by local produce.
TINOS ISLAND - KOMI VILLAGE	Artichoke Festival	Artichoke is one of the main agricultural products of Tinos, which the residents have cultivated throughout the ages. Every June, in the village of Komi, the ladies of the village prepare many recipes based on artichoke and offer them to visitors.
TINOS ISLAND - POTAMIA VILLAGE	Caper Festival	The Cyclades are well known for high quality capers grown on their typical dry soil. Every August in the village of Potamia many delicacies are served based on caper.
KIMOLOS ISLAND	Ladenia Festival	Ladenia is a traditional recipe from Kimolos, quite similar to pizza, full of tomatoes and onions. Every August the locals organise a festival dedicated to Ladenia.
ANDROS ISLAND	Fourtalia Festival	Fourtalia is a type of omelette with potatoes, sausages and local cheese. Every August in Messaria village, visitors and locals have the opportunity to taste this delicacy which is prepared and served by villagers.
SIFNOS ISLAND - ARTEMONAS VILLAGE	Tselementes Festival	Sifnos is well known for its legacy on gastronomy. This famous festival takes place in the village of Artemonas, every September and is dedicated to the Sifnian chef, Nikolaos Tselementes. In this event, delegations (consisted from professional chefs and amateurs) from other Cycladic islands visit Sifnos in order to cook and offer their traditional recipes to the guests. Every island has a stand and for three days many traditional delicacies of the Aegean islands are being served. There are also some cooking lessons for the young children, giving them the opportunity to be familiarized with the legacy of their island.

Calendar of events – Dodecanese

Place	Name of Event	Description of Event
PARADEISI VILLAGE RHODES	LOCAL STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL	The festival is dedicated to strawberries, one of the most important produce of Paradeisi village. It takes place every spring and is a great success.
AFANTOU VILLAGE RHODES	LOCALPANCAKE FESTIVAL	This festival involves housewives from Afantou village who make the local pancake "tiganita" in large quantities, enough to satisfy visitors from all over Rhodes island, accompanied by the local orchestra and local traditional dances.
AFANTOU VILLAGE RHODES	LOCAL APRICOT FESTIVAL	In Afantou village a festival also takes place dedicated to the produce of apricot, with marmalades and sweets made of this delicious fruit.
MONILITHOS VILLAGE RHODES	THE FESTIVAL OF THE FARMER & THE BREEDER	Monolithos is a village in the hills having extensive cattle farming. This festival gives the visitor the opportunity of learning and seeing how livestock products are made and taste.
KALYTHIES VILLAGE	RHODIAN TRADITIONAL GASTRONOMY FESTIVAL	One of the most touristic places of Rhodes island, Faliraki - in the coastal part of Kalythies village - has a big fiesta once a year for the visitors to the island. Traditional dances and songs from several local culture clubs and special dishes made of local products by chefs from all the hotels in the area, is an unforgettable experience for everyone.
DAMATRIA VILLAGE RHODES	LOCAL BEER FESTIVAL	DamatRIA is transformed for this big village event through the impressively decorated central square, with plenty of beer for everyone.
SIANNA VILLAGE RHODES	LOCAL SUMA & HONEY FESTIVAL	Sianna village, one of the biggest honey and grape producers in Rhodes island, gives the visitor an opportunity to taste the high quality local honey and enjoy the local spirit named "suma" .
SALAKOS VILLAGE RHODES	LOCAL TRADITIONAL FOOD "YAPRAKI" FESTIVAL	In Salakos village the local housewives cook the traditional "yapraki" (vine leaves stuffed with rice, meat, and spices including cumin) for this big fiesta with traditional dances from local culture clubs and a traditional orchestra.
EMPONA VILLAGE RHODES	LOCAL WINE FESTIVAL	The 5 biggest wineries of Rhodes are located in Empona village as well as many of the smallest producers of wine. They therefore host the big wine festival of the island which provides plenty of wine for every visitor as well as several desserts made from grapes.
PLATANIA VILLAGE RHODES	LOCAL BREAD FESTIVAL	The small village of Platania provides its own gastronomic tastes and aromas every autumn as the housewives of the village bake bread and cook other local dishes for visitors.
KATTAVIA VILLAGE RHODES	LOCAL BEAN FESTIVAL	The festival is dedicated to the local produce known as "lopi", a type of bean that grows only in Kattavia village. The Club of Dodecanese Chefs participate in this event which serves traditionally cooked beans as well as innovative ways of serving this legume.
RHODES TOWN	MEDIEVAL FESTIVAL OF OLD TOWN	The festival depicts everyday life in Rhodes during the medieval era. All those involved in festival dress in traditional medieval clothes and serve delicacies based on medieval recipies. Actors dressed as knights enact a parade.
KRITINIA VILLAGE RHODES	MEDIEVAL FESTIVAL OF KRITINIA'S CASTLE	The festival depicts everyday life in Rhodes during the medieval era. All those involved in festival dress in traditional medieval clothes and serve delicacies based on medieval recipies. Actors dressed as knights enact a parade.
LINDOS VILLAGE RHODES	MEDIEVAL FESTIVAL OF LINDOS' CASTLE	The festival depicts everyday life in Rhodes during the medieval era. All those involved in festival dress in traditional medieval clothes and serve delicacies based on medieval recipies. Actors dressed as knights enact a parade.
LEIPSOI ISLAND	LOCAL WINE FESTIVAL	Dodecanese wine-tasting in the beautiful island of Leipsoi
KALYMNOS ISLAND	LOCAL HONEY FESTIVAL	Kalymnos island produces honey and every August a large festival is organised with products made of honey and a show of traditional music and dances.
ASTYPALAIA ISLAND	PANAGIA PORTAITISA FESTIVAL	Three days festival with traditional music and local delicacies. The housewives of the village prepare and offer guests a local recipe named "Lampriano"
PATMOS ISLAND	CELEBRATION OF THE VIRGIN MARY	A festival dedicated to the religious celebration of the Virgin Mary on the 15th of August. Her holy portrait is carried by fishermen across the village and guests have the opportunity to taste local grapes, figs, cheese pies, soumada (local raki), whilst enjoying traditional music and dance.
PATMOS ISLAND	TRADITION & TASTE FESTIVAL	In this festival, 5 to 9 islands including Syros, Tinos, Folegandros, Leipsoi, Agathonisi, Kalymnos, Astypalaia participate every year. Every island shows its own traditional recipe and its own traditional songs and dances. The highlight of the event is the participation of famous chefs like Lefteris Lazarou, Vefa Alexiadou, Eutimis Bletsas and Eleni Psihouli who publicise the event through photographs on their respective websites. There is also a competition for the best recipe and a book containing the best recipes is published.

Place	Name of Event	Description of Event
PATMOS ISLAND	TRADITION & TASTE FESTIVAL	In this festival, 5 to 9 islands including Syros, Tinos, Folegandros, Leipsoi, Agathonisi, Kalymnos, Astypalaia participate every year. Every island shows its own traditional recipe and its own traditional songs and dances. The highlight of the event is the participation of famous chefs like Lefteris Lazarou, Vefa Alexiadou, Eutimis Bletsas and Eleni Psihouli who publicise the event through photographs on their respective websites. There is also a competition for the best recipe and a book containing the best recipes is published.
ANTIMACHIA VILLAGE KOS	THE SHEPART FESTIVAL	Local breeders with their unique and delicious products offer the visitor a special gastronomic experience.
KARDAMAINA VILLAGE KOS	FOLKLOR EVENING	An orchestra of local folk "rempetiki" music where the visitors can drink local wine for free.
MASTIHARI VILLAGE KOS	LOCAL WINE FESTIVAL	Kos island host a very famous winery in the Dodecanese with many award-winning wines every August. This festival gives visitors an opportunity to enjoy them.
KEFALOS VILLAGE KOS	LOCAL TRAWLERS FESTIVAL	The event takes place in the port of Kefalos village with a display of traditional fishing with trawlers. A huge fish barbeque follows that is served to the visitors accompanied by traditional music and dance.
ANTIMACHIA VILLAGE KOS	LOCAL HONEY FESTIVAL	A traditional festival with the participation of famous traditional singers. During the festival, locals offer visitors honey and sweets based on bee products
PYLI VILLAGE KOS	"CHIROSFAGIA"	Pigs' Slaughter and preparation of local sausages
KASOS ISLAND	HALOWEEN PROM WITH TRADITIONAL HOME MADE PASTA WITH GARLIC CALLED "SKORDELA"	Local Carnival. A traditional pasta called "Makarounes" is baked with garlic is served known as "Skordelas".
KASOS ISLAND	THE JUDAS BURNING	Religious celebration which depicts the burning of Judas. Local delicacies are offered.
KASOS ISLAND	EVENT CALLED "SWINGS"	A festival named "kounies" which is the Greek word for swings. The young men swing unmarried young ladies and a traditional meal takes place.
KASOS ISLAND	EXCURSION	A day trip where the guest have the opportunity to watch the preparation of "Taramosalata", which is a Greek dip made out of fish eggs.
KASOS ISLAND	CUSTOM OF "KLIDONAS"	Religious celebration having traditional pancakes (churros) known as "loukoumades".
KASOS ISLAND	FEAST OF TRADITIONAL DISHES	A feast of local delicacies
KASOS ISLAND	LOCAL HONEY FESTIVAL	Locals offer visitors honey and sweets based on bee products during this festival.
KASOS ISLAND	LOCAL CHEESE "SITAKA" FESTIVAL	Traditional food festival where the locals cook dishes with the local sitaka cheece.
KARPATHOS ISLAND	"PATINADES" IN KARPATHOS	Ten karpathian patinades (lovers' songs which were sung at the end of festivals many years ago). The participants wear traditional custumes and baklavas (Greek sweets) are served to guests.
KARPATHOS ISLAND	LOCAL FESTIVAL "MENOULLAS" FROM THE FISHERMEN OF THE ISLAND	Fish Festival where the locals are fishing and cooking together the menoullas fish.



Calendar of events - exhibitions



Place	Name of Event	Description of Event
ATHENS	EXPOTROF EXHIBITION	The Region of South Aegean rents a space at all these exhibitions for local producers to show and promote their products to the public, as well as national and international distributors, selling some products on the spot. The participants also have the opportunity to meet and deal with large enterprises for local and export markets who are looking for new and unique flavours.
THESSALONIKI	DETROP EXHIBITION	
ATHENS	FOODEXPO EXHIBITION	
ATHENS	TASTE OF GREECE EXHIBITION	
ATHENS	GREEK TASTE FESTIVAL (ATHINORAMA)	
RHODES	NATIONAL GREEK EXHIBITION OF HANDICRAFTS AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS	The Region of South Aegean promotes Aegean Cuisine at some of the biggest tourism exhibitions of the world.
ATHENS	NATIONAL AGROQUALITY EXHIBITION	
PARIS FRANCE	EXHIBITION SIAL	
ATHENS	NATIONAL HONEY EXHIBITION	
BERLIN GERMANY	PRESENTATION OF AEGEAN COUISINE	
MOSCOW RUSSIA	PRESENTATION OF AEGEAN COUISINE	The Region of South Aegean organise events for promoting the remarkable and award-winning wines of our islands.
ATHENS	WINES OF SOUTH AEGEAN	
INSTABUL TURKEY	TOURIST EXHIBITION	
BRUSSELS BELGIUM	SALON DES VACANCES	
TEL AVIV ISRAEL	IMTM	
MILANO ITALY	BIT	The Region of South Aegean participates in almost all important international exhibitions that involves the tourist promotion of all our 50 islands.
STOCKHOLM SWEDEN	GREKLAND PANORAMA	
TEHRAN IRAN	ROADSHOW	
BERLIN GERMANY	ITB	
PARIS FRANCE	SALON DE MONDIAL	
MOSCOW RUSSIA	MITT	
PEIREUS	MID EAST YACHT SHOW	
ABU DHABI UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	GREEK TOURISM WORKSHOP	
LOS ANGELES & CHICAGO	USA ROADSHOW	
DUSSEDORF GERMANY	TOUR NATUR	
LONDON GREAT BRETAGNE	WTM	
WARSAW POLAND	GRECKA PANORAMA	
THESSALONIKI	PHILOXENIA	
ATHENS	GREEK TOURISM EXPO	
CANNES FRANCE	ILTM	



Marketing & Communication Plan

The South Aegean Region intends creating an environment where our quality local gastronomic values and the Aegean Diet establish a presence locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. Our main tool of success is the Aegean Cuisine.

This will be the basis for our strategy, in combination with tourism and cultivation of the land. All stakeholders will work together so that the gastronomical result will travel across the world reaching international levels of good practice and recognition.

...Figures to remember...

50 Islands

Fifty islands who share some common products but, at the same time, every one of them have unique and rare products.

107 Stakeholders

The first target audience for our strategy is the local stakeholders who have embraced Aegean Cuisine and are ready to take the next step.

30 centuries of cultural legacy spread all over the Aegean Archipelago.

900 days (approximately) to 2019, the year that we want our Region to become the European Region of Gastronomy.

...Steps to follow...

The development of our plan has 3 axes:

1. Produce the requested tools - products to be included in the marketing plan.
2. Adapt already known planned projects and activities to go a step further on. Communicate at every opportunity and by every means, gastronomic good practice.
3. Introduce new projects and ideas that will stimulate a change in mindset and focus on the areas where we face challenges.

For each of the above axes we will communicate and market our plans to:

3 Levels

1. Local
2. National
3. European
4. International

Target group

- a. Islanders (Community and Stakeholders)
- b. Visitors/tourists
- c. Gastronomic Opinion Leaders
- d. Media

Communication Objectives

1. Create awareness at all levels respectively to all corresponding target group.
2. Increase local interaction (community, stakeholders and volunteers)
3. Target audience call to action

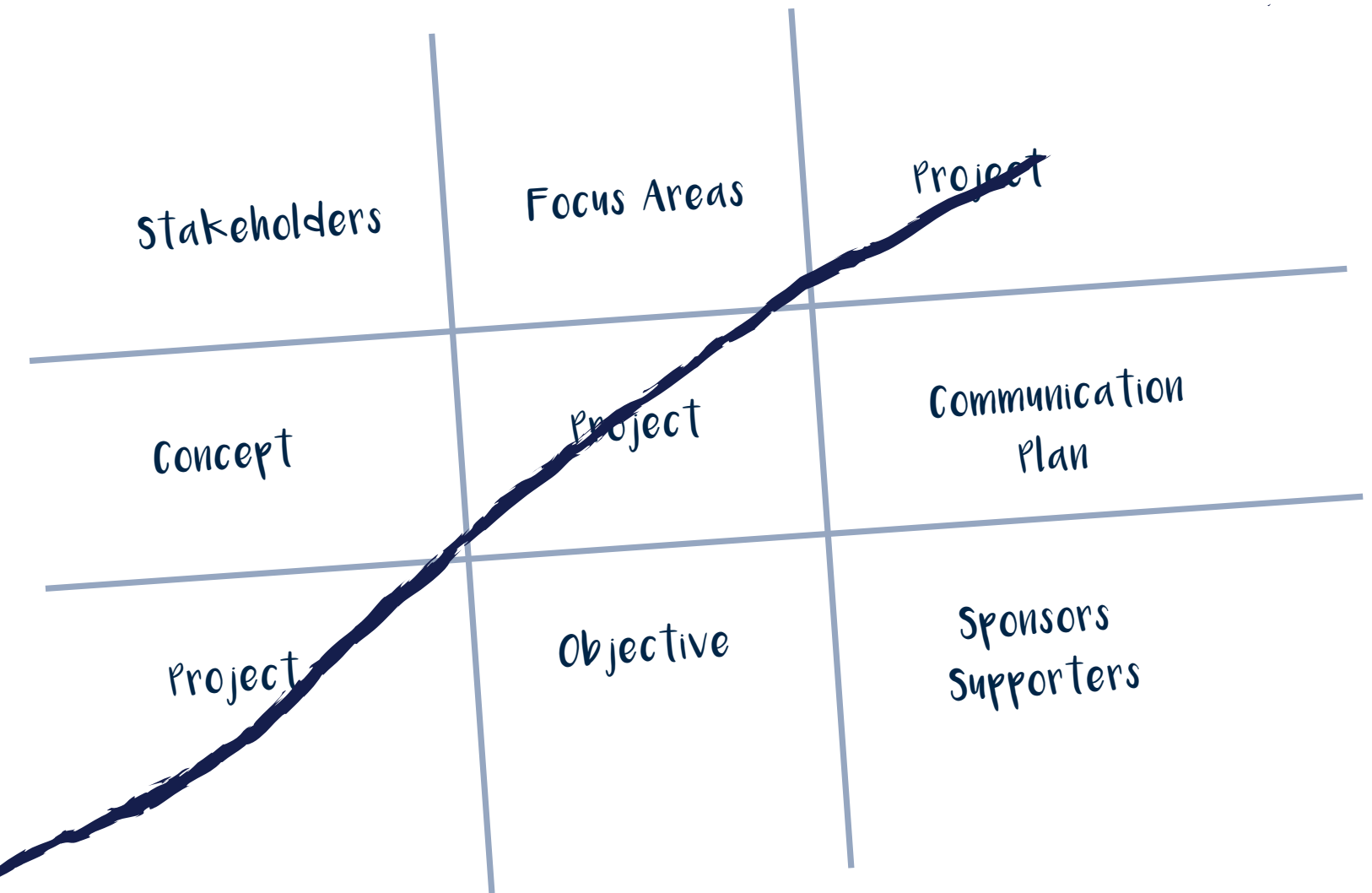
Means to Meet the Communication Objectives

Our Communication material: audiovisual, web site, social media, below the line activities, thematic videos, educational material, opinion articles, media kit, press trips, advertising campaigns, volunteer engagement tools For a, b, c: We will organize gastronomic special events, conferences with key individuals and teams from the hospitality, food industry and tourism sectors. Food exhibitions will take place and an annual calendar for the Region of events of interest. Other initiatives include online broadcasting tools (food blogs); press initiatives (press trips and educational tours for journalists); tools for territorial communication (roll up and totems positioned in key places of arrival and passage for local events; windows transparencies for shops participating in the project; brochures, leaflets, postcards for tourists and visitors).



Budget

Our budget is estimated at 1.5m per year. This includes the implementation of our projects and our communication and marketing plan.



1.500.000 €
Per year



Sponsors & Supporters

Sponsors

OFFICIAL EXCLUSIVE CARRIER

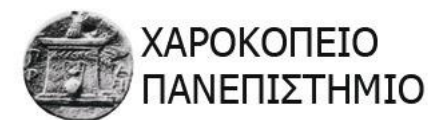


“Aegean Airlines, a member of Star Alliance, is Greece’s largest airline providing ever since its inception in 1999 until today, full service, premium quality short and medium haul services.

In 2013 AEGEAN acquired Olympic Air; as a result passengers now have increased flight frequencies and connections as well as improved accessibility to Greece’s islands, including some of the most remote ones. Total traffic of both companies reached 11.6 million passengers in 2015. The 2016 network offers 145 destinations, 111 domestic and 34 international, to 45 countries. The flights are being performed with one of the youngest fleets in Europe, comprising of 61 aircraft, after AEGEAN’s recent investment in 7 new additional Airbus A320 ceos. AEGEAN has been honored with the Skytrax World Airline award, as the “Best European Regional Airline in Europe” for 2016. It is the sixth year in a row and the seventh time in the last 8 years that the company has received this distinction.”



Founded in 1998, HELLENIC PETROLEUM is one of the leading energy groups in South East Europe, with activities spanning across the energy value chain and presence in 7 countries. Its shares are primarily listed on the Athens Exchange (ATHEX: ELPE) with secondary listing on the London Stock exchange (L.SE: HLPD/98LQ).



Harokopio University of Athens (<http://www.hua.gr>) is a public university, dedicated to promoting education and research since 1990 in a small, well focused set of intellectual areas and providing a high quality academic environment for its students. The university’s excellent campus facilities houses four departments, i.e. the departments of Nutrition and Dietetics, Home Economics and Ecology, Geography, and Informatics and Telematics, all promoting education, research and interdisciplinary collaboration on cutting edge scientific fields. Specifically, the department of Nutrition and Dietetics consists of a solid educational undergraduate and postgraduate program based on research, teaching and leadership in human nutrition and dietetics (including basic nutritional sciences and clinical-, socio-cultural-, historical-, food-, sports-, and community-related aspects of nutrition), as well as on health promotion and lifestyle education. The department aims to highlight the role of nutrition in prevention and healthcare and its correlation with other sciences and academic fields, and to provide students with the ability to succeed in a wide variety of employment through a solid academic background in nutrition and dietetics including rigorous, science-based coursework.



Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey (<http://www.rutgers.edu>), is a leading national research university and the state of New Jersey’s preeminent, comprehensive public institution of higher education. Established in 1766, the university is the eighth oldest higher education institution in the United States, with more than 67,000 students and 22,000 faculty and staff learning, working, and serving the public at Rutgers locations around the world. At Rutgers, 31 schools and colleges, focusing on diverse fields of arts and sciences, serve students seeking an undergraduate education, professional studies, graduate degrees, and postdoctoral education. Within this excellent educational environment, Study Abroad Programs act toward developing a comprehensive, campus-wide set of international initiatives and services, initiating collaborative projects and strategic partnerships around the world, and expanding students’ opportunities for international study and research. Among them, novel, well-designed interactive Study Abroad Programs of the department of Kinesiology and Health, in collaboration with other schools and departments, aim to familiarize students of diverse study fields with the complex concept of the Mediterranean lifestyle, and provide them with skills and competencies to adopt this health-promoting lifestyle in their everyday life.

Supporters



SYMPOSSIO GREEK GOURMET TOURING

A journey of Greek gastronomy is taking place in large cities throughout Europe. Greek cuisine and diet is exhibited through one of the most dynamic, promotional projects ever set in motion by Greek hoteliers, who are establishing Greece as a distinct culinary destination on the world map. (www.symposio.gr)

Legacy

Our plan for the Region of South Aegean will leave a legacy of growth based on the following needs and priorities of our Region:

- Acquire a strong brand name for Aegean Cuisine, recognized by visitors to the Region.
- Establish the Region of South Aegean as a gastronomic tourism destination, make known and famous the culinary traditions of our islands and the purity of our local products beyond our Region.
- Prolong the tourism season through the shoulder months, enticing visitors to taste seasonal recipes related to festivals and feasts that happen at specific times of the year.
- Brand as many quality key local products we can, in order to exploit the most effective routes to market .
- Support the awareness of specialists-professionals of each Focus Area to cultivate, use and promote branded local products.
- Ensure cooperation through the value chain among all the stakeholders involved (producers, local authorities, entrepreneurs, institutions/organizations, cultural associations, consumers etc).
- Educate local social groups from school to professionals to recognise, prefer and buy local products of across the Region of South Aegean .
- Increase the cultivation of local varieties not only to satisfy local needs but also to enable cultivation for exportation which will ensure a better income for producers, motivating them to stay or return to their homeland and encouraging young people to farm the land.
- Establish an information system in educational institutions using the Digital Agenda's Focus Area projects for healthy eating and the importance of using specific local products with high nutritional value.
- Foster awareness and knowledge to farmers of the importance of using technological means, to access necessary information that will solve problems.

“

The Guardian:

“Life in the blue zone is good. And that may be the real secret of why it's also so long.,”

“

National Geographic Travel for the life of the Aegean islands:

“Diet is the key to longevity”

“

BBC TRAVEL:

“In Santorini, you feel like no other spot on earth. Here, 120 miles southeast of mainland Greece, everything is brighter: the white houses, the sea and the sunsets over the caldera,”

reports the BBC.

BBC Travel

.. Named “Best World's Island in 2011” part of our family

“

Trip Advisor:

Santorini in the World's top 10 islands for 2016 (No. 2-ranked Santorini)

“

CNN Travel For Naxos:

Some places are better than others at fulfilling the powerful human desire to live well.

