



### 'Figs with history': a gastronomic and historical immersion through Europe and Perú

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#### Abstract

Growing figs not only takes horticultural knowledge in order to take care of the orchard, but it also requires an immersion in the history of civilizations, migrations, and cultural mixture. The fig tree was adopted in different regions; it could be planted in poor soils and feed entire ecosystems and societies. For that reason, my work on the gastronomic branch of figs turned into a research about the relationship between this symbolic fruit and mankind. The stories and pictures that I have collected were taken between 2015 and 2018. They depict Peru at first, where my own history begins, but also Greece, Spain, Italy, France, Germany, Croatia, Switzerland, Austria, France, and Turkey; countries where figs are a lead character in recipes like fig bread in Mallorca, hib in Croatia, Feigengeist in Austria or Greek askada. This research was initially technical and then became a journey through legends, tastes, faces and the whole biodiversity that coexists under the wisdom of the fig tree. Mankind is just a part of it, but it has an enormous power to preserve this historical crop for those to come in the future. The places represented: Mallorca, Elche, Extremadur and Granada (Spain), Vis Island and Zadar (Croatia), Aydin (Turkey), Speyer, Berlin, Hamburg, Freiburg, Karlsruhe, Stuttgart, München, Kiel and Münster (all of them about urban farming projects in Germany), Dornach (Switzerland), Arequipa and Lima (Perú), Tucumán (Argentina), Naples, Calabria, Carmignano and Puglia (Italy), Kimi and Kamena Vourla (Greece), Wien (Austria) and Nîmes (France). Through this presentation, I would like to show also the enormous tradition of the dried fig in the Mediterranean gastronomy and the affinities between people living in different continents in similar landscapes, lifestyles, and human relationships. This trait could be used to reposition the fig as a historical fruit with a great potential for food security, storytelling and education about biodiversity and food systems.

#### Keywords

Organic dried figs, slow food, gastronomy and history, intercultural relationships, marketing, storytelling, biodiversity