CAP BON

A SHAKSHOUKA OF FLAVOURS IN THE HEART OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

WORLD REGION OF GASTRONOMY CANDIDATE 2028

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CAP BON CANDIDATE 2028

LAMIA TEMIMI

Cofounder and CEO Sawa Taste of Tunisia

At Sawa – Taste of Tunisia, we proudly champion Cap Bon as one of the Mediterranean's most vibrant and promising gastronomic regions.

This vision is deeply rooted in the personal journey of Lamia Temimi, cofounder of Sawa Taste of Tunisia. Lamia's story begins generations ago, when her Sicilian ancestors settled in Cap Bon, drawn by its fertile land, maritime culture, and distinctive Mediterranean identity. Over time, their traditions blended seamlessly with the local Tunisian way of life—enriching the family's culinary heritage with a fusion of Sicilian technique and Cap Bon flavors.

After building an international career in hospitality and culinary consulting, Lamia returned to Tunisia with a clear mission: to elevate Tunisian gastronomy on the global stage and position Cap Bon as a leader in sustainable, experience-driven food tourism. Cap Bon's natural abundance has shaped its culinary identity for centuries. From its fertile plains to its Mediterranean coastline, the region produces Tunisia's finest citrus, aromatic herbs, olive oils, wines, and the celebrated harissa of Nabeul—now internationally recognized for its craftsmanship and protected designation. This rich agricultural heritage, influenced by Punic, Roman, Andalusian, and Mediterranean cultures (including long-standing Sicilian exchanges), gives Cap Bon a gastronomic profile that is both deeply rooted and unmistakably unique. Through Sawa Taste of Tunisia, Lamia Temimi and her business partner, the anthropologist, Jamie Furniss, work hand-in-hand with local producers, chefs, and artisans to create curated experiences that invite high-end travelers to discover the true essence of Cap Bon.

For Sawa and for Lamia Temimi personally, supporting Cap Bon's candidacy for the World Region of Gastronomy 2028 is both a commitment and a calling. It is an opportunity to honor a region that has shaped her identity, celebrate its multicultural heritage, uplift its artisans, and introduce travelers from around the world to the extraordinary culinary richness of Cap Bon. Cap Bon is ready—full of stories, flavors, and living traditions—to take its rightful place among the world's great gastronomic destinations.

WAHID BEN FRAJ

Regional Tourism Commissioner of Nabeul–Hammamet

Commissariat Régional de Tourisme de Nabeul

Cap Bon stands at the forefront of Tunisia's culinary and cultural renaissance, positioning itself as a compelling candidate for the World Region of Gastronomy 2028. Distinguished by its exceptional terroir, millennia-old traditions, and a vibrant community of artisans, the region offers high-end travelers an immersive and authentic gastronomic experience during the whole year.

Blessed with a fertile peninsula framed by the Mediterranean Sea, Cap Bon has long been celebrated as Tunisia's garden. Its sun-drenched citrus groves, world-renowned harissa, aromatic herbs, and exceptional seafood traditions make it a living showcase of Mediterranean gastronomy. The region's culinary identity reflects centuries of cultural exchange—from ancient Punic settlements to Roman agricultural heritage—resulting in a unique, layered cuisine that continues to flourish today. Cap Bon's candidacy for the World Region of Gastronomy 2028 reinforces its commitment to sustainable, community-driven food tourism. Visitors are invited to explore refined culinary journeys that extend far beyond traditional hospitality.

Recent international attention—including culinary explorations by global figures such as Jamie Oliver—has highlighted the creativity, integrity, and vibrancy of Tunisian cuisine. Cap Bon, in particular, offers a sensory-rich journey through flavors that are both deeply traditional and refreshingly innovative.

As Tunisia advances its bid for the World Region of Gastronomy 2028, Cap Bon stands out as a leading ambassador—an exceptional destination where flavor, culture, and craftsmanship converge. For high-end travelers seeking meaningful, high-quality getaways, Cap Bon promises an unforgettable and enriching gastronomic escape.

connecting Cap Bon to national and international networks.

LASSAAD JELIDI

Director

Institut de Formation dans les Métiers du Tourisme de Nabeul - IFMT

Founded in 1976, the Institute of Vocational Training for Tourism Professions in Nabeul is one of Tunisia's pioneering institutions dedicated to developing skilled human capital for the tourism sector. The institute offers specialized training in restaurant and bar management, housekeeping, culinary arts, hospitality, hotel management, and reception services, supported by a modern pedagogical framework and an experienced faculty.

Situated in a region with a strong tourism vocation, the institute plays a vital role in the economic development of Cap Bon. It contributes directly to improving youth employability by facilitating rapid integration into hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, and other tourism-related businesses across the region. Through the quality of its training programs and its professional partnerships, the institute remains a key contributor to sectoral development and to the enhancement of both regional and national tourism excellence.

Furthermore, IFMT-Nabeul plays a significant role in the "Cap Bon, World Region of Gastronomy Candidate 2028" initiative. The institute trains young chefs to showcase local products, embrace environmentally responsible and sustainable practices, and strengthen the local supply chain through workshops with producers, culinary projects, and partnerships with regional stakeholders.

IMEN RABEH

President

ATPNE - Association Tunisienne de Protection de la Nature et de l'Environnement de Korbal

As one of Cap Bon's most established environmental actors, ATPNE Korba has been driving nature conservation and sustainable development since 1992 and has continued this mission as an independent organization since 2012. With more than three decades of committed action, the association inspires eco-citizenship, strengthens environmental education, protects biodiversity, empowers women, and champions green entrepreneurship across the region.

As an active member of the consortium, ATPNE Korba contributes its strong expertise in community mobilization, environmental awareness, and participatory governance. The association plays a key role in strengthening the environmental dimension of Cap Bon's candidature as a World Region of Gastronomy 2028. Through its long-standing work in environmental education, citizen engagement, and the preservation of local ecosystems, ATPNE Korba supports the transition toward sustainable gastronomic practices rooted in local heritage.

By encouraging eco-friendly production methods, valorizing natural resources, and fostering collaboration between producers, schools, local institutions, and communities, ATPNE Korba helps anchor a vision of gastronomy that respects nature and celebrates cultural identity. Its contribution reinforces Cap Bon's ambition to stand as a model territory where biodiversity, community well-being, and culinary excellence flourish together.

PART I

CAP BON - A PENINSULA OF CROSSINGS

A shakshouka of cultures and flavors

Shakshouka (شكشوكة) is a beloved North African dish of eggs poached in a spiced sauce of tomatoes, peppers, and onions—ingredients that thrive in Cap Bon's gardens—often enriched with garlic, cumin, and harissa, cooked in a single pan and served communally with bread. The word itself, which originates in the North African Arabic dialects, is onomatopoeic, evoking the sound and action of shaking and mixing ingredients together into a jumbled, harmonious whole. This humble, healthy, and satisfying dish is also a metaphor for the peninsula's identity: distinct elements from different time periods and geographies mixed together, each maintaining its character while contributing to a unified dish. Cap Bon's layered influences remain traceable yet inseparable, shaken together across millennia into a cuisine that is recognizably Mediterranean, proudly African, perfumed by Eastern spice routes, and distinctly itself.

Stand at the northernmost point of Cap Bon, at Cape Bon itself, and you gaze across the Strait of Sicily toward Europe, a mere 140 km away. Turn south, and you face the vast African continent, its Saharan immensity giving way here to one of North Africa's most fertile agricultural regions.

The Mediterranean laps at your feet from three directions, and the land beneath you holds the traces of Phoenicians and Romans, Byzantines and Arabs, Ottomans, Andalusians, French and Italians—layers upon layers of human passage, each leaving its mark on the soil, the table, and the soul of this place.

Trans-Saharan caravans brought dates and desert knowledge northward; maritime trade winds carried spices from India and Persia; Andalusian refugees fleeing the Reconquista brought orange blossom distillation and almond pastries; Eastern commerce networks delivered saffron, cinnamon, and the art of preserving lemons. Each arrival added ingredients to the mix, new flavors shaken into the peninsula's culinary repertoire.

Cap Bon is where continents meet at the table, and the shakshouka of history has been simmering for three millennia.

This is not metaphor but lived reality. The peninsula's cuisine bears influences of Africa and Europe, of the Arab world and the Mediterranean basin, of Eastern spice routes and Western innovations. Its harissa—that

fiery condiment now conquering global palates—speaks of chili peppers from the Americas transformed by Mediterranean olive oil and the bold North African palate. Its couscous, recognized by UNESCO as Intangible Cultural Heritage, represents grain cultivation techniques refined across continents and centuries. Its citrus groves produce the orange blossoms that perfume Tunisian pastries, a tradition linking back to Andalusian gardens. Its pottery, sometimes rugged and often colorful, cradles tagines and couscous in vessels whose forms echo Berber, Arab, and Ottoman influences.

The French historian Fernand Braudel taught us to see the Mediterranean not as a dividing line between Europe and Africa, between North and South, but as a space of exchange and connectivity—a liquid highway binding disparate shores into a common conversation. Cap Bon embodies this Braudelian vision, yet challenges us to expand it further. For too long, discussions of "Mediterranean cuisine" have privileged the northern shore—Italy, Greece, Spain, southern France—while overlooking the southern Mediterranean's equally profound contributions. Cap Bon's bid for recognition as a World Region of Gastronomy 2028 seeks to expand and correct this narrow vision, asserting that Tunisia is Mediterranean, that Cap Bon's shakshouka of influences belongs at the center of any honest discussion of Mediterranean food culture.

Cap Bon, with its citrus groves, vineyards and vegetable fields, its coastline teeming with fish, exemplifies this fertility and the capacity to nourish.
For decades, insofar as the Cap Bon has had any reputation in the global imagination at all, it has been shaped by a particular model of tourism: the all-inclusive beach resort, the package holiday, the "sun and sea" commodity. Millions of European visitors have come to Hammamet and Nabeul seeking affordable Mediterranean beaches, often without venturing beyond their hotel compounds to discover the pottery workshops, the harissa producers, the family couscous recipes, the souqs, the fishing harbors at dawn—the ingredients of the shakshouka simmering just beyond the resort walls.

Cap Bon is Mediterranean, yes—but it is also, proudly African. The peninsula's agriculture, fishing techniques, pottery methods, textile traditions, and music are the fruit of knowledge systems influenced by exchange with African contexts.

To understand Cap Bon's gastronomy is to understand that African and Mediterranean identities are not contradictory but complementary, not separate but intertwined. The ancient Romans knew this fertility. They called the broader Tunisian region the "Granary of Rome," recognizing its extraordinary agricultural abundance. Wheat, olive oil, and wine flowed from North African ports to feed the empire's cities. Any Arabic speaker know Tunisia as "Tunis al-khadra" (تونس الخضراء), or Tunisia the Green. This captures the same truth: this is not desert but garden, not scarcity but abundance.

This disconnect between the region's profound food culture and its tourism economy represents both a missed opportunity and an urgent call to action. Cap Bon's bid for World Region of Gastronomy recognition is fundamentally about transformation: transforming how the world sees Tunisia, transforming how visitors experience the region, transforming how local communities value and preserve their gastronomic heritage, and transforming how the economic benefits of tourism flow to farmers, fishers, artisans, and small producers rather than concentrating in large resort complexes. It is about inviting the world to taste the real shakshouka—not the buffet version served once weekly as "Tunisian night" in hotels, but the authentic dish made with Cap Bon tomatoes and peppers, local eggs and olive oil, spices, eaten with fresh bread, in a family home or perhaps under an olive tree with workers resting in the shade after a morning of harvest.

Not infrequently in Euro-American settings, a great gastronomic experience involves "going out"—the restaurant meal, the public table, the visible performance of dining as social display.

This understanding is mirrored by the notion of the star chef or chef as "auteur," a creative genius whose individual vision and technique merit celebration and awards. While this influential paradigm has merits and contributes in large part to the way "gastronomy" is understood today, it is not difficult to see how it is also founded on a kind of elitism and exclusivity, nor how it entrenches and reinforces a single pathway to culinary recognition—one that leads other regions of the world to aspire to the same model rather than trace their own trajectories rooted in different cultural values and social practices.

In Tunisia, as in much of the Arab Mediterranean world, the architecture of the built environment reflects profoundly different values, ones that also extend to the table. The traditional medina's uniform, often austere exteriors—blank walls punctuated by modest doorways, narrow streets lined with undifferentiated facades—conceal interior courtyards of extraordinary beauty: fountains, gardens, intricate tilework, and elaborate stucco invisible from the street.

This architectural grammar expresses both humility and equality, a deliberate reluctance to display wealth or difference in ways visible to passersby, while reserving splendor for family, guests, and those invited across the threshold. Anthropologists and archaeologists have documented this pattern of interiority that protects private life from public gaze while honoring guests with hospitality's fullness once inside.

Tunisia's culinary culture mirrors this spatial logic. While Cap Bon certainly does offer fine dining experiences in restaurants and hotels, these represent merely the tip of the iceberg.

The most original, generous, and memorable meals unfold behind closed doors—in family homes where tables groan under the abundance of shared dishes prepared on the basis of recipes passed orally and sensorially rather than through the written word or uniform measurement. To eat only in public spaces is to remain perpetually outside, seeing uniform facades. We might invoke another metaphor here through reference to a common and iconic fruit in the region, the prickly pear cactus—hindi (هندي) in Tunisian Arabic, literally "Indian". Beyond the name that references the distant lands with which the Cap Bon has long been in contact, the fruit reflects a similar exterior/interior paradox, here pertaining to the natural landscape: a forbidding exterior beneath which lies sweet, colorful nourishment. Hindi appears on street carts from August through October, sold by vendors who skillfully peel away the thorny skin so customers can enjoy the fruit without injury. The hindi cart is woven into Tunisian childhood memory: vendors calling out "hindi! hindi!" as they navigate neighborhoods, much as ice cream trucks announce their presence in North American suburbs, draw children and adults alike out for a refreshing treat in the summer heat. What distinguishes this street food tradition from the ice cream truck perhaps most of all is its healthfulness—a naturally sweet snack requiring no added sugar, with flesh ranging from red to white to yellow-orange depending on variety. The cactus itself serves practical purposes beyond its fruit: throughout Cap Bon and rural Tunisia, opuntia cacti are planted as living fences to delineate property boundaries and contain grazing animals, their drought tolerance and ability to thrive on marginal land making them ideal for arid conditions.

This dual function—defensive barrier transformed into generous fruit—perhaps mirrors Cap Bon's own character: a peninsula that yields abundance to those who know how to approach it expertly, peeling back protective layers to discover the sweetness within.
This bid book tells the story of a peninsula

at a crossroads—geographic, cultural, and temporal. It documents Cap Bon's agricultural abundance, from citrus to olives, from grapes to harissa peppers. It celebrates artisanal traditions, from Nabeul's pottery to the distillation of orange blossom water. It honors fishing communities sustaining ancient practices along three coastlines. It recognizes festivals and weekly markets as living laboratories of food culture.

And it presents a vision for 2028 and beyond: a Cap Bon where gastronomy drives sustainable development, where food culture bridges communities, where culinary tourism enriches both visitors and hosts, and where a new generation of farmers, chefs, artisans, and food entrepreneurs build prosperous futures rooted in tradition and open to innovation.

We invite IGCAT's jury, the Platform's member regions, and ultimately the world's food lovers to discover what Cap Bon has always been: a place where ingredients from multiple continents have been shaken together, where cultures mingle, where the bounty of sea and land come together at tables shaped by millennia of exchange. We invite you to taste the Mediterranean from its southern shore, to experience Arabo-African hospitality, and to participate in a process of reimagining the meanings, spaces and forms of gastronomy.

Welcome to Cap Bon, the Shakshouka Peninsula, in the heart of the Mediterranean.

A peninsula in the heart of the mediterranean

Cap Bon occupies the northeastern corner of Tunisia, a peninsula extending approximately 80 kilometers eastward from the Tunisian mainland into the Mediterranean Sea. The governorate of Nabeul, which encompasses the Cap Bon peninsula, covers an area of approximately 2,840 square kilometers, making it one of Tunisia's smaller governorates by area but among its most densely populated and economically significant.

The peninsula is bounded by water on three sides: the Gulf of Tunis to the northwest, the Strait of Sicily to the northeast, and the Gulf of Hammamet to the southeast. This tri-marine geography creates microclimates and ecological zones that have profoundly shaped the region's agriculture, fishing traditions, and cultural identity. At its northernmost point, Cape Bon (Ras ed-Dar) stands just 140 kilometers from Sicily's southwestern coast.

The landscape varies dramatically across short distances. The Jebel Sidi Abderrahman range runs along the peninsula's spine, reaching elevations of up to 637 meters and providing cooler, wetter conditions that support diverse agriculture. The eastern slopes descend to rocky coastlines punctuated by fishing harbors at Kelibia, El Haouaria, and Sidi Daoud. The western plains, particularly around Grombalia and Menzel Bouzelfa, form some of Tunisia's richest agricultural land, with deep soils ideal for viticulture, market gardening, and citrus cultivation. The southern coast along the Gulf of Hammamet features the long sandy beaches that have made Hammamet an international tourist destination since the early 20th century.

A GENTLE AND BOUNTIFUL CLIMATE

Cap Bon enjoys a Mediterranean climate characterized by mild, rainy winters and hot, dry summers. Annual precipitation averages

400-600mm, significantly higher than Tunisia's national average and concentrated primarily between October and March. This rainfall pattern, combined with relatively moderate temperatures (average winter lows around 8°C, summer highs around 30-32°C), creates ideal conditions for a diverse range of crops.

The Mediterranean's moderating influence prevents the temperature extremes common in interior Tunisia. Sea breezes cool the coastal areas during summer months, while the mountains provide orographic lift that enhances precipitation. These conditions have made Cap Bon Tunisia's most important region for rain-fed agriculture, particularly for fruit trees, vines, and vegetables.

The climate also supports the cultivation of aromatic and medicinal plants. Wild and cultivated herbs thrive in the Mediterranean vegetation zones, while the region has become Tunisia's center for geranium cultivation, whose essential oils supply international perfume industries. Orange trees, introduced centuries ago, flourish in the coastal microclimates, producing both fruit and the blossoms essential to traditional Tunisian pastry-making.

THE KEY TOWNS: NABEUL, HAMMAMET, KELIBIA

Nabeul, the governorate capital, serves as the administrative and commercial heart of the region. Founded on or near the site of ancient Neapolis (a Punic and Roman settlement), Nabeul today is known for its pottery workshops, its mats woven from esparto grass (halfa), reeds, or palm fronds,and its orange blossom distilleries. The city's character reflects its dual identity as both a working town of artisans and farmers and an administrative center.

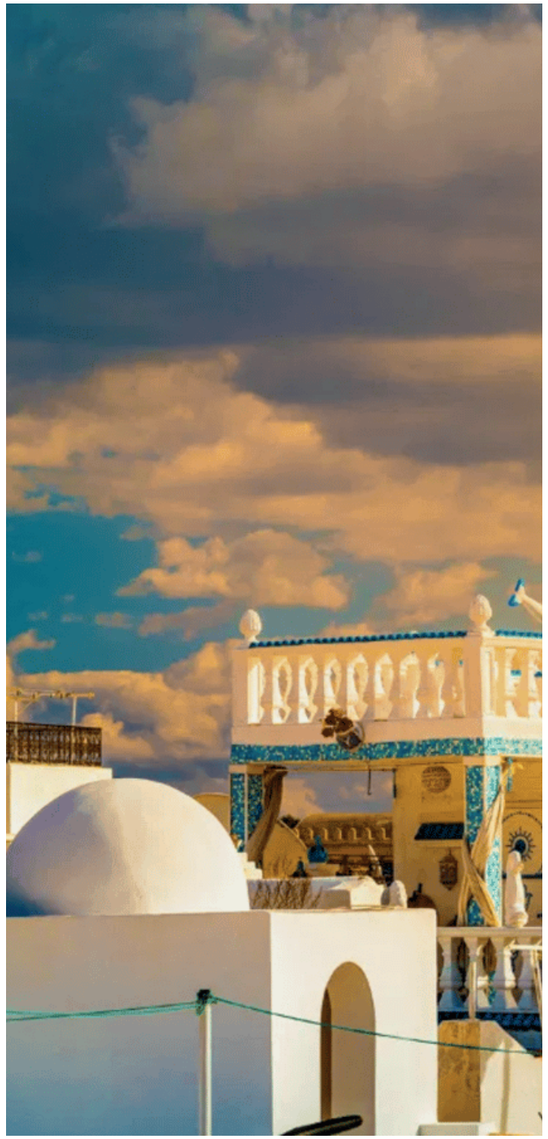
Hammamet, positioned on the southern coast, transformed during the 20th century from a small fishing village into one of the Mediterranean's major resort destinations. The medina (old town) preserves elements of Hammamet's pre-tourism identity, while the coastal hotel zone stretching north and south represents the mass tourism development that began in the 1960s.

Kelibia, on the peninsula's eastern tip, remains primarily a fishing port, with one of Tunisia's most active fish markets. The town is dominated by a massive Byzantine-era fortress that testifies to the strategic importance of controlling this maritime crossroads.

AN ECONOMY BUILT ON AGRICULTURE, TOURISM, AND CRAFT

Cap Bon's economy has traditionally rested on three pillars: agriculture, fishing, and artisanal production. The 20th century added a fourth pillar—tourism—which has grown to dominate the economic landscape, particularly in coastal areas.

Agriculture remains foundational despite tourism's prominence. The governorate accounts for a disproportionate share of Tunisia's



production of citrus fruits, table grapes, market garden vegetables, and ornamental plants. Olive cultivation occupies significant acreage, particularly in drier zones, while viticulture concentrated around Grombalia has ancient roots. Small-scale farming dominates, with family operations typically cultivating diverse crops on holdings of a few hectares.

Fishing employs thousands in coastal communities. The three-sided maritime exposure provides access to different fish populations and enables diverse fishing methods, from small-scale artisanal fishing in protected bays to larger-scale operations targeting tuna and other pelagic species in offshore waters. Artisanal production—particularly pottery in Nabeul, weaving in several centers, and food processing (harissa, preserved vegetables, olive oil, wine)—continues to employ significant numbers and contribute to regional identity, even as globalization and industrialization transform and at times wipe out historic practices.

Tourism has transformed Cap Bon's economy over the past six decades. Hammamet alone hosts hundreds of hotels ranging from small family pensions to large international resort complexes. Tourism provides direct employment in hotels, restaurants, and services, and indirect employment in construction, transportation, and supply chains. However, this tourism model—focused on all-inclusive beach vacations—has created economic dependencies while failing to fully engage local food systems, artisanal traditions, and cultural assets. It has also demonstrated its lack of sustainability environmentally. The challenge facing Cap Bon today is to evolve beyond this model toward a more integrated, sustainable, and culturally rich form of tourism that better distributes economic benefits and showcases the region's distinctive identity.

Historical timeline: millennia at the crossroads

Each civilization added a defining element to Cap Bon's culinary identity: Phoenician olives, Roman wheat, Byzantine liturgical wine, Arab citrus and spices, Andalusian almond pastries, Ottoman coffee, Italian market vegetables, French modern infrastructure, independent Tunisia harissa exports. The result is a living palimpsest where couscous steamed in a pottery couscoussier might be dressed with olive oil from Roman-era groves, seasoned with Arab spices, accompanied by Italian tomatoes, and finished with a drizzle of harissa - three millennia meeting on one plate.

Libyan-Berber & Phoenician period
The olive tree

- Neapolis founded as Phoenician trading post
- First organized olive cultivation and early viticulture
- Beginnings of Mediterranean export agriculture

Punic era
Garum – liquid gold

- Cap Bon as Carthage's agricultural hinterland
- Terraced hillsides & advanced irrigation
- Export-scale garum production

Roman era
Granary of Rome" – wheat empire

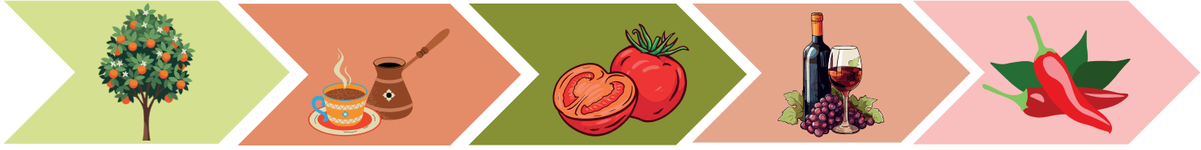
- Major durum wheat estates (villae)
- Intensified olive oil production for the empire
- Flourishing wine and garum industries

Byzantine period
Continuity – the last Roman harvest

- Roman agricultural systems maintained
- Viticulture preserved for Christian liturgy
- Kelibia fortress protecting fertile lands

Arab-Islamic era
The citrus revolution & distillation arts

- Oranges and lemons transform the landscape
- Orange blossom water enters the culinary repertoire
- Couscous becomes staple; new spices redefine flavor



Fatimid & Hafsid dynasties
Andalusian sweetness

- Sicilian-Andalusian exchanges enrich agriculture
- Almond pastries, marzipan, floral waters
- Advanced fruit tree cultivation

Ottoman period
Coffee culture & Ottoman sweets

- Arrival of Turkish coffee rituals
- Baklava and Ottoman-style pastries
- Olive oil trade expands across Mediterranean

Italian agricultural communities
Tomatoes & market gardening

- Intensive vegetable cultivation
- Tomato, pepper, zucchini varieties introduced
- Commercial wineries established

French protectorate
Modern wine industry & infrastructure

- Mechanical presses modernize olive oil
- Viticulture expands for export
- Tourism emerges in Hammamet

Independent Tunisia
Harissa conquers the world

- Tourism boom from 1960s onwards
- Harissa becomes global export (1990s–2000s)
- Organic agriculture rises
- 2020 UNESCO couscous recognition

HISTORICAL NAMES OF THE CAP BON PENINSULA

The Cap Bon peninsula has been known by different names throughout its history, each reflecting the civilizations that shaped it.
The ancient Latin designation was Mercurii Promontorium (Promontory of Mercury). In the medieval Arab period, it was called al-Rass al-Taïeb, while Western sources used the term Cap Bon. The contemporary Arabic name is Watan al-Qibli.

The city of Nabeul itself carries a Greek name, Neapolis (meaning "new city"), which is the equivalent of the Phoenician name Carthage (also meaning "new city"). This linguistic parallel underscores the deep Greek-Punic interactions that characterized the region's early history.

KEY THEMES ACROSS MILLENNIA:

Agricultural Continuity: From Phoenician terraces to Roman estates to Arab irrigation to Italian market gardens to contemporary organic farms - Cap Bon has been farmed intensively for 3,000 years, each civilization building on predecessors' knowledge. Olive groves planted by Romans still produce.

Cultural Layering: Each civilization added ingredients, techniques, and dishes without fully erasing what came before. Modern Cap Bon cuisine has Berber, Phoenician, Roman, Arab, Andalusian, Turkish, Italian, and French influences - a palimpsest of flavors.
Mediterranean Connectivity: Cap Bon never existed in isolation. Its history is one of constant exchange - goods, people, ideas flowing across seas. The Mediterranean is a liquid highway, not a barrier.

Sicily-Tunisia Connection: The 140-kilometer strait is a connection, not a division. From Phoenician times through Arab Sicily to 20th-century Italian migration to contemporary exchange - the two shores remain in dialogue.
From Granary to Garden: Roman "Granary" becomes Islamic "Tunisia the Green" becomes contemporary agricultural powerhouse - the land's fertility constant across 2,000+ years.

Cap Bon's candidacy for World Region of Gastronomy 2028 is not creating something new but recognizing and celebrating continuity - a food culture shaped by millennia of exchange, adaptation, and creativity, now ready to share its story with the world.

SHAPED BY MANY LAYERS OF CIVILIZATION

Neapolis: The greek name that endures

Walk through modern Nabeul and you walk through a linguistic time capsule. The city's name derives directly from the ancient Greek "Neapolis" (Νεάπολις), meaning "new city"—one of the rare North African settlements to retain its Greek toponym across 2,500 years of history. This linguistic persistence hints at deeper continuities. Arabic speakers transformed it phonetically to "Nābul" (نابل), but the root remained recognizable, suggesting that despite dramatic political changes, the settlement maintained sufficient urban identity to carry its name forward.
Neapolis was founded by Greek colonists or Phoenicians adopting Greek naming conventions during the period of intense Greek-Punic interaction in the 6th-5th centuries BCE. The settlement occupied a strategic position on Cap Bon's northern coast, with natural harbors facilitating Mediterranean trade. While Carthage dominated the Punic world, Neapolis served as a prosperous secondary port, exporting agricultural goods across the Mediterranean.

A PALIMPSEST OF CULTURES

Cap Bon is a palimpsest—a manuscript written upon again and again, each new text partially erasing yet never fully obscuring what came before. Layer upon layer of human settlement has created a cultural landscape of extraordinary depth.

THE PHOENICIAN FOUNDATION

The Phoenicians established trading posts throughout the Mediterranean beginning in the 12th century BCE. Their greatest foundation, Carthage (814 BCE), lay just across the Gulf of Tunis from Cap Bon. The peninsula became part of Carthage's agricultural hinterland, supplying grain, olive oil, and wine to the growing city.

Phoenician agricultural techniques shaped Cap Bon's landscape in ways still visible today. They introduced or expanded olive cultivation, developing press technologies to extract oil for trade. They planted vineyards and created terraced fields on hillsides to maximize arable land. They developed sophisticated irrigation systems—cisterns, channels, and reservoirs—establishing patterns of water management that would be maintained by successive civilizations. Phoenician fish preservation techniques, particularly the production of garum (fermented fish sauce made from small fish and entrails), created an industry that would flourish for centuries. While garum production eventually ceased in the medieval period, the culture of preserving fish in salt is still practiced along Cap Bon's coasts.

ROMAN AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION

When Rome absorbed Carthaginian territories in 146 BCE, Cap Bon entered a new phase of agricultural intensification. Roman North Africa became the empire's breadbasket, and the fertile plains of Cap Bon produced vast quantities of durum wheat destined for Rome's populace.

Roman estates (villae) combined agricultural production with olive oil processing, wine-making, and food preservation. Archaeological excavations have revealed Roman-era mosaics depicting maritime scenes with fish and sea creatures, testifying to the settlement's continued relationship with the sea, and agricultural scenes, reminding us that even in ancient times, Cap Bon's identity combined maritime and agricultural vocations. These provide insight into the foods Romans prized: fish and seafood, game birds, fruits and vegetables, wine—recognizably the Mediterranean diet in its ancient form.

Preserving Layers: Digital Heritage in an Age of Climate Crisis

The archaeological sites that document Cap Bon's millennia of human occupation—Neapolis beneath modern Nabeul, the Punic ruins at Kerkouane, the Roman mosaics of Pupput—face accelerating threats from climate change, erosion, and time. A Tunisian-led initiative is racing to digitally document these vanishing traces before they disappear. Using accessible scanning technology, volunteers and researchers create high-resolution 3D models of mosaics, statues, and architectural remains, building a free online archive accessible to teachers, students, researchers, and the public worldwide. The project develops augmented and virtual reality experiences that allow users to place ancient mosaics in their own spaces or walk through reconstructed Roman villas, transforming heritage preservation from passive documentation into active engagement. Through partnerships with local and international institutions, training programs for Tunisian students, and a global volunteer network, this effort embodies a contemporary approach to the palimpsest—each generation adding its layer not through physical construction but through digital preservation, ensuring that even if physical sites succumb to floods, storms, and heat, their digital memory survives for future generations. The work represents urgent recognition that Cap Bon's layered civilizations—Phoenician, Roman, Byzantine, Arab, Ottoman—are heritage not only for Tunisia but for humanity, and that preserving these layers requires new technologies deployed with the same care and creativity that ancient builders applied to their original construction

THE ARAB-ISLAMIC TRANSFORMATION

The Arab conquest of North Africa, beginning in the 640s and culminating in the capture of Carthage in 698 CE, initiated the most profound transformation of Cap Bon's agricultural and culinary landscape since Roman times. Arabs and Arabized Berbers brought agricultural knowledge from the Middle East, Persia, India, and eventually al-Andalus (Islamic Spain). The introduction of citrus fruits revolutionized Cap Bon's agriculture and cuisine. Bitter oranges (naranj in Arabic) arrived first, valued for their aromatic peel and juice. Sweet oranges came later, probably in the 15th or 16th century. By the Ottoman period, Cap Bon had become a major citrus producer, its orange and lemon groves perfuming the air for kilometers. With citrus came the art of distillation. Arabic-speaking alchemists and physicians had perfected distillation technology for medicines and perfumes. Applied to orange blossoms, this technology produced "mā' zahar" (ماء زهر)—orange blossom water, used to flavour sweet and savory dishes and in ritual aspersions today.

Islamic culture brought experimentation and knowledge exchange across vast distances from which came many products now considered quintessentially Mediterranean: eggplants, artichokes, spinach, hard wheat varieties ideal for couscous, and a greatly expanded pharmacopoeia of herbs and spices.

The spice culture that defines Tunisian cuisine today—cumin, coriander, caraway, harissa peppers (arrived from the Americas but quickly adopted)—also reflects Arab-Islamic influences, often modified by local practice, as with the Tunisian spice blend "tabil" (coriander, caraway, garlic, chili pepper–though people often disagree on the recipe from one region or family to another). It is also from this period that one can trace couscous—hand-rolled semolina pellets steamed over aromatic stews—as the staple dish.

ANDALUSIAN REFINEMENT

The fall of al-Andalus to Christian reconquest stretched across centuries, culminating in 1492 with the conquest of Granada. Waves of Muslim and Jewish refugees fled to North Africa, bringing refined Andalusian knowledge, skills, and tastes. Tunisia received many of these refugees, particularly in the 13th and 15th-17th centuries.

Andalusian immigrants brought sophisticated agricultural techniques, particularly in irrigation and fruit cultivation, advanced knowledge of perfume production and distillation of aromatic waters, and refined pastry-making traditions. The use of almonds, honey, orange blossom water, and rose water in Tunisian sweets shows Andalusian influence. The concept of elaborate sweets for celebrations and hospitality—offering beautifully presented small pastries with mint tea or coffee—carries echoes of Andalusian courtly culture democratized and made popular.

EUROPEAN EXCHANGES: ITALIAN ROOTS IN TUNISIAN SOIL

The French Protectorate (1881-1956) imposed colonial rule but also connected Tunisia to French markets and technologies. French influence remained largely superficial compared to earlier cultural layers, affecting urban elites and certain industries more than daily food practices.

Italian influence, paradoxically, went deeper—especially in Cap Bon. Beginning in the late 19th century and accelerating in the early 20th century, Sicilian and other Italian agricultural workers migrated to Tunisia.

Many settled in Cap Bon, where the climate, soils, and crops resembled those of Sicily and southern Italy.

These Italian communities, numbering in the tens of thousands by the 1940s, transferred intensive market gardening techniques to Tunisia. They introduced or promoted Italian vegetable varieties—particular types of tomatoes, peppers, zucchini, eggplants. They brought expertise in viticulture and wine-making, helping establish commercial wineries. They operated small farms, applying the intensive cultivation methods of southern Italian agriculture to Cap Bon's receptive soils. Italian and Tunisian families lived as neighbors, worked the same land, celebrated harvests together. Sicilian grandmothers taught Tunisian neighbors to make pasta; Tunisian women shared couscous techniques with Italian families. Children played together in fields fragrant with orange blossoms.
Lamia Temimi's family story exemplifies this history. Her Sicilian ancestors arrived in Cap Bon in the early 20th century, part of the wave of Italian agricultural migration. They worked the land and became part of Cap Bon's social fabric. When Lamia's mother was a child, Italian and Tunisian children dodged pottery drying on Nabeul's sidewalks on their way to school—a detail that captures the everyday intermingling of communities and the centrality of craft to daily life. Most Italians left Tunisia around independence in 1956, but some families maintained connections. Decades later, Lamia returned to Cap Bon, closing a circle of migration, memory, and belonging.

Her decision to co-found Sawa Taste of Tunisia and to initiate Cap Bon's candidacy for World Region of Gastronomy represents a profound form of reciprocity. "The Cap Bon welcomed my Sicilian ancestors at the beginning of the last century, offering them some of the hardest yet most joyful years of their lives," she reflects. "Now, after a decade of living in the heart of this region, I feel it is my turn to give back, to honour the land, culture, and cuisine that shaped my mother's childhood."

This personal story illuminates larger truths about Cap Bon's identity. The peninsula has always been a place of arrivals and exchanges, where outsiders could become insiders, where different traditions could coexist and cross-pollinate. Each wave added to the cultural sediment, enriching the soil metaphorically as immigrants enriched it literally. Today, traces of the Italian presence persist in Cap Bon's agriculture—certain vegetable varieties, viticulture techniques, even turns of phrase in local dialect. More profoundly, the memory of Sicilian-Tunisian coexistence exemplifies the peninsula's vocation as a bridge between shores, a place where Mediterranean neighbors could collaborate despite political boundaries.

PART II

THE GASTRONOMY OF CAP BON

Agricultural abundance: the garden of tunisia

If Tunisia is "Tunis al-khadra"—Tunisia the Green—then Cap Bon is the emerald in that green crown. The peninsula's agricultural abundance has defined its identity since ancient times, when Roman ships carried Cap Bon's wheat and olive oil to feed the empire. Today, Cap Bon remains Tunisia's agricultural heartland, producing a disproportionate share of the country's citrus, table grapes, market vegetables, and wine.

Stand on Jebel Sidi Abderrahman in late winter and look down across the peninsula. In every direction, the land displays the geometry of cultivation: the dark green rectangles of orange groves, the lighter green of olive orchards marching up hillsides, the neat rows of vineyards awaiting spring's growth, the patchwork of market gardens where vegetables grow in succession from October through May. This is an anthropomorphized landscape, every hectare shaped by generations of farmers' labor.

AGRICULTURAL PROFILE OF CAP BON IN NUMBERS

Cap Bon's Nabeul Governorate encompasses 281,000 hectares, of which 260,000 hectares (4% of Tunisia's total cultivated land) are dedicated to agriculture, with an additional 61,000 hectares of forests and pastures.

Despite representing only 1.8% of Tunisia's total area, the governorate contributes an impressive 15% of national agricultural production, demonstrating the peninsula's exceptional fertility and agricultural expertise. The region supports approximately 36,000 agricultural holdings, with 72% smaller than 5 hectares, reflecting a predominantly small-scale family farming structure. The agricultural sector provides approximately 10 million working days annually, employing 21,900 farmers, 57,900 family helpers, and 4,500 permanent workers.

Water resources include 77 million cubic meters of storage capacity from 5 major dams, 35 hill dams, and 56 mountain lakes, alongside extensive groundwater resources, though current exploitation (254 million cubic meters) exceeds renewable resources (183 million cubic meters) by 138%, indicating significant water management challenges requiring urgent attention for agricultural sustainability.

The governorate's agricultural output is remarkably diverse and nationally significant. Cap Bon produces 73% of Tunisia's citrus fruits, 32% of tomatoes, 98% of strawberries, 37% of potatoes, 79% of table grapes, and 90% of condiments and spices—making it the undisputed national leader in these products.

Fruit tree production reached 436,123 tons in 2024, vegetable production 819,851 tons, and industrial crops (primarily grapes for wine) 315,480 tons. Key crops include oranges (with 7 distillation facilities processing orange blossoms), wine grapes (13 wine production facilities), olives (53 olive presses), tomatoes (14 processing plants), and the aromatic and spice plants that define Tunisian cuisine. The livestock sector maintains 30,000 cattle, 128,000 sheep, and 18,000 goats, supported by 19 milk collection centers and 4 dairy processing facilities. The 180-kilometer coastline supports a fishing fleet of 560 boats employing 2,570 workers across 4 ports, with annual catches of approximately 12,738 tons in 2024. This agricultural diversity is supported by processing infrastructure including 53 cold storage facilities, 18 packing and conditioning stations for export, and numerous transformation facilities, alongside 31 basic agricultural service cooperatives and 16 rural women's development groups (GDAs) with 350 women members, demonstrating the sector's organized collective approach to production and marketing.

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ORGANIC VS. CONVENTIONAL AGRICULTURE

The transition toward organic agriculture in Cap Bon reflects both market opportunities (European demand for organic produce) and environmental concerns about pesticide use, soil health, and water quality. Many small-scale farmers practice what might be called "de facto organic" agriculture—using few or no chemical inputs due to cost rather than certification—though they may not pursue formal organic certification due to administrative burdens and costs.

CITRUS FRUITS: THE FRAGRANT ORCHARDS

Drive along any rural road in Cap Bon between December and April and your journey is accompanied by fragrance. Orange trees in bloom release waves of perfume, almost intoxicating in intensity. Later, when fruit weighs down branches, the same trees present a visual feast: dark green leaves punctuated by orange globes catching sunlight.

Cap Bon is Tunisia's citrus capital.The region's Mediterranean climate, with winter rains and moderate temperatures, provides ideal conditions for citrus cultivation. The industry's roots go back centuries—citrus arrived with Arab-Islamic expansion, transforming North African agriculture—but commercial production expanded dramatically in the 20th century as urban markets grew and export opportunities emerged.

Sweet Oranges dominate production. Multiple varieties are cultivated, including Maltaise (Malta), the most common table orange, prized for its sweetness and juice content; Thomson Navel, an early-season variety; and Valencia Late, which extends the fresh orange season into May and June. Orange production peaks from December through March, flooding markets with affordable fresh fruit that becomes a staple of Tunisian winter diet.

Bitter Oranges (bigarade in French, naranj in Arabic) are cultivated not for eating fresh but for their blossoms and aromatic peel. The distillation of bitter orange blossoms to produce orange blossom water (mā' zahar) is a specialized industry concentrated in Nabeul and surrounding areas. During the brief flowering period in March and April, trucks loaded with white blossoms converge on distilleries, where traditional copper alembic stills extract the precious aromatic water used in Tunisian pastries, beverages, and perfumes. The annual Orange Blossom Festival (Nabeul, April) celebrates this heritage craft.

Lemons grow year-round in Cap Bon, providing fresh fruit for cooking and preserving. The practice of

preserving lemons in salt—a staple of North African cooking—turns surplus fruit into a condiment that adds complex, fermented citrus notes to tagines and stews. Preserved lemons in markets, their rinds softened and darkened by salt and time, represent both practical food preservation and culinary art.
Citrons and bergamot, less common than oranges and lemons, are valued for their aromatic oils. Candied citron peel appears in traditional pastries, while bergamot oil goes into perfumes and cosmetics.

GRAPES AND WINE: ANCIENT VINES, MODERN CHALLENGES

Today, Cap Bon concentrates much of Tunisia's wine production, particularly around Grombalia, which hosts several wineries. Both table grapes and wine grapes are cultivated across the peninsula's varied terroirs. Viticulture in Cap Bon predates written history. The Phoenicians cultivated vines and made wine, establishing traditions that the Romans would expand dramatically. North Africa became renowned for its wine production—Roman ships carried Cap Bon's vintages throughout the empire. The great Carthaginian agronomist Magon wrote what is considered one of the world's oldest viticultural treatises, his techniques so respected that Roman authors preserved fragments of his lost work.

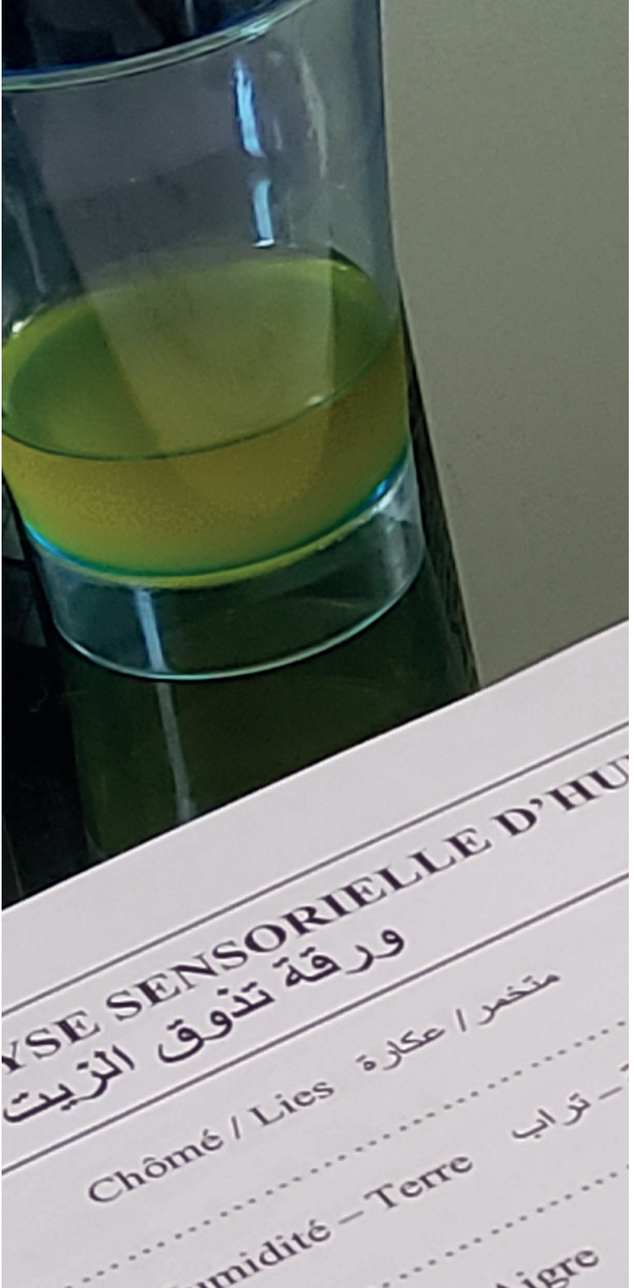
The vine itself persisted through the centuries following the Arab conquest, and grapes continued to be cultivated for fresh consumption and raisins, while the vine's aesthetic beauty became celebrated in Tunisian art. Grapevine motifs adorned faïence tiles, stucco work, and mosaics, the vine gracing gardens not for fermentation but for contemplation. When French colonists reimplanted commercial viticulture in the late 19th century, they were reawakening a dormant memory—rekindling a relationship between this land and this plant that stretched back millennia.

The Phylloxera Crisis and Tunisia's Viticultural Renaissance The catalyst for modern Tunisian wine production came from catastrophe elsewhere. In the late 19th century, phylloxera—a tiny aphid from America—devastated European vineyards. Within decades, French, Italian, and Spanish wine regions were decimated, plunging Europe into wine scarcity.

North Africa offered salvation. The climate, soils, and Mediterranean proximity made Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco ideal for replanting. Beginning in the 1880s, French colonization brought viticultural renaissance: thousands of hectares were planted, wineries constructed, and wines shipped to Marseille or Sète for blending with French production. Tunisia became a discreet but essential actor in reconstituting European vineyards.

Tunisia's modern wine story thus roots itself in this paradoxical period—born from a foreign crisis yet reviving an agricultural heritage thousands of years old. After independence in 1956, wine production underwent profound transformations: departure of French settlers, shifts in agricultural policy, decline of export markets, and reduction of planted acreage.
Today, however, a new chapter is being written. Contemporary Tunisian vignerons are producing wines of terroir and seeking international recognition. The current generation is reshaping the conversation, presenting wine not as colonial imposition but as legitimate agricultural heritage and contemporary craft. As Cap Bon positions itself as a World Region of Gastronomy, wine can be acknowledged as one thread in the peninsula's rich agricultural tapestry, connecting ancient Carthaginian vineyards to French colonial plantations to contemporary quality-focused production, part of the complex story of a peninsula where continents, cultures, and millennia meet at the table.

Wine production employs both international varieties introduced during the colonial period—Carignan, Cinsault, Grenache, Syrah, Chardonnay—and adaptations to Tunisian conditions.
Wines range from basic table wines to increasingly ambitious quality production as a new generation of Tunisian vignerons works to restore dignity and meaning to this heritage.
The Route du Magon wine route links viticulture to cultural heritage and gastronomy. The route's name honors Magon, whose lost viticultural treatise was considered the ancient world's definitive work on vine cultivation—a reminder that wine knowledge in this land predates Rome itself.



OLIVES AND OLIVE OIL: LIQUID GOLD
The olive tree is perhaps the most iconic Mediterranean plant, and Cap Bon has cultivated olives for at least 2,800 years. Today, olive groves cover extensive areas, particularly on hillsides and in zones too dry for more water-demanding crops.

Multiple olive varieties are cultivated in Cap Bon, including Chetoui (a native Tunisian variety prized for its oil), Chemlali (producing smaller fruits but adapted to drier conditions), and others. Some groves are ancient, with gnarled trees hundreds of years old. Others are recent plantings, part of agricultural development projects. Most olive cultivation is rain-fed (non-irrigated), relying on winter rains and the olive tree's deep roots and drought tolerance.

Tunisian olive oil, including Cap Bon's production, has gained international recognition for quality. Tunisia is one of the world's largest olive oil exporters, though much is sold in bulk to European countries (especially Italy and Spain) where it is blended and bottled, often losing its Tunisian identity. A key challenge is building Tunisia's brand identity in olive oil markets, moving from commodity supplier to recognized quality origin.

Olive oil is central to Cap Bon's cuisine and identity. It's used lavishly—not as a luxury but as a necessity. The famous Tunisian salad mechouia (grilled peppers and tomatoes, mashed and dressed with olive oil, garlic, and spices) swims in oil. Couscous is drizzled with oil. Fish is fried or grilled with oil. Bread is dipped in oil. This generous use reflects both abundance and nutritional wisdom—olive oil is the healthiest fat, central to the Mediterranean diet's benefits.

MARKET GARDEN VEGETABLES: THE DAILY HARVEST
Cap Bon feeds Tunisia. The peninsula's market gardens supply a vast array of vegetables to local markets, to Tunis and other cities, and increasingly for export.

The mild Mediterranean climate enables year-round production with careful variety selection and planting schedules. Cool-season crops (artichokes, fava beans, peas, lettuce, turnips, radishes) grow through winter and spring. Warm-season crops (tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, zucchini, cucumbers, melons) dominate summer and fall. With protection (greenhouses, tunnels), even more intensive production is possible. Two of the most iconic vegetables of the region are tomatoes and peppers.
Tomatoes are among the most important crops economically. Multiple varieties are grown, from large beefsteak types for slicing to Roma-type paste tomatoes to cherry tomatoes. Both conventional and organic production occur. Tomatoes go fresh to markets, to processing plants for canned tomatoes and tomato paste (essential for Tunisian cooking), and for sun-drying (sun-dried tomatoes preserved in olive oil are a traditional preparation experiencing renewed interest).

Peppers of all types—sweet bell peppers, long sweet peppers, and crucially, hot chili peppers for harissa—are major crops. The chili varieties used for harissa include both North African types and others introduced from the Americas and adapted to local conditions. Pepper production peaks in late summer, when the harissa-making season begins.
Other important vegetables include eggplants (essential for many dishes), zucchini, cucumbers, fava beans (both fresh and dried), chickpeas, various beans, turnips (eaten fresh and pickled), carrots, onions, garlic, and leafy greens. This diversity reflects the Mediterranean agricultural pattern: not monoculture but polyculture, not specialization but variety. Most farms grow multiple crops in succession and simultaneously, spreading risk and matching crops to microclimates and seasons.

The Italian influence on Cap Bon's market gardening persists. Italian farmers in the early 20th century brought intensive cultivation techniques—close planting, succession cropping, composting, careful water management—that increased yields. They introduced or popularized certain vegetable varieties. Today's market gardeners, whether or not aware of this history, benefit from the knowledge transfer that occurred when Sicilian and Tunisian farmers worked side by side in these same fields.

Market gardening supports extensive employment. Planting, weeding, harvesting, and packing are labor-intensive. While mechanization has advanced (tractors for plowing, mechanical transplanters, drip irrigation systems), much work remains manual. Family labor predominates on small farms, while larger operations employ wage workers. Women play crucial roles, particularly in harvesting and packing tasks requiring dexterity and care.

The vegetable sector faces challenges similar to other Cap Bon agriculture: water scarcity, pest pressures, market price volatility, and the need to balance productivity with environmental sustainability. Yet vegetables remain profitable for small-scale farmers with access to water and markets, and vegetable farming provides livelihoods for thousands of families.

AROMATIC AND MEDICINAL PLANTS: PERFUMING THE WORLD

Cap Bon's agricultural abundance extends beyond food to include aromatic and medicinal plants cultivated for essential oils, perfumes, and traditional medicine. The region has become Tunisia's center for geranium cultivation, whose leaves yield geranium oil (pelargonium oil) used in perfumery.

Geraniums (Pelargonium species) grow well in Cap Bon's climate. The plants are cultivated in fields, harvested multiple times per year, and distilled to extract aromatic oil. Tunisian geranium oil supplies international perfume houses, particularly in Grasse, France (the traditional center of European perfume production). This trade connects Cap Bon farmers to global luxury markets, with their crop appearing ultimately in high-end fragrances sold worldwide.

Orange blossom water and rose water production, as mentioned earlier, uses distillation technology to capture floral essences. Beyond geraniums, oranges, and roses, various aromatic plants are cultivated or wild-harvested: jasmine, rosemary, thyme, lavender, sage, and others. Some are used in cooking (thyme, rosemary), others in traditional medicine, others for export.

The Orange Blossom Festival (Nabeul, April) celebrates this heritage industry. During the festivals, visitors can observe traditional distillation processes, learn about aromatic plants, purchase products, and experience the sensory richness of Cap Bon's floral economy.

Traditional medicine in Tunisia makes use of local plants. Herbalists (attarin) sell dried herbs, flowers, roots, and prepared remedies in souqs. Knowledge of plant properties—which cure digestive issues, calm anxiety, treat colds, improve skin, etc—passes informally through families and formally through herbalist apprenticeship. While modern pharmaceutical medicine dominates, traditional plant-based remedies remain popular, particularly for minor ailments and preventive care.

The aromatic plant sector represents a niche but links the region to global markets in interesting ways while maintaining traditional knowledge and practices. It also offers potential for value-added production: essential oils, hydrosols (aromatic waters), dried herb mixtures, and natural cosmetics could be branded as Cap Bon products, capturing more value locally.

The mediterranean and its bounty: fishing traditions

Cap Bon's identity is inseparable from the sea. With coastline along three bodies of water—the Gulf of Tunis, the Strait of Sicily, and the Gulf of Hammamet—the peninsula has sustained fishing communities for millennia. Fish and seafood are not luxury foods in Cap Bon but daily staples, as fundamental to local diet as bread and olive oil. The peninsula's tri-maritime geography creates distinct fishing zones: the relatively protected Gulf of Tunis coast (northwest) favors small-scale artisanal fishing; the exposed Strait of Sicily coast (northeast and east) hosts deeper-water and pelagic species, with Kelibia as Cap Bon's most important fishing port; and the curving Gulf of Hammamet coast (south and southeast) supports both artisanal fishing and limited aquaculture. This geographic diversity means Cap Bon's fishers access varied fish populations and employ diverse methods—from small boats using hand lines near shore to larger vessels using purse seines or longlines in deeper waters.

TUNA: THE RED GOLD OF CAP BON

No fish holds greater historical, economic, and cultural significance in Cap Bon than tuna. For centuries, bluefin tuna (Thunnus thynnus) migrating through Mediterranean waters sustained coastal communities and created distinctive fishing traditions.The traditional fishing method, called mattanza in Italian or hargala in Arabic, involved elaborate fixed net systems that channeled migrating tuna into progressively smaller enclosures. When tuna concentrated in the final chamber, fishermen hauled nets while chanting rhythmic work songs, bringing the massive fish aboard in a coordinated effort requiring strength, skill, and precise timing.Communities like Sidi Daoud on Cap Bon's coast became centers of tuna fishing culture. The season—late spring when tuna migrate—structured the fishing calendar and social life.

OTHER KEY SPECIES

Beyond tuna, Cap Bon's waters yield Mediterranean abundance: small pelagic fish (sardines, anchovies, mackerel) that school in large numbers and provide affordable protein; demersal fish (sea bream, sea bass, grouper, sole, red mullet) prized for their delicate flesh; cephalopods (octopus, squid, cuttlefish) featured prominently in Tunisian cooking; and crustaceans (shrimp, prawns) commanding premium prices. The daily fish auction at Kelibia before dawn is a point of connection between sea and consumer that ensures freshness and builds relationships between fishing families and their customers.

Fishing boats return with the night's catch, fish are sorted by species and quality, and sold by rapid-fire auction. Tunisia's fish markets in general are atmospheric and at times theatrical spectacles well worth taking in.

CRISIS AND ADAPTATION: THE HUMAN COST

Today, decades of overfishing, particularly by industrial fleets using spotter planes and massive purse seines, have decimated stocks of Tuna. The same is true of other species: habitat destruction from bottom trawling and coastal development, pollution from inadequately treated sewage and agricultural runoff, and climate change altering water temperatures and fish distribution had led to declining catches, smaller fish, and fewer large predator species. For Cap Bon's fishing communities, the tuna decline represents both ecological tragedy and economic catastrophe. The tonnare —elaborate fixed installations requiring maintenance and coordination—have been abandoned.

The economic pressure on fishing communities has driven some to desperate measures. Unable to sustain livelihoods from fishing alone, some boat owners have become involved in the dangerous and illegal business of transporting migrants attempting to cross the Mediterranean from North Africa to Europe.

The irony is profound and tragic: in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, ecological pressures and poverty drove migration in the opposite direction, with Sicilian agricultural workers (including Lamia Temimi's ancestors) crossing the same waters southward to Tunisia in search of better lives. Now, a century later, similar forces of environmental degradation and economic desperation reverse the flow, with North Africans risking death attempting the northward passage.

This grim reality underscores the urgency of sustainable fishing practices and alternative livelihoods. As a World Region of Gastronomy, Cap Bon may be able to address these challenges in some modest ways, for example developing fish-tourism (taking tourists on fishing trips) and promoting sustainable seafood choices and seasonality.

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HARISSA: THE CONDIMENT THAT CONQUERED THE WORLD

If one product could symbolize Cap Bon's gastronomic identity and global reach, it would be harissa. This fiery red paste of chili peppers, garlic, olive oil, and spices has journeyed from North African kitchens to international supermarket shelves, from home-made staple to exported specialty product, from anonymous condiment to branded cultural ambassador.

Harissa's story begins with the Columbian Exchange. Chili peppers (Capsicum species) are native to the Americas and unknown in the Old World before 1492. Spanish and Portuguese explorers brought peppers back to Europe, and from there they spread rapidly across Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. By the 17th or 18th century, peppers had reached North Africa and been enthusiastically adopted into local cuisine.

Tunisians transformed the imported pepper into something distinctly their own. The word "harissa" (هريس) comes from the Arabic root "h-r-s" meaning to pound or crush, referring to the traditional preparation method: pounding peppers, garlic, and spices together in a mortar. The basic recipe is simple—hot peppers, garlic, olive oil, salt, and spices (typically cumin, coriander, caraway)—but the proportions, the pepper varieties chosen, the quality of olive oil, and the preparation technique create infinite variations.

TRADITIONAL PRODUCTION METHODS

Traditional harissa-making follows seasonal rhythms. In late summer and early autumn, when peppers ripen to red, families purchase kilograms of fresh peppers—both moderately hot varieties and extremely hot ones—to make harissa for the year ahead. The peppers are washed, stemmed, and often left in the sun briefly to concentrate flavors. Then comes the labor-intensive process:

First, peppers are ground or pounded, traditionally in a large stone mortar (mehraz) using a heavy pestle. This work, often performed by women, requires strength and endurance. As peppers break down, garlic cloves (peeled) are added and pounded into the mixture. Then come spices: cumin seeds, coriander seeds, caraway seeds, toasted to release their aromatics before grinding. Some recipes add dried hot peppers for extra heat, tomato paste for color and body, or preserved lemon for complexity.

Once the paste reaches the desired consistency—thick enough to hold its shape but spreadable—olive oil is incorporated, both mixed into the paste and floated on top to seal it from air. Salt, added throughout, acts as preservative. The harissa is packed into jars or ceramic pots, covered with a layer of olive oil, sealed, and stored in a cool place. Properly made, harissa keeps for months, improving as flavors meld. This home production continues in many households, especially rural families, but has been largely supplemented or replaced by commercially produced harissa. Small-scale artisanal producers and large industrial operations now make harissa, employing mechanical grinders and standardized recipes but often maintaining quality and flavor.
The Harissa Industry: From Kitchen to Export
Cap Bon, and particularly the Nabeul area, has become Tunisia's center for commercial harissa production. Dozens of producers range from family operations making a few hundred kilograms annually to factories producing tons.

The growth of Tunisia's harissa exports over the past two decades represents a remarkable success story. Tunisian harissa now appears in supermarkets across Europe, North America, and the Middle East. Brand names like "Le Phénicien," "Sicam," "Ferrero," and others have built recognition. Harissa has moved from ethnic specialty stores to mainstream grocery aisles, driven by growing consumer interest in spicy, flavorful condiments and North African cuisine.

HARISSA IN CUISINE AND CULTURE

Harissa is ubiquitous in Tunisian cooking and eating. It appears at virtually every meal, offered in small dishes alongside bread or as a condiment to accompany couscous, grilled meats, fish, sandwiches, and stews. Many dishes incorporate harissa into their preparation—mixed into marinades for grilled meats, stirred into tomato sauces, added to soups and stews for heat and depth.

The paste's versatility stems from its balanced complexity. It's not merely hot but aromatic, with garlic pungency, cumin earthiness, coriander's citrus notes, and olive oil's richness moderating the pepper's fire. Good harissa enhances rather than overwhelms, adding layers of flavor while waking up the palate.
Beyond cuisine, harissa carries cultural meaning. Making harissa together—mothers and daughters, neighbors, friends—is a social ritual marking the change of seasons. The labor of pounding peppers becomes an occasion for conversation, storytelling, and transmission of knowledge. When families share their homemade harissa, they share not just a condiment but the care and effort embedded in its making.

The Harissa Festival represents an opportunity to celebrate Cap Bon's most iconic product, educate visitors about traditional and modern production methods, support local producers, and position harissa as a protected and valued element of Tunisian gastronomic heritage. The festival is currently mostly a local event, but has the potential to serve multiple functions: economic (promoting sales and exports), educational (teaching about ingredients, production, uses), cultural (celebrating food traditions and community), and touristic (attracting visitors to Cap Bon and raising the region's profile).
Successful food festivals worldwide—from Italy's white truffle festivals to Mexico's mole festivals—demonstrate how celebrating a signature ingredient can build regional identity, drive tourism, and create economic opportunities. Cap Bon's Harissa Festival has the potential to become a major event in Tunisia's cultural calendar and an international draw for food enthusiasts.

FLORAL WATERS AND ESSENTIAL OILS: DISTILLING BEAUTY

The distillation of aromatic waters from orange blossoms is one of Cap Bon's most distinctive and culturally significant culinary practices, connecting agriculture, artisanal craft, culinary tradition, and even cosmetics and perfume.

Orange Blossom Water: Liquid Fragrance
Each spring, typically in March and April, bitter orange trees (bigaradiers) throughout Cap Bon burst into bloom. For a few short weeks, the air fills with intense, sweet fragrance. This is the season when distillers work nearly around the clock, processing mountains of white blossoms into "mā' zahar" (ماء زهر)—orange blossom water.
The process is ancient, based on distillation technology perfected in the medieval Islamic world. Fresh blossoms, picked by hand, are brought to distilleries—some

traditional operations using copper alembic stills heated over wood fires, others more modern facilities with steam-heated stainless steel equipment.

The blossoms are placed in the still with water. As heat is applied, steam passes through the flowers, capturing their volatile aromatic compounds. The steam then travels through a cooling coil (often immersed in cold water), where it condenses back into liquid. The resulting distillate is orange blossom water—clear, intensely fragrant, and essential to Tunisian pastry-making and beyond.

Beyond the hydrosol (aromatic water), the distillation process can produce essential oil (neroli oil, named after an Italian princess who used it as perfume). The oil floats atop the distillate and can be separated. Neroli is one of perfumery's most precious essential oils, used in high-end fragrances. Some Cap Bon distilleries produce neroli for export to the global perfume industry, connecting local orange groves to luxury brands in Paris, New York, and beyond.

Orange blossom water appears throughout Tunisian cuisine and culture:

- In pastries: Most Tunisian sweets—makroud, baklava, zlebia, yo-yo biscuits, kaak warqa—are perfumed with orange blossom water, often in both the dough and the sugar syrup that soaks them.
- In beverages: A few drops transform water or milk into a refreshing, fragrant drink. During Ramadan, orange blossom water appears in many iftar beverages.
- In savory dishes: Some tagines and stews include a touch of orange blossom water, adding subtle floral notes.
- In ceremonies: Wedding rituals sometimes involve sprinkling orange blossom water for purification and blessing.
- In cosmetics: Orange blossom water serves as a toner and facial cleanser in traditional beauty routines.

Rose Water and Other Distillates

While orange blossom water dominates, Cap Bon also produces rose water (mā' ward, ماء ورد) from fragrant rose varieties. Rose water is used similarly to orange blossom water but has a different aromatic profile—floral but less sweet, slightly astringent. It appears in some pastries, beverages, and traditional remedies.

Other aromatic distillations include geranium water (from pelargonium leaves) and potentially others from local herbs. These products serve niche markets but contribute to Cap Bon's reputation for aromatic products.

BEEKEEPING

Beekeeping occurs throughout Cap Bon, with bees foraging on citrus blossoms, wild herbs, and various flowering plants. Tunisian honey varies by season and location—citrus blossom honey is pale and delicately flavored; thyme or mixed wildflower honey is darker and more robust. Honey is consumed daily (with bread and butter for breakfast, in pastries, as a sweetener for beverages) and used in traditional remedies. Supporting beekeeping serves multiple purposes: honey production, pollination services for agriculture (essential for many crops), biodiversity (healthy bee populations indicate healthy ecosystems), and education (bees as ambassadors for environmental awareness).

A group of young entrepreneurs from Cap Bon is demonstrating how this traditional practice can be valorized through innovation, bridging beekeeping heritage with contemporary biotechnology. Launched in 2023, their venture specializes in the ethical and sustainable extraction of pure bee venom for use in cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, and natural therapies. Rather than displacing traditional beekeepers, they partner with local apiarists throughout the region, providing training and advanced extraction technology that allows them to diversify income while maintaining healthy hives.

This approach exemplifies how Cap Bon's agricultural heritage can generate new value streams without replacing traditional practices—transforming a byproduct of beekeeping into a high-value ingredient for international markets. Bee venom, long recognized in traditional medicine for its anti-inflammatory and therapeutic properties, now finds applications in modern skincare and pharmaceutical research, positioning Cap Bon's beekeepers at the intersection of ancient knowledge and contemporary science while creating economic opportunities for a new generation committed to both innovation and sustainability.

Culinary heritage

Cap Bon's cuisine draws on centuries of accumulated knowledge, cultural exchange, and creative adaptation. While "Tunisian cuisine" exists as a national category, regional variations reflect local ingredients, microcultures, and histories. Cap Bon's proximity to the sea, agricultural abundance, and position at Mediterranean crossroads shape its distinctive culinary character.

THE COUSCOUS TRADITION

It is sometimes said that the definition of the Maghreb is "the countries where couscous is eaten." This preparation of hand-rolled semolina granules steamed over aromatic broth and served with vegetables, meat, and sometimes fish unites the Maghreb (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and parts of Mauritania, as well as possibly the berber oasis of Siwa in Egypt) in shared culinary identity. In 2020, couscous was inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity as a shared heritage of Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, and Mauritania—recognition of both the dish's cultural significance and the knowledge required to produce it.

Traditional couscous-making begins with durum wheat semolina—coarse grains of wheat. The semolina is spread in a large, wide dish (preferably earthenware or wood). Water (sometimes salted, sometimes with a little oil) is sprinkled lightly over the semolina while hands work through it, rolling small amounts between the palms to form tiny pellets. This process—rolling, sprinkling, rolling again—gradually creates couscous grains of relatively uniform size.

The skill lies in moisture control (too dry and grains won't form; too wet and they clump), hand motion (a particular rolling technique passed from generation to generation), and patience (the process takes time). Experienced makers can produce fine, medium, or coarse couscous by adjusting technique.

Once formed, couscous is spread to dry partially, then cooked by steaming. The traditional vessel is a couscoussier—a pot with a perforated upper section (steamer) sitting atop a lower pot where broth or stew simmers. As the liquid boils, steam rises through the perforations and cooks the couscous grains, infusing them with aromatic vapors. The couscous is steamed, removed, broken up (to prevent clumping), oiled or buttered, then steamed again. Multiple steamings create light, fluffy grains.

While many Tunisian families now buy pre-rolled dried couscous (a time-saver), the knowledge of hand-rolling persists, particularly in rural areas and for special occasions.

COUSCOUS VARIATIONS IN CAP BON

Typically, Tunisian couscous is prepared with tomato sauce (unlike in Morocco and Algeria), but in the Cap Bon one often finds "white couscous" (without tomato sauce). Reflecting coastal identity, Tunisia is the only country where couscous is frequently prepared with fish, features chunks of firm white fish (grouper, sea bass) or mixed seafood steamed with vegetables and spices. Most Tunisian couscous recipes are savoury, however the Cap Bon is one of the country's regions where raisins and almonds can be found in the dish.

ICONIC DISHES OF THE CAP BON

COUSCOUS ABYAD (COUSCOUS BLANC/ WHITE COUSCOUS)

Arabic: الكسكسي الأبيض ***(al-kuskusi al-abyad)***

White couscous breaks with Tunisia's typical tomato-based couscous preparations, creating a dish whose pale golden color—tinted with saffron and perfumed with rose petals—marks it as ceremonial rather than everyday. The dish allows the subtle aromatics of shush al-ward (rose petal powder, شوش الورد), ma' al-zhar (orange blossom water, ماء الزهر), and saffron to define its character, combining savory and sweet elements: chickpeas and meat alongside almonds, raisins, and hard-boiled eggs, topped with decorative bonbons that signal celebration. This is couscous as both nourishment and symbol, its whiteness marking transitions—harvests, marriages, mourning—rather than ordinary meals.

Three distinct occasions demand couscous abyad in Cap Bon, each named for its context. Couscous al-Khamsa'shar Mayo (كسكسي الخامس عشر مايو, "Couscous of the Fifteenth of May") celebrates the cereal harvest's beginning on May 14th, when families traditionally fed their harvest workers with couscous made from the season's first grain. Today, families throughout Cap Bon prepare it on this date, serving each child their portion in a mithrid (مثرد)—a raised ceremonial plate that young men traditionally offer their brides-to-be alongside jewelry as part of marriage negotiations. Qassat Hilal (قصة هلال , literally "story/tale of the crescent") refers to the white couscous prepared by the bride's family for the Islamic marriage contract signing, featuring exactly 100 hard-boiled eggs and 100 pieces of meat, with the imam invited to recite the Fatiha and neighbors welcomed to share the meal. Finally, on the third day after a death, families prepare couscous abyad as part of mourning rituals, the dish's pale color and aromatic delicacy expressing both sorrow and continuity, feeding the living while honoring the departed.

ASSIDA BEL KHAROUB (CAROB ASSIDA)

Arabic: عصيدة بالخروب ***('asida bil-kharroub)***

Assida occupies a sacred place in Tunisian ritual life, a sweet porridge served at moments of transition and blessing—births, circumcisions, weddings, religious celebrations, and gatherings during Ramadan and Eid. The dish's significance extends beyond nourishment to become an offering of abundance and goodwill, prepared by women and shared communally as an expression of joy, gratitude, or welcome. While Tunisia's most iconic assida is 'asida zgougou (عصيدة الزقوقو), made from the ground seeds of Aleppo pine cones and sold by street vendors during Mouled celebrations, Hammamet's distinctive version substitutes locally abundant carob for the more common grain or pine seed base.

Hammamet's carob groves once supplied not only this ceremonial dish but also bsissa (بسيسة), the ancient North African preparation of toasted grain or legume (wheat, barley, sorghum, chickpea, or lentil) ground to powder

with spices (coriander, anise, fennel, caraway) and combined with olive oil and honey or sugar. Mixed to thick consistency, bsissa forms balls eaten as portable nourishment by travelers, shepherds, and workers; thinned, it becomes a spread for bread or a porridge-like preparation. Both assida and bsissa represent pre-industrial food wisdom—shelf-stable, energy-dense, made from stored ingredients—yet remain vital in contemporary Cap Bon, prepared for ritual occasions and everyday sustenance alike. Hammamet's historic carob and charcoal market connected these traditions to commerce, both products harvested from the surrounding forests. Notably, vendors refer to charcoal as al-biadh (الأبيض , "the white") rather than pronounce the word "black," a linguistic practice reflecting regional beliefs about the power of words to influence fortune—a reminder that even markets are spaces where material exchange and cultural meaning intertwine.

OSBANE SHAYIH (DRIED OSBANE SAUSAGE)

Arabic: **أصبان شاي *(osbane shayih)***

Osbane represents Tunisian cuisine's commitment to wholeness—the principle that nothing from a slaughtered animal should be wasted. Throughout Tunisia, osbane takes the form of sheep or lamb intestines stuffed with a mixture of organ meats (liver, heart, lungs), rice or bulgur, chickpeas, herbs (parsley,

cilantro), and spices, then either cooked fresh or dried for preservation. Cap Bon's osbane shayih—dried osbane—embodies an older food economy where refrigeration didn't exist and where meat's scarcity demanded ingenious methods to extend its presence across seasons and meals. These small, dark sausages undergo complete desiccation, transforming organ meats that would spoil within days into a shelf-stable ingredient lasting months. When added to a pot of grains, vegetables, and broth, dried osbane releases its concentrated, intensely salty and pungent essence—breaking open to distribute its contents throughout the dish, flavoring the entire preparation with the memory of meat without requiring that each diner receive an individual portion.
This is cuisine born of parsimony elevated to art, reflecting values of a modest, resourceful, and communal food culture. A single dried osbane can transform a large pot of humble ingredients—wheat, vegetables, pulses—into something substantial and satisfying, allowing families to taste meat's richness even when fresh meat remained beyond daily reach. The dish demands sharing; there is no individual serving of meat but rather collective participation in its flavor, a culinary expression of mutual dependence and equitable distribution. Not everyone appreciates osbane shayih's assertive character—its flavor can overwhelm palates accustomed to milder preparations—yet Hammamet's cultural guardians, women who preserve the city's culinary heritage and traditional needlework techniques, present it proudly as one of their signature dishes. Their insistence that visitors taste it reflects attachment to local food traditions and has a ritualistic component: your tasting of a local dish and appreciation of it marks your initiation into a community of taste with local contours.

SWEETS AND PASTRIES

Tunisian pastry-making reflects layers of influence—Berber, Arab, Andalusian, Ottoman, French—melded into distinctive forms. Cap Bon participates in this broader Tunisian sweet tradition while maintaining local specialties and production centers, particularly in Nabeul. Jewish Tunisian pastry traditions: Tunisia's Jewish community, present for over two millennia and numbering over 100,000 before most emigrated after 1956, contributed significantly to Tunisian food culture. Certain pastries and preparations have Jewish origins or associations, though cultural exchange makes attribution complex. The Jewish Tunisian diaspora maintains connections to Tunisian culinary traditions, and some efforts exist to document and preserve Jewish Tunisian recipes as part of shared heritage.

THE CULINARY CALENDAR: FESTIVALS AND CELEBRATIONS

Differing dates, following the Islamic calendar
Nights of Sulayman for Andalusian Maqamat (February, during Ramadan) - Sulayman Traditional Andalusian music performances celebrating Cap Bon's musical heritage during the holy month.

Sugar Bride Festival (coinciding with Islamic New Year) - Nabeul, Traditional celebration marking the new year with sweets and festivities.

MARCH-APRIL

Spring Outing Festival (March) - El Mida (Jebel Sidi Abderrahman), Celebration of spring's arrival in the mountain regions.

Orange Blossom Festival (April) - Nabeul, Celebrating the brief but intense orange blossom harvest and distillation season.

Heritage Month Celebrations (April-May) - Throughout the governorate, All cultural institutions participate in celebrating local heritage and traditions.

MAY

Mat-Making Craft Days (May) - Nabeul, Showcasing traditional hassira (mat) weaving techniques and artisans.

Couscous of the Fifteenth of May (May 14) - Throughout Cap Bon, Families prepare white couscous to celebrate the beginning of the cereal harvest.

JUNE

Al-Saf Festival (June) - El Haouaria, Celebrating local traditions in this coastal fishing community.

JULY-AUGUST

Ouessou Boukarim Festival (July) Boukarim, Local summer cultural celebration.

Hammamet International Festival (July-August) - Hammamet (North), Major international arts and culture festival attracting regional and international performers.

Summer in the City Festival (July-August) - Hammamet (South), Summer cultural programming for residents and visitors.

Nabeul International Festival (July-August) - Nabeul, International cultural performances and events in the governorate capital.

Orange Blossom and Jasmine Festival (August) - Hammamet (North), Celebrating Cap Bon's signature aromatic flowers and distillation heritage.

Mousiqat Festival (August) - Nabeul, Music festival showcasing diverse musical traditions.

Young Writers National Festival (August) - Kelibia, Platform for emerging Tunisian literary voices.

Amateur Filmmakers International Festival (August) - Kelibia, International competition for non-professional cinema.

Zine Essafi Festival for Committed Song (August) - Kelibia, Festival of socially engaged music and performance.

Grape Festival (August) - Grombali,a Celebrating the grape harvest in Cap Bon's viticulture capital.

Beach Festival (August) - Korba, Summer coastal celebration.

Pepper Festival (August) - Menzel Horr, Celebrating the chili pepper harvest essential for harissa production.

Emigrant Festival (August) - El Mida, Welcoming back diaspora members during summer return season.

Maghrebi Cultural Festival (August) - Oudhna Regional, celebration of North African cultural exchange.

Sea Festival (August) - Sulayman, Celebrating maritime traditions and fishing culture.

Korbous Colors Festival (August) - Korbous, Arts and culture festival in this coastal thermal town.
Zaouia Jdidi Festival (August) - Zaouia Jdidi, Local summer cultural celebration.

Sidi Ahmed ben Boubaker Festival of Popular Poetry and Horsemanship (August) - Oum Dhouil, Traditional poetry recitation and equestrian displays.

Chrifat Cultural Festival (August) - Chrifat, Local cultural programming.

Qrounda Boucharray Festival (August) - Boucharray, Village summer celebration.

Summer Festival of Mehadhba-Kharrouba (August) - Mehadhba, Local festivities celebrating community traditions.

Note: Many festivals concentrate in August when diaspora Tunisians return home and coastal tourism peaks, creating intense cultural programming throughout the peninsula.

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER

Ciné-étoiles International Short Film Festival (September) - Nabeul-Hammamet, International short film competition.

Harissa Festival (October) - Nabeul, Major celebration of Cap Bon's signature condiment during harvest season.
"Through Their Eyes" International

Women's Film Festival (October) - Nabeul, International film festival showcasing women filmmakers and perspectives.

"Marhaba" International School Theater Festival (October) - Korba, International youth theater performances and exchange.

Stone Carving Days (October) - Dar Chaabane, Celebrating traditional stone carving craftsmanship.

Maghrebi Amateur Theater Festival (October) - Nabeul, North African theater competition and performances.

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER

National Visual Arts Salon (November) Nabeul, Exhibition and competition for Tunisian visual artists.
Neapolis International Children's Theater Festival (December) - Nabeul, International festival of theater for young audiences.

PART III

ARTISANAL CRAFTS AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

Pottery: the art of earth and fire

If harissa represents Cap Bon's culinary identity in content, then pottery represents it in container. The two are inseparable—harissa stored in ceramic jars, couscous steamed in earthenware couscoussiers, tagines baked in pottery dishes. Nabeul pottery is not merely decorative craft but functional art intimately connected to food culture.

NABEUL AS POTTERY CAPITAL

Nabeul has been a pottery center for centuries, possibly millennia. Archaeological evidence suggests ceramic production during Roman times, and the tradition has continued through successive civilizations. Suitable clay deposits, abundant fuel, access to markets, and accumulated generational knowledge made Nabeul Tunisia's pottery capital.

By the early 20th century, Nabeul's main avenue and surrounding lanes hosted dozens of pottery workshops and showrooms. The pottery trade created its own urban rhythms. Fresh-thrown pots needed to dry before firing. Without modern facilities, potters placed vessels outdoors—sidewalks became vast drying racks lined with bowls, plates, jars, and tajines waiting for sun and air to remove moisture.

Children navigating these sidewalks on their way to school threaded carefully between drying pottery, avoiding knocking over the day's production. This childhood memory, shared by many Nabeul residents, captures a moment when craft and daily life were completely intertwined. One such child was the man who would later become president of the Sauvegarde de Nabeul association dedicated to preserving heritage. His memory of dodging pottery en route to school is not merely personal nostalgia but a window into a time when artisanal production structured urban space and social life.

POTTERY AND GASTRONOMY: VESSELS THAT SHAPE CUISINE

Nabeul potters produce vessels specifically designed for Tunisian cooking, and these forms actively shape how food is prepared and experienced:

Tajine dishes: Wide, shallow earthenware dishes with conical or domed lids for baking Tunisian tajine (the egg dish, not Moroccan stew). Clay conducts heat gently and evenly, preventing burning while developing a golden crust. The porous earthenware absorbs and releases moisture differently than metal, affecting texture and flavor subtly but distinctly.

COUSCOUSSIERS: Two-part clay vessels where the bottom pot holds stew and the perforated upper pot steams couscous. While metal couscoussiers now dominate for convenience, clay versions are valued for their traditional aesthetic and the subtle flavor they impart—an earthy quality that metal cannot replicate.

Storage jars: Large lidded jars for storing olive oil, preserved lemons, harissa, and dried goods. Clay's porosity allows minimal air exchange, beneficial for certain preserved foods. The cool earthenware keeps contents at stable temperature.

Serving dishes: Handmade pottery plates, bowls, and platters for presenting meals connect diners to place and craft. Eating from pottery shaped by local hands using local clay creates intimacy with the landscape itself.

This functional pottery shapes cuisine directly. Cooking in clay differs fundamentally from metal or glass—heat distribution, moisture retention, and subtle flavor effects vary. A tajine baked in authentic earthenware tastes subtly different from one made in a metal pan. Couscous steamed in clay develops character distinct from metal-steamed grain. The vessel is not passive container but active participant in cooking, another ingredient shaping the final dish.

TRADITIONAL TECHNIQUES MEET CONTEMPORARY MARKETS

The potter's wheel remains central. Skilled throwers shape vessels in minutes, hands moving with practiced precision—centering clay, opening the form, pulling up walls, shaping the rim. After forming, vessels dry to leather-hard stage when handles or decorative elements are added, then to bone-dry greenware ready for bisque firing.

Beyond functional ware, Nabeul produces decorative pottery for tourist markets. This provides income but sometimes at cost to quality and authenticity—pressure to produce cheap souvenirs can undermine craftsmanship.

Yet tourism also creates opportunities when visitors seeking authentic, high-quality pottery support artisans maintaining traditional techniques.

CHALLENGES AND SUSTAINABILITY

Nabeul pottery faces multiple 21st-century challenges: competition from cheap industrial ceramics undercuts prices; younger Tunisians increasingly choose other careers over physically demanding, modestly compensated pottery work; environmental concerns around clay extraction and kiln fuel consumption; and market fragmentation with potters working individually lacking collective marketing power.

Supporting Nabeul pottery means creating markets for quality handmade ceramics (restaurants and hotels using local pottery; export opportunities), educational programs introducing pottery to children and tourists, documentation of techniques before master potters retire, fair-trade certification or geographic indication protecting "Nabeul pottery," design collaborations bringing contemporary aesthetics to traditional craft, and integration into gastronomy tourism through workshops combined with cooking classes and market visits.

As a World Region of Gastronomy, Cap Bon can champion pottery as inseparable from food culture, ensuring that the vessels in which food is cooked, served, and stored receive recognition and support equal to the food itself. The clay that shapes the tajine and the hands that throw the couscoussier are as essential to Cap Bon's gastronomic identity as the harissa and couscous they hold.

Weaving: mats, curtains, and textile traditions

Beyond pottery, Cap Bon maintains weaving traditions producing utilitarian and decorative textiles for domestic use, particularly mats and curtains woven from natural fibers. Traditional Tunisian mats (hassira,) are woven from esparto grass (halfa), reeds, or palm fronds, serving multiple functions: floor covering (especially in summer when cool natural fibers are more comfortable than carpets), prayer mats, sleeping mats, and decorative wall hangings. Fibers are harvested, dried, sometimes dyed with natural or synthetic colors, then woven on simple floor looms or through hand-plaiting techniques, creating geometric patterns—stripes, diamonds, zigzags—in contrasting colors. While mat-making has declined with availability of cheap industrial floor coverings, the craft persists.

Cap Bon's textile heritage extends to passementerie—the art of creating decorative trimmings, tassels, fringes, braids, and tiebacks that ornament curtains, upholstery, and ceremonial costumes. This craft, practiced by Tunisian Jewish artisans since the 19th century, had virtually disappeared after many Jewish craftspeople left Tunisia following World War II, forcing merchants to import inferior-quality trimmings from Syria, Turkey, and Egypt. The craft's remarkable return to Cap Bon came through serendipity when Leila Boufaied, then a financial director seeking independence from corporate constraints, encountered a Belgian passementerie couple without heirs who worried about their knowledge disappearing.

After negotiating their equipment purchase and securing their agreement to spend a year in Tunisia transferring their expertise, Boufaied established Tunisia's only passementerie workshop in Korba in the family's unused ancestral home. The location proved strategic—rural Korba provided willing workers, particularly young women whose conservative families refused to send them to secondary school in Nabeul but welcomed factory employment close to home. Starting with 12 workers, the workshop grew to 60 as demand expanded from local markets to significant Libyan exports and eventually luxury commissions for French museum restorations and palace furnishings. Passementerie demands multiple specialized skills: color matching threads to client fabrics, preparing warps, creating twisted cords of various colors, weaving braids with embroidered borders, placing individual strands onto fringes, and meticulously assembling these elements into elaborate tiebacks. Quality control occurs at each stage, ensuring durability and excellence. Weaving connects to food culture through domestic space: the homes where food is prepared, served, and consumed are furnished with these woven textiles. The aesthetic environment of eating—sitting on mats, leaning against woven cushions, with natural fiber curtains and passementerie-adorned drapery filtering light—shapes the sensory experience of meals. Preserving weaving traditions requires creating markets, documenting techniques, training new artisans (as Korba's passementerie demonstrates is possible even for nearly-extinct crafts), and integrating workshops into broader cultural tourism offerings alongside pottery and cooking experiences.

Other artisanal traditions

Cap Bon's craft landscape extends beyond pottery and weaving to include various artisanal traditions, some directly connected to food, others part of the broader material culture that contextualizes gastronomy.

BASKETRY: Basket-making from palm fronds, reeds, or esparto grass produces containers for carrying produce from field to market, storing dried goods, and serving bread. Traditional bread baskets—wide, shallow, with intricate geometric weaving—are both functional and beautiful.

WOODWORK: Olive wood, abundant in Tunisia, is prized for its beautiful grain and durability. Olive wood spoons, cutting boards, and serving pieces are both functional and attractive, often finished only with olive oil—creating a pleasing circularity: olive trees providing wood, finished with oil from olive fruit. It is worth noting that olive trees are more valuable standing than as wood, and the wood used in this way is part of the natural renewal of groves, never contributing to their permanent removal.

ARTISAN COOPERATIVES AND WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT: Many of Cap Bon's artisanal traditions are maintained through cooperatives, particularly women's cooperatives.

These organizations provide collective production facilities, marketing support, quality standards, training, fair compensation, and social support. Supporting these cooperatives—especially through gastronomy tourism where visitors purchase pottery, textiles, and preserved foods directly from producers—directly benefits women's economic empowerment and family

Groupements de développement agricole: cooperative platforms for local development

Tunisia's Groupements de Développement Agricole (GDA - Agricultural Development Groups) are public-interest organizations that bring together landowners and resource users, charged by the state with managing certain natural resources including irrigation systems, forests, and pastures. GDAs are governed by a council of administration elected by members, with technical staff employed to manage operations and finances. Beyond resource management, GDAs have expanded their mandate to include involving members in local development, promoting agricultural cooperatives, providing technical training, improving livestock systems, and facilitating cooperation with national and international agricultural organizations. The GDA structure aligns with principles of social and solidarity economy, pursuing equity, equal opportunities, and collective profitability through participatory and inclusive approaches.

Women's GDAs have become particularly important vehicles for rural women's economic empowerment and social inclusion. In Tunisia, rural women play a crucial role in the agricultural sector and food production, yet remain often excluded from the market economy. Women's GDAs produce diverse products including hand-rolled couscous, bsissa, spices, artisanal soap, preserved foods, pottery, textiles, and dairy products like artisanal cheese. Challenges persist: limited access to finance, weak governance structures, insufficient technical and administrative skills among members, and limited market access for selling products. Nevertheless, women's GDAs represent critical platforms for collective action, skill development, and economic autonomy in Cap Bon, and offer interesting opportunities for inclusion in gastronomy and cultural tourism, particularly on the experiential level.

PART VI

CAP BON TODAY TOURISM, SUSTAINABILITY, AND INNOVATION: FROM MASS TO MEANING

THE MASS TOURISM MODEL: ACHIEVEMENTS AND LIMITATIONS

Tunisia's modern tourism industry began in the 1960s but expanded dramatically in the 1970s-1990s, with Cap Bon—particularly Hammamet—at the center of this growth. The model leveraged Tunisia's proximity to Europe (2-3 hour flights from major cities), Mediterranean beaches, abundant sunshine, and competitive costs to attract mass-market package tourists primarily from France, Germany, Italy, and Britain.

Hammamet transformed from a small fishing village with a beautiful 15th-century medina into a major resort destination. By the 2000s, the coastal strip had become one continuous hotel zone, with sprawling all-inclusive properties offering 500-1000 rooms stretching for kilometers. This brought substantial benefits: employment for thousands, foreign currency earnings, infrastructure development, and regional income that made tourism Tunisia's second-largest foreign currency earner.

However, this growth model carried significant limitations. Many hotels operated on an all-inclusive basis where guests paid fixed prices covering accommodation, meals, drinks, and entertainment. This convenience meant tourists rarely left hotel grounds. Buffet meals featured international cuisine with token "Tunisian nights" once weekly, and local restaurants, artisans, and food producers saw minimal benefit as tourist money concentrated within hotel companies, many foreign-owned or managed.

Price competition positioned Tunisia as an affordable alternative to Spain, Greece, or Turkey, creating a cost-cutting cycle: lower wages, less staff training, cheaper ingredients, reduced maintenance. Package tourists arrived by charter flight, transferred directly to hotels, spent a week on beach loungers, perhaps took one or two organized excursions, then flew home—experiencing Tunisia as sun, sea, and carefully packaged glimpses of "exotic" culture without encountering the peninsula's rich living traditions.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL PRESSURES

Rapid coastal development occurred with insufficient environmental planning, creating pressures that now demand urgent attention.

Beach erosion affects stretches of coastline, particularly where natural dune systems were removed for construction. Water consumption by hotels strains limited freshwater resources during peak summer months when agricultural needs are also highest. Inadequate sewage treatment infrastructure in some areas contributes to coastal water quality concerns, particularly during tourist season when volumes increase dramatically.

Solid waste management presents ongoing challenges, with seasonal surges in waste generation overwhelming collection and disposal systems. The concentration of tourism development on narrow coastal strips creates intense localized environmental stress while leaving inland areas underdeveloped and unable to benefit from tourism revenues. Marine ecosystems face pressure from increased boat traffic, beach activities, and waste, affecting the very assets—clear water, healthy beaches—that attract visitors.

These environmental pressures interact with social dynamics. When tourists and local communities don't interact meaningfully beyond transactional encounters with hotel staff and souvenir vendors, mutual understanding is impossible. The economic model concentrates benefits among relatively few stakeholders while the environmental costs are borne by entire communities.

THE REPUTATION CHALLENGE

This tourism model shaped how many Europeans perceived Tunisia—as a cheap beach destination rather than a place of deep culture, history, or gastronomy. Just as Spain's Costa del Sol developed a reputation that obscured Spanish cultural diversity and richness, Tunisia became seen as a budget option rather than a distinctive destination.

For too many European tourists, "Tunisian food" means the buffet couscous served at their hotel: lukewarm, bland, with anonymous vegetables and overcooked meat—to authentic Tunisian couscous what frozen pizza is to Neapolitan pizza. The parallel to Mexican food in North America is instructive: decades of fast-food representations created perceptions of Mexican food as cheap and uninspired. It took deliberate efforts—chefs promoting regional cuisines, UNESCO recognition, high-end restaurants showcasing culinary artistry—to shift perceptions. Tunisia faces the same challenge.

THE MISSED OPPORTUNITY

Cap Bon possesses extraordinary gastronomic and cultural assets largely invisible to most tourists: Nabeul's pottery workshops and weekly market (not just the souq), artisan harissa producers, orange blossom distilleries operating during the brief March-April season, family farms producing organic vegetables and citrus, fishing harbors with morning auctions, traditional family meals, and festivals celebrating local products.

This represents a missed opportunity on multiple levels. Economically, the all-inclusive model concentrates income in the hotel sector while small producers, artisans, restaurants, and guides see limited benefit. More distributed tourism—where visitors spend widely across the local economy—would provide broader prosperity and a more resilient economic base. Environmentally, concentrating tourism on narrow coastal strips creates intense localized pressure while leaving other regions undeveloped and unable to share benefits. Culturally, limited meaningful interaction between tourists and communities impoverishes both.

As long as Tunisia's tourism identity remains "cheap beaches," it cannot compete with destinations commanding premium prices through successfully communicated cultural depth and authentic experiences. A tourism model based on low prices and high volumes remains vulnerable to economic competition and external shocks, while diversifying toward higher-value, culturally-focused tourism creates resilience.

REGENERATIVE TOURISM: BUILDING ON EXISTING FOUNDATIONS

Regenerative tourism—cultural tourism, ecotourism, experiential gastronomy tourism—focuses on authentic cultural engagement, environmental responsibility, small-scale operations, and direct interaction between visitors and local communities. It attracts travelers seeking meaning, discovery, and connection rather than passive consumption.

In Cap Bon, regenerative tourism remains marginal despite obvious potential and despite existing pioneers proving demand exists. A few farms offer accommodations or visits. Cooking classes, market tours, and food-focused itineraries exist but remain limited and poorly marketed. Pottery workshops and artisan centers could systematically receive visitors for demonstrations and hands-on experiences.

Cap Bon's varied landscapes, birdwatching opportunities along Mediterranean migration routes, and coastal-mountain hiking potential remain largely undeveloped for tourism.

Several barriers require addressing: infrastructure gaps (many potential destinations lack facilities like bathrooms, parking, signage), language limitations (many small operators speak little English or other foreign languages), marketing capacity (small operators lack resources for international promotion), coordination challenges (without networks connecting operators, creating multi-day itineraries is difficult), quality variation (without credible standards, visitors risk disappointment), and regulatory frameworks that may create bureaucratic obstacles for agritourism, cooking classes, and craft workshops.

Yet success stories exist. Individual talented chefs offer cooking classes, passionate pottery masters welcome apprentices, knowledgeable guides create custom itineraries. These pioneers demonstrate what's possible; the challenge is scaling and systematizing without destroying authenticity.

A NEW VISION: TOURISM THAT NOURISHES PEOPLE AND PLACE

Cap Bon's candidacy for World Region of Gastronomy 2028 represents a framework for tourism transformation—redirecting how the region welcomes and engages visitors while addressing environmental and social challenges.

From Commodity to Experience: Instead of interchangeable beach holidays, Cap Bon offers distinctive experiences impossible to replicate elsewhere: making couscous with a Tunisian family, harvesting olives and watching them pressed into oil, learning harissa-making from artisan producers, joining fishers at dawn then cooking the catch, exploring souqs with chefs shopping for ingredients, dining in family homes.

From Passive to Active: Visitors become active participants—learning, doing, creating, connecting. This aligns with global tourism trends where travelers increasingly seek transformation, not just transaction.

From Resort Bubble to Community Integration: Hospitality distributed across communities—small hotels and guesthouses in villages, farm stays, homestays, meals in family restaurants—brings tourism income directly to local families while reducing pressure on coastal zones.

From Cheap to Valued: Shifting from competing solely on price to competing on value—unique experiences, quality, authenticity, meaning. Visitors willing to pay more for authentic experiences benefit themselves through richer encounters while hosts receive better compensation for sharing culture.

From Volume to Discernment: Not maximizing tourist numbers but attracting culturally engaged, food-interested, environmentally aware travelers. Smaller numbers of such visitors, staying longer and spending more locally, can generate equal or greater economic benefit with less environmental and social stress.

Environmental Integration: Gastronomy tourism inherently supports environmental goals. Promoting local food reduces transportation emissions and water footprints from imported ingredients.

Celebrating traditional agriculture encourages preservation of agricultural biodiversity and traditional crop varieties. Connecting tourists to farms and fishing communities creates stakeholders invested in sustainable resource management. Extending tourism beyond summer beach season reduces seasonal pressure on coastal ecosystems while providing year-round income stability for communities.

MODELS AND WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

Cap Bon need not invent transformation from scratch. Sicily faced similar challenges—mass coastal tourism obscuring rich culture—yet deliberate efforts promoting agritourism, wine tourism, and Sicilian cuisine (including European Region of Gastronomy recognition) diversified tourism and improved reputation. Visitors now come specifically for food experiences alongside beach holidays.

Oaxaca, Mexico successfully positioned itself as a cultural and culinary heart, attracting travelers interested in traditional foods and authentic experiences. This brought prosperity while presenting lessons about managing tourism growth and preventing over-commercialization that Cap Bon should heed.

By 2030, successful transformation would show: a growing visitor segment coming specifically for food and culture, staying longer and traveling beyond coastal hotels; networks of approved agritourism operations, bookable cooking schools and tours; measurable increases in small business income and women's cooperative revenues; Cap Bon chefs and producers earning recognition; reduced seasonality as cultural tourism extends beyond summer; community pride with young people learning pottery, harissa-making, couscous preparation; and balanced development where coastal tourism continues while diversified, distributed tourism creates broader prosperity and resilience.

CAP BON'S HISTORIC POSITIONING

Cap Bon's candidacy represents historic milestones: the first African region to receive World Region of Gastronomy recognition, challenging Euro-centric geography of "Mediterranean" concepts and asserting Africa's place in global gastronomy conversations; the second Arabic-speaking region following Aseer in Saudi Arabia, demonstrating IGCAT's commitment to geographical and cultural diversity; and an ideal bridge builder whose position—Mediterranean and African, Arab and connected to Europe, ancient and modern, multilingual and Francophone—facilitates dialogue between European, Middle Eastern, and African regions within the Platform.

PART V

OUR VISION FOR 2028 FOCUS AREAS AND INITIATIVES

OUR CONCEPT: THE SHAKSHOUKA PENINSULA

Shakshouka (شكشوكة)—eggs poached in spiced tomato-pepper sauce, cooked communally in one pan—serves as our organizing metaphor. The word itself is onomatopoeic, evoking the shaking and mixing that creates harmony from diverse ingredients. Like this dish made from Cap Bon's own produce (tomatoes, peppers, onions, harissa), our peninsula's identity emerges from distinct cultural elements blended across millennia, each traceable yet inseparable, contributing its character to a unified whole that is recognizably Mediterranean, proudly African, and distinctly itself.

Geography as Shakshouka: Cap Bon is literally a meeting point—a peninsula extending into the sea, surrounded by water on three sides, reaching toward Sicily and Europe while rooted in Tunisia and Africa. This geography has shaped everything: the crops that grow, the fish that are caught, the people who have arrived and mixed, the ideas that have circulated, the cuisines that have evolved. Like ingredients in a shakshouka pan, these elements have been heated together over millennia of exchange.

The Table as Common Ground: Across differences of language, religion, ethnicity, and history, people meet at the table. Food is universal while every cuisine is particular. Sharing meals bridges divides, creates understanding, builds relationships. The table is where strangers become guests, where guests become friends, where commerce becomes community, where bread is broken.

Exchange Not Separation: The Mediterranean has too often been imagined as a border between North and South, between "Europe" and "Africa," between "us" and "them." Historically, the exact opposite was true: the sea was a liquid highway connecting shores, facilitating exchange. Cap Bon's history embodies this connectivity. Our cuisine carries the traces of these exchanges: Roman wheat and olive techniques, Arab spices and distillation, Andalusian sweets, Italian vegetables—all shaken together into something distinctively Tunisian.

Expanding "Mediterranean Cuisine": When people think "Mediterranean cuisine," they typically envision Italy, Greece, Spain, southern France—the northern shore. Tunisia, despite being geographically Mediterranean and sharing many ingredients (olive oil, wheat, vegetables, fish), is often excluded from this mental map. Our candidacy asserts: Tunisia IS Mediterranean. Tunisian cuisine IS Mediterranean cuisine. The southern shore's contributions must be recognized as integral to understanding the Mediterranean as a culinary region.

African Identity: Yet Cap Bon is not merely Mediterranean—it is African. The peninsula's connections to Saharan trade routes, its position as part of the African continent, its role in African history are equally essential to identity. World Region of Gastronomy recognition would make Cap Bon a voice for African gastronomy on a global stage—representing a continent whose culinary diversity and richness remain underappreciated internationally.

From Division to Dialogue: In an era of rising nationalism and "clash of civilizations" rhetoric, Cap Bon's candidacy offers a counter-narrative: cultures strengthen by exchange, not isolation; diversity enriches rather than threatens; the mixing of traditions creates vitality. Our shakshouka of influences proves this—it is complex and delicious precisely because of its diverse elements.

2028 Vision: By 2028, we envision Cap Bon as an internationally recognized gastronomic destination where visitors come specifically to experience Tunisian food culture in its homeland, where

"Mediterranean cuisine" naturally includes Tunisia, where African gastronomy receives deserved global attention, where local farmers, fishers, artisans, and chefs benefit economically from food tourism, and where young Tunisians see futures in gastronomy, agriculture, and artisanal crafts. This is why gastronomy matters. Food is never just food—it's history, culture, environment, economy, identity, and future.

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Regional Stakeholder Committee

Cap Bon's candidacy is built on cross-sectoral collaboration. The Regional Stakeholder Committee brings together public, private, third sector, and educational institutions in recognition that sustainable gastronomic development requires all sectors working in concert.

Founding Members (Executive Board):

1. Sawa Taste of Tunisia (Private Sector) - Co-founder Lamia Temimi initiated Cap Bon's candidacy, bringing expertise in food tourism, culinary heritage, and international marketing.
2. National Tourism Board (Public Sector) - Provides tourism development expertise, national coordination, and links to broader national tourism strategy.
3. Association Tunisienne de la Protection de la Nature et de l'Environement (ATPNE) (Third Sector) - President Imen Rabah ensures sustainability principles guide development, representing civil society and environmental concerns with focus on Korba and peninsula-wide protection. ATPNE's ongoing environmental strategy work in Cap Bon—including marine protection initiatives at fishing ports, school gardens programs, community greening campaigns, and climate resilience planning—provides essential expertise for ensuring gastronomy tourism development serves rather than stresses environmental goals.
4. Institut de Formation dans les Métiers du Tourisme de Nabeul (Education/Knowledge Sector) - Provides educational expertise, workforce development, and capacity for research and evaluation. The institute's role includes integrating gastronomy and sustainability into tourism training curricula, conducting visitor satisfaction surveys, and evaluating program outcomes.

These four institutions signed the Protocol Agreement with IGCAT in June 2025, committing Cap Bon to Platform membership.

Stakeholder Expansion Process (2025-2026)

During preparation years, the Regional Stakeholder Committee will expand significantly through systematic engagement:

Sectoral Recruitment: Working groups will form around key themes (agriculture and fishing, artisans and crafts, restaurants and hospitality, cultural heritage, education, environment). Each working

group will recruit members from their sector, including:

- ***Agriculture and Fishing:*** Farmers' cooperatives, GDAs (Groupements de Développement Agricole), fishing cooperatives, organic agriculture associations, beekeepers' networks, seed savers
- ***Artisans and Crafts:*** Pottery cooperatives (particularly Nabeul potters), harissa producers, orange blossom distillers, weavers, food processors, the Association Tunisienne de l'Art Culinaire Professionnel (ATPAC - professional chefs' association)
- ***Restaurants and Hospitality:*** Hotel and restaurant associations, classified touristic restaurants, family-owned establishments, catering services, cafés
- ***Cultural Heritage:*** Association pour la Sauvegarde de la Ville de Nabeul (ASVN - safeguarding Nabeul's heritage), festival organizers (Harissa Festival, Orange Blossom Festival, etc.), cultural centers, museums
- ***Education:*** Schools, university Faculty of Economic Sciences and Management, training centers, culinary schools, youth organizations
- ***Environment:*** Municipal environmental offices, water management authorities, coastal protection agencies, waste management services
- ***Public Administration:*** Municipalities of Nabeul, Hammamet, Kelibia, Korba, and other delegations; Ministry of Agriculture representatives; Ministry of Environment representatives

Inclusive Outreach: Special attention will be given to recruiting diverse stakeholders including women-led organizations and GDAs, youth groups, rural communities, and underrepresented

populations to ensure benefits and participation reach broadly across Cap Bon society.

Quarterly Stakeholder Assemblies: Beginning in 2025, regular gatherings will bring together the full committee to review progress, discuss challenges, approve major decisions, and ensure transparency and shared ownership. These assemblies will be the democratic foundation of Cap Bon's gastronomy development.

Executive Management
An Executive Manager and small coordinating team will be appointed by mid-2026 to lead daily operations, coordinate stakeholder activities, manage the budget, represent Cap Bon at Platform meetings, and serve as primary contact with IGCAT. The Executive Manager must speak English, French and Arabic, understand IGCAT's principles, and effectively coordinate diverse stakeholders. Lamia Temimi is the likely candidate given her initiative in launching the candidacy, multilingual capacity, deep knowledge of Cap Bon, and personal commitment to the region.

LAMIA TEMIMI: FOUNDER AND VISION

As co-founder of Sawa Taste of Tunisia and initiator of Cap Bon's World Region of Gastronomy candidacy, Lamia Temimi embodies the bridge-building spirit central to Cap Bon's identity.
Her Sicilian ancestors arrived in Cap Bon in the early 20th century, part of the Italian agricultural migration that brought expertise and established deep roots in Tunisian soil. Growing up hearing stories of her mother's childhood in Cap Bon, Lamia absorbed a dual heritage—Sicilian and Tunisian, Mediterranean and African, Italian and Arab.
After years abroad, she returned to Cap Bon, feeling a profound call to give back to the land that shaped her family. "The Cap Bon welcomed my Sicilian ancestors at the beginning of the last century, offering them some of the hardest yet most joyful years of their lives," she reflects. "Now, after a decade of living in the heart of this region, I feel it is my turn to give back, to honour the land, culture, and cuisine that shaped my mother's childhood."

Through Sawa Taste of Tunisia, Lamia has worked to connect visitors to authentic food experiences, artisan producers, and culinary heritage. Her initiative to pursue World Region of Gastronomy recognition emerged from seeing Cap Bon's potential—the extraordinary food culture, the talented producers and artisans, the rich agricultural landscape—and recognizing that these assets deserved international recognition and the development framework that Platform membership provides.
Lamia's personal story illuminates larger truths about Cap Bon: that this is a place of welcome, where newcomers can become family, where different cultures enrich rather than threaten each other, where food builds bridges across seas and generations. Her Sicilian-Tunisian heritage makes her an ideal voice for Cap Bon's message: the Shakshouka Peninsula, a place where continents meet at the table.

THE SIX FOCUS AREAS: PARTICIPATORY PLANNING PROCESS

Rather than prescribing detailed programs at this stage, Cap Bon will undertake a participatory planning process during 2025-2026 to develop specific initiatives across IGCAT's six focus areas. This approach ensures programs respond to genuine local needs and opportunities while building stakeholder ownership.

Planning Methodology

Thematic Working Groups: For each focus area, a working group comprising relevant stakeholders will be formed. For example, the "Feeding the Planet" group might include farmers, GDAs, seed savers, beekeepers, ATPNE, and agricultural researchers; the "Education" group might include teachers, Institut de Formation dans les Métiers du Tourisme, nutritionists, and youth organizations.

Needs Assessment: Each working group will conduct consultations to identify Cap Bon's specific challenges and opportunities related to their focus area. What are the real barriers to biodiversity protection? What do young people need to pursue careers in gastronomy? What prevents tourists from experiencing authentic food culture? How can gastronomy tourism support rather than stress environmental systems?

Program Design: Based on needs assessment, working groups will design 3-5 flagship initiatives per focus area, developing clear objectives, activities, timelines, budgets, and success indicators. Programs should be concrete, achievable, and aligned with local realities rather than imported models.

Priority Setting: Given finite resources, stakeholders will collectively prioritize initiatives, selecting those with greatest potential impact, feasibility, and alignment with the "Shakshouka Peninsula" vision.

Focus Area Themes

A. Feeding the Planet: Cap Bon will implement the IGCAT Food Commitment, a set of principles recognizing food as vital cultural heritage that empowers communities, protects biodiversity, and fosters sustainable development through gastronomy. This regional commitment framework guides long-term strategy using food, culture, and tourism as drivers for transformation. Through this commitment, Cap Bon will focus on: protecting agricultural biodiversity (traditional crop varieties like white couscous wheat, heritage citrus varieties, bee populations), reducing food waste in restaurants and hotels, documenting traditional farming knowledge, supporting organic agriculture expansion, improving water management, establishing seed banks, creating farm-to-table networks linking producers directly to restaurants and hotels, and reducing reliance on imported ingredients with high water and carbon footprints while strengthening local food security.

B. Innovation, Creativity, and Job Opportunities: Cap Bon will leverage IGCAT Platform initiatives including the World Food Gift Challenge (enabling craftspeople and producers to develop distinctive Cap Bon food gifts with authentic packaging for international markets) and Top Foodie Websites (providing entrepreneurs with platforms to develop and present food experiences for international visitors). Additional priorities include: supporting small producers in branding and market access through unified quality labels for products like harissa and orange blossom water, fostering youth entrepreneurship in food sectors through training programs and startup incubators, promoting innovation in traditional products (like the «el food lab» model reviving historical recipes), supporting women's economic empowerment through food enterprises and GDAs, creating gastronomic routes connecting multiple producers and experiences, establishing quality certifications for gastronomy tourism experiences, developing new food tourism products that showcase heritage while meeting contemporary traveler expectations, and training artisans in traceability systems so their products can be marketed to quality-focused restaurants and export markets.

C. Educating for the Future: Integrating food and agriculture education into schools through programs combining environmental education (school gardens as ATPNE already implements) with culinary heritage education, improving school meal quality with local ingredients through farm-to-school programs, providing culinary arts training that includes both traditional techniques and contemporary innovation, promoting nutrition and healthy eating based on traditional Mediterranean diet patterns, supporting professional development for food sector workers including chefs, guides, and hospitality staff, training tourism guides specifically on gastronomy heritage, educating catering services students about sustainability and local heritage through site visits to markets and farms, creating a food heritage knowledge hub where professionals discuss sector issues and share innovations, developing educational materials about Cap Bon's food culture for use in schools and with tourists.

D. Balanced and Sustainable Tourism:Cap Bon will encourage the development of audiovisual works that tell Cap Bon's food stories to reach global audiences and build the region's gastronomic profile, for example through participation in the Food Film Menu International Competition. The consortium will also focus on: developing gastronomic tourism routes and experiences that distribute benefits beyond coastal hotels (Nabeul market tours, rural farm visits, artisan workshop tours), extending tourist season through food-focused offerings (harvest festivals, cooking classes, off-season culinary tours), distributing tourism benefits to rural areas through agritourism development and improved rural infrastructure, implementing sustainable tourism practices that reduce environmental pressure (promoting off-season travel, encouraging longer stays with deeper engagement, developing cycling routes, eliminating single-use plastics in food service), integrating gastronomy tourism with existing environmental protection initiatives, ensuring tourist food consumption emphasizes local products to reduce imports and transportation impacts, and managing tourism growth to prevent over-commercialization and environmental stress.

E. Linking Urban and Rural: Strengthening connections between urban consumers (e.g. hotels and restaurants in Hammamet and Nabeul) and rural producers through establishing a farm-to-table coordinating institution, developing agritourism opportunities that allow visitors

to urban areas to experience agricultural production firsthand and come into contact with direct marketing channels such as producer cooperatives, creating opportunities for urban youth to learn about food production, ensuring rural communities benefit economically from their role in producing the foods that define Cap Bon's gastronomy identity, facilitating knowledge exchange between farmers and culinary professionals. We are particularly enthusiastic about encouraging young chefs to become ambassadors for local food and crafts, including participation in the first MENA Young Chef Awards.

F. Well-being and Healthier Living: Promoting Mediterranean diet and traditional Tunisian eating patterns (emphasizing the health benefits of olive oil, whole grains, vegetables, fish, moderate meat consumption), reducing single-use plastics in food systems through working with restaurants, hotels, and markets to adopt sustainable alternatives, preserving medicinal plant knowledge through documentation and integration into wellness tourism offerings, encouraging physical activity through food culture (walking food tours, cycling routes connecting food sites, hiking to agricultural areas), strengthening community bonds through shared meals and participatory food events, addressing food waste through education campaigns and connecting hotels/restaurants with organizations that can redistribute excess food, promoting local street food traditions like hindi (prickly pear) as healthy snacks, supporting initiatives like thermal spa tourism in Korbous that combine wellness with gastronomy, ensuring tourism development enhances rather than disrupts community wellbeing and social cohesion.

TIMELINE

2025: Working groups form, conduct needs assessment, develop program proposals

Early 2026: Stakeholder assembly reviews and prioritizes proposals, approves program portfolio

2026-2027: Implement priority programs, pilot test approaches, refine based on experience

2028: Showcase successful programs during Award year, demonstrate Cap Bon's model

2029+: Evaluate outcomes, institutionalize successful programs, share learnings with Platform This participatory approach ensures programs are locally relevant, stakeholder-owned, and sustainable beyond the Award year.

CROSS-PLATFORM COLLABORATION

Cap Bon commits to active participation in IGCAT Platform initiatives, recognizing that collaboration with other awarded and candidate regions worldwide provides invaluable learning opportunities and international visibility.

Platform Projects: Cap Bon will participate in the Young Chef Award (establishing regional competition to identify promising culinary talent who can champion both tradition and innovation), World Food Gift Challenge (developing distinctive Cap Bon food gifts with authentic packaging for international markets—harissa, orange blossom water, pottery vessels filled with local products), Food Film Menu (commissioning or identifying Tunisian films featuring Cap Bon's food culture, documenting artisan traditions, family food practices), and Top Websites for Foodie Travelers (creating comprehensive gastronomy tourism website with booking capabilities, producer profiles, seasonal calendars, cultural context).

Knowledge Exchange: Cap Bon will actively engage with other Platform regions for mutual learning, building special relationships with Sicily (given historical and ongoing Sicilian-Tunisian connections, potential for joint marketing as Mediterranean neighbors with intertwined histories), Aseer in Saudi Arabia (as fellow Arabic-speaking region facing similar challenges of developing gastronomy tourism in contexts where traditional hospitality occurs primarily in homes rather than restaurants), and future African regions joining the Platform (positioning Cap Bon as bridge-builder and mentor). Staff and stakeholder exchanges, joint marketing initiatives, and thematic working groups on shared challenges will facilitate peer learning.

Regional Partnerships: Beyond the Platform, Cap Bon will explore formal partnerships with other Mediterranean, Arab, and African regions through sister city arrangements, university twinning, producer organization exchanges, and chef collaborations.

SUSTAINABILITY AND LEGACY

The World Region of Gastronomy Award is not an endpoint but a catalyst for long-term transformation. Cap Bon's vision extends beyond 2028 to ensure lasting benefits.

Phased Approach: The 2025-2026 preparation years focus on stakeholder mobilization, program development, and capacity building. 2027 intensifies implementation and marketing. 2028 showcases Cap Bon's achievements during the Award year. 2029-2030 and beyond focus on evaluation, institutionalizing successful programs, and maintaining Platform membership to continue collaborations.

Environmental Commitments: Programs will prioritize climate change adaptation in agriculture (water conservation techniques, drought-resistant traditional crop varieties, efficient irrigation systems), biodiversity protection (seed banks preserving heritage varieties, supporting bee populations through apiculture and reducing pesticide use, protecting agricultural landscapes from further development, marine protection initiatives at fishing ports), waste reduction (addressing food waste in hotels and restaurants through better planning and redistribution systems, eliminating single-use plastics in food service, improving solid waste management in tourist areas, composting organic waste for agricultural use), sustainable energy use in food businesses (supporting solar power adoption in farms and processing facilities, reducing cold chain energy through emphasizing local seasonal products), beach and coastal protection (ensuring gastronomy tourism reduces rather than increases pressure on coastal

zones by distributing visitors inland and across seasons), and water management (promoting crops and practices that conserve water, connecting tourists to local products to reduce water footprint from imports, supporting traditional water harvesting and irrigation techniques).

Cultural Preservation: Documentation projects will capture traditional techniques through video and oral history before elder knowledge holders pass away (hand-rolling couscous, traditional pottery firing, orange blossom distillation, harissa-making, fishing techniques, agricultural practices). Intergenerational transmission programs will pair young people with master artisans and cooks. Traditional knowledge will be integrated into educational curricula ensuring it remains living practice, not museum artifact. Support for cultural festivals and traditional celebrations will maintain their authenticity while carefully managing tourism interest to prevent commodification.

Institutional Capacity: Strengthening stakeholder organizations through training in governance, financial management, and strategic planning will ensure sustainability. This includes supporting GDAs and artisan cooperatives to improve their organizational capacity. Policy advocacy at regional and national levels will create supportive frameworks for gastronomic development (clearer regulations for agritourism, streamlined processes for small food businesses, protection of geographical indications for products like harissa). Diversified funding sources beyond initial Platform investment—including tourism revenues, product certifications, government support, international development funding, and private sector partnerships—will provide financial sustainability.

Evaluation Framework: An evaluation partner (likely Institut de Formation dans les Métiers du Tourisme de Nabeul or university partner) will establish baseline data in 2025-2026 (current visitor numbers and spending patterns, environmental indicators like water quality and waste volumes, producer income levels, employment in gastronomy sectors, community satisfaction measures), conduct ongoing monitoring, perform mid-term evaluation in 2027, comprehensive end-of-award evaluation in 2029, and long-term follow-up in 2031-2032 to assess sustained impacts.

Findings will be shared publicly and contribute to broader knowledge about gastronomy-led regional development. Specific indicators will include: number of tourists participating in gastronomy experiences, percentage of hotel/restaurant food sourced locally, income changes for small producers and artisans, employment creation in gastronomy sectors, environmental improvements (water quality, waste reduction, beach condition), community participation rates in gastronomy initiatives, youth retention in food and agriculture sectors.

COMMUNICATION AND MARKETING VISION

Effective communication is essential for Cap Bon's success as a World Region of Gastronomy. A comprehensive communication strategy will be developed during 2025-2026 through stakeholder consultation, balancing the need to reach international food-focused travelers while engaging local communities and Tunisian citizens in the vision.

Strategic Communication Concepts

Rather than detailing every communication channel, we highlight three creative concepts that will distinguish Cap Bon's approach:

"Tables of Exchange" Campaign: A multimedia storytelling project documenting actual tables in Cap Bon—the family table where couscous is served, the potter's workshop table where ceramics are shaped, the harissa producer's table where peppers are pounded, the fishing boat where morning catch is sorted, the souq vendor's table displaying oranges and lemons. Each table becomes a narrative vehicle exploring how Cap Bon's identity emerges through daily acts of making, sharing, and eating food. Stories told through photography, short films, and written profiles create emotional connection with place and people. This campaign works across digital platforms, exhibitions, and potentially print publication.

"Mediterranean Reversal" Provocation: A creative campaign challenging northern-centric definitions of "Mediterranean cuisine." Playful but serious interventions might include: a map of the Mediterranean with south at top (geographically accurate from Tunisian perspective); side-by-side taste comparisons showing Sicilian-Tunisian parallels in ingredients and dishes; influential food writers and chefs invited to "discover" the southern Mediterranean; strategic media placement arguing that any discussion of Mediterranean diet excluding Tunisia is incomplete. This positions Cap Bon as confident interlocutor redefining conversation, not supplicant seeking recognition.

"Harvest Residencies" Program: Inviting international food writers, photographers, filmmakers, and chefs for week-long immersive residencies during key agricultural moments (orange blossom harvest and distillation in March-April, harissa-making season in September-October, olive harvest in November-December). Residents work alongside producers, experience processes firsthand, then create content from their authentic encounters. Their work—articles, photo essays, films, recipes—becomes marketing material while building long-term ambassadors who've developed genuine relationships with Cap Bon. This generates higher-quality, more credible content than transactional influencer visits.

Communication Development Process

A marketing working group will be established in 2026 bringing together communications professionals, tourism operators, digital specialists, and creative industry representatives. This group will develop detailed communication plan including target audience analysis (identifying markets beyond traditional package tourists—culinary travelers, cultural tourists, sustainability-focused travelers, diaspora communities), message development (emphasizing Cap Bon's unique positioning as Shakshouka Peninsula where ingredients from multiple continents blend), channel strategy, content calendar, and budget allocation. Website development, social media strategy, media relations, and event marketing will be planned systematically based on stakeholder input and available resources.

ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK

A detailed budget covering 2025-2029 will be developed during 2025-2026 by the Regional Stakeholder Committee. Budget development will involve:

Program Costing: Each focus area working group will estimate costs for their proposed initiatives, creating realistic budgets based on local cost conditions.

Funding Strategy: The Executive Board will identify and pursue funding sources including:

- Government ministries (Tourism, Agriculture, Culture, Environment)
- Private sector contributions (hotels, producers, sponsors)

- International development programs (EU programs, UNESCO, bilateral aid, Swiss SECO which has supported agricultural development programs in Tunisia, Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives which has supported environmental initiatives in Cap Bon)
- Revenue generation (tourism commissions, certification fees, event income, membership fees for quality labels)
- Foundation grants focused on sustainable development, cultural preservation, women's empowerment

Financial Management: Clear responsibility for financial management will be established, with transparent accounting systems, regular reporting to stakeholders, and independent audit ensuring accountability.

Economic Impact: While detailed projections are premature, the goal is demonstrable economic benefit through job creation (particularly for youth and women), increased producer income (through better market access and value-added products), tourism growth (measured in both numbers and spending per visitor), and product exports (branded Cap Bon products reaching international markets). Evaluation will measure these outcomes against baseline data collected in 2025-2026. The focus is on creating distributed economic benefits—not just concentrating wealth in hotels and large enterprises but ensuring small producers, artisans, guides, family restaurants, and rural communities share prosperity.

The focus is on creating a realistic, achievable financial plan supported by committed funding sources rather than aspirational projections

AMBASSADORS AND CHAMPIONS

Ambassadors are individuals who embody Cap Bon's gastronomic excellence and serve as voices for the region. Rather than naming ambassadors prematurely, a selection process will occur during 2025-2026.

Ambassador Selection Process

The Regional Stakeholder Committee will identify potential ambassadors representing different aspects of Cap Bon's food culture: distinguished chefs with national or international profiles (including members of ATPAC who have championed Tunisian cuisine internationally), exemplary producers or artisans (harissa makers, olive oil producers, potters, fishers, orange blossom distillers), cultural figures with deep knowledge of food heritage (including the "Ambassadors of Hammamet"—the women's group preserving culinary heritage and needlework who proudly presented dishes like osbane shayih), young people bringing fresh perspectives (like the el food lab team documenting and innovating traditional recipes), and international figures championing Tunisian cuisine abroad.

Selection criteria will include: genuine connection to Cap Bon, embodiment of quality and authenticity, ability to communicate compellingly, willingness to actively promote the region, and representation of Cap Bon's diversity (geographic, generational, gender, sectors).

Ambassadors will be formally designated through stakeholder vote, ensuring legitimacy and broad support. Their roles will include promoting Cap Bon in media and public appearances, participating in events, mentoring young professionals, supporting program development with expertise, and connecting Cap Bon to national and international networks.

APPENDICES

TABLE OF REGIONAL CONSORTIUM

Organization Name	Sector	Representative	Contact	Specific Role/ Commitment
Sawa Taste of Tunisia	Private	Lamia Temimi	Chef@sawataste.com	Co-founder, Executive Board, Experience development
National Tourism Board	Public	Wahid Ben Fraj	crt.nabeul@discovertunisia.com	Executive Board, Tourism strategy, Marketing
ATPNE	Third Sector	Imen Rabeh	atpnekorba@yahoo.fr	Executive Board, Environmental sustainability
Institut de Formation dans les Métiers du Tourisme de Nabeul	Education	Lassaad Jedili	Lassaad.Jelidi@afmt.tn	Executive Board, Training, Evaluation

Lamia Temimi

Wahid Ben Fraj

Imen Rabeh

Lassaad Jedili

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Arabic Culinary Terms (with transliterations):

- Assida (العصيدة) - Sweet porridge made from grains, served at celebrations
- Brik - Thin pastry pocket filled with egg, tuna, or other ingredients and fried
- Couscous (كسكس) - Hand-rolled semolina grains, staple dish
- Harissa (هريسة) - Spicy chili paste condiment
- Jben (جبنة) - Fresh cheese
- Kamounia - Stew flavored with cumin
- Lablabi - Chickpea soup/stew breakfast dish
- Mā' zahar (ماء زهر) - Orange blossom water
- Mā' ward (ماء ورد) - Rose water
- Makroudh - Semolina pastry filled with dates or nuts, fried and soaked in syrup
- Malsouka/Warqa - Ultra-thin pastry sheets
- Mechouia - Grilled pepper and tomato salad
- Mesfouf - Sweet couscous with dates and nuts
- Tajine - Baked egg dish (different from Moroccan tagine stew)
- Torshi (طرشي) - Pickled vegetables
- Tunis al-khadra (تونس الخضراء) - "Tunisia the Green," expression emphasizing fertility

Agricultural/Artisanal Terms:

- Alembic - Traditional distillation apparatus
- Couscoussier - Two-part pot for steaming couscous
- GI (Geographical Indication) - Legal protection for products from specific regions
- Hassira - Traditional woven mat
- PDO (Protected Designation of Origin) - EU quality scheme for regional products
- PGI (Protected Geographical Indication) - EU quality scheme
- Souq - Traditional market

Organizational Acronyms:

- ATPNE - Association Tunisienne de la Protection de la Nature et de l'Environement
- IGCAT - International Institute of Gastronomy, Culture, Arts and Tourism
- UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
- UNWTO - United Nations World Tourism Organization

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The Four Founding Stakeholders whose vision and commitment launched this candidacy:

Sawa Taste of Tunisia
National Tourism Board
Association Tunisienne de la Protection de la Nature et de l'Environement (ATPNE)
Institut de Formation dans les Métiers du Tourisme de Nabeul

IGCAT for creating the World Regions of Gastronomy Platform and providing guidance, support, and a framework for transformation.

The producers, farmers, fishers, artisans, chefs, and food professionals of Cap Bon whose daily work creates the gastronomic richness we celebrate and whose commitment to quality, tradition, and innovation makes this candidacy credible.

The communities of Cap Bon who have welcomed visitors, shared knowledge, and maintained traditions across generations. The women whose labor, knowledge, and creativity sustain food culture but are too often unrecognized.

All who contributed stories, recipes, photographs, data, expertise, time, and encouragement to this effort. In particular Yahya El-Ghoul, Mariem Kacem, Mamia Trabelsi, Azza Jedidi, Lamia Temimi, Jamie Furniss, Wafa Bettaieb, Lassad Jeddi, Imen Ismail, Imen Rabeh.

Art direction & layout design
Chedly Haouel

This bid book is dedicated to the land and people of Cap Bon—to the soil that grows our food, the sea that provides our fish, the hands that shape our pottery, the fires that distill our orange blossoms, the tables where we gather,

PARTNERS IN PURPOSE

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CAP BON CANDIDATE 2028