

## **TRADITIONAL DRINK “CHICHA” OF THE ME'PHAA CULTURE AS A TOURISM PRODUCT OF THE COMMUNITY OF MALINALTEPEC, GUERRERO, MEXICO**

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**Abstract:** La Chicha is a traditional drink from the Malinaltepec community, made from fermented corn, which has a sweet and sour flavor, light brown in color, produced once a year, considered alcoholic and appreciated by the producers, who are mostly of the elderly, which shows indifference on the part of the young generations despite being a drink that is part of their traditions; The present investigation seeks to evaluate the level of acceptance that this drink has among tourists who arrive in the three study locations, as well as to incorporate the drink as a tourist product, that is, Chicha will be offered to tourists and people who wish to taste the exquisite flavor of the drink, for this, descriptive research and a sampling by snowball, judgment and by quotas were used. For this, three sampling points were identified where the surveys were applied, these points are the following: Malinaltepec because the drink is prepared there and especially because it is visited by tourists on its patron saint's day on the first Friday of Lent, Xalpatláhuac due to the visit tourism that the Patron Saint has and also due to the influx of national and foreign tourists, and Marquelia due to the high rate of tourists that it receives each vacation period on the beaches of said city, the aforementioned sampling consisted of giving them as a sample the drink and consecutive to this the surveys were applied. It should be noted that the investigation was based on the opinion of people outside the towns and not their local population, so they took advantage of the patron saint festivities in the case of Malinaltepec and Xalpatláhuac, and the vacation period in Marquelia, since in those periods there is a greater tourist influx.

**Keywords:** Chicha, Malinaltepec, mysticism

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of alternative tourism is to put the tourist in contact with the different

activities (walks with low difficulties, combined activities, flora and fauna observation) that are carried out in local communities and with customs very different from ours, with these activities you can participate in rural tasks, tasting products from different communities as well as their traditions.

Tourism has become one more option for the economic development of our country; For this reason, it is extremely important that readers learn about issues related to cultural tourism and Chicha.

This research covers topics such as cultural tourism, which will help us understand the potential of the traditional drink and thus achieve that tourists are interested in Chicha and visit the host community, as well as publicize the tourist product, background of the Chicha, definition of the Chicha and origin of the Chicha; specifying that the work focuses on analyzing the level of acceptance that the traditional drink Chicha has among tourists and potential consumers of it, with the purpose of knowing the perception that people have of the drink to later make a possible introduction to the market. tourist.

## HISTORY OF THE CONSUMPTION OF THE DRINK

To systematize the following result, direct observation was used and consequently the following was obtained:

All the drinks (pulque, sour atole, punch) that are produced in Malinaltepec have deep vital histories, which identify their culture, their origin and above all describe their history; Chicha is one of these drinks, as it has gained great value and influence in the traditional festivals of the town.



Figura 1. Productor rezándole a la producción de chicha.

La Chicha plays a very important role in the town festival, since it is only prepared once a year.

Chicha is only used for the local party on the first Friday of Lent, because its preparation requires a lot of time and high economic resources, which are provided by the president of the H. Ayuntamiento de Malinaltepec; and also because it has always been a tradition to give it away only once a year, this with the purpose of having people from outside the municipality visit the community in increasing numbers, which favors the town in different aspects.



Figure 2. Chicha producers, giving it away in bullfights.

This drink is given away in bullfights and in the stewardship house of the honorable Corral de Toros Board, after all the bullfights, because that is when the different wind bands meet there to consume the food that has been prepared for them.

One of the main attractions of this great drink is that before the bullfights, the producers have to go to pray in the field where the bullfights will take place; In the four corners where the counter rings will be placed, flowers are placed and prayers are made so that the bullfights take place without unfortunate inconveniences and fewer lives to regret. In each corner, as the bunches of flowers and drunken leaves are placed, throw a little bit of Chicha and consume it with copal, so that the God of the earth does not get upset by the action that is going to be carried out.



Figure 3. Producer praying to the field where the bullfights or jaripeos will take place.

Subsequently, the producers and the members of the stewardship of the Corral de Toros Board put wreaths in the Catholic church so that, at the party, everything goes well and they do not have major problems;

They carry out a procession with dances from the region such as: the tlaminques , the 12 pairs and the turtle, the entire tour is carried out accompanied by different wind bands and with the parish priest of the church.



Figure 4. Members of the stewardship of the Junta Corral de Toros y Productores de chicha, bringing wreaths and flowers to the church.

This drink demonstrates not only a commercial question, but a demonstration that the drink is a historical and cultural fruit of this town.

The relationship between the inhabitants and the corn plant is very evident, not only because it provides them with tortillas, tamales, corn and esquites, but also because it gives them the joy of making an exotic traditional drink, which is only produced in the community. from Malinaltepec and with elders from said town, who transmit their knowledge from generation to generation. For this reason, it is of the utmost importance to prevent such knowledge from becoming extinct.

Chicha is a sacred drink for the inhabitants, because previously only the great chiefs could consume it. After a long period, they managed to get the entire population to consume it, which is why it is only awarded annually and in honor of the first Friday of Lent.

Visitors from different places come to this town to try Chicha and enjoy the party.

## HISTORY OF THE PREPARATION OF THE DRINK

Previously, the Chicha drink was prepared with pulque, but seeing that its cost was high and that some producers did not properly wash the container (the tambo), the chicha consequently came out sour and when it was prepared it became sedate; for this reason they decided to change the production process and began to prepare it with water and brown sugar.

## ELABORATION PROCESS

For its elaboration some producers use rotten corn and others white corn; Those who use the first only soak the corn, while those who use the second soak the corn in a drum for a day and a half so that the corn swells and becomes soft, and then it is ground in a mill. hand, it is important that the corn is not completely ground, but only cracked (Flores, 2013).

1. Under the pot that is going to be used to make the Chicha, 7 leaves of a flower called floripondio are placed upside down, in the shape of the sun, this will serve for bad air.
2. *timbre*” is placed (it is a preparation that contains 7 chili peppers, 7 copal balls and 7 cigars, wrapped with the stem of the cane or with totomoxtle leaves and well tied, This is used for the evil eye and so that the entire manufacturing process goes well.)



Figure 5. Bell that the chicha wears.

3. The broken corn is added in the pot, water is added to the measure so that it does not pass.
4. For a 200-liter drum, after 10 days, two to three bagasses of brown sugar are added<sup>1</sup>.
5. It is left to ferment and is checked every third day, after the first panela bagasses are added.



Figure 6. Producer adding panela bagasse to chicha drums.

<sup>1</sup> panela bagasse: caramelized balls of cane juice in the shape of a cup of approximately 350 ml; A bagasse contains eight inverted balls.

If it is not sweet, add one to one and a half of the panela bagasse so that it can ferment

well and if it is very sweet, add a bucket of water, in such a way that it should not be too sweet or too simple for it to the drink ferments well.

6. In this case, if you want to speed up the fermentation process, add 2 brown sugar bagasses and 2 buckets of water.
7. If there are two days left before the Chicha is used, a day before panela is added so that the next day it is sweet and the drink is used.

For a 20-liter drum, put a liter and a half of broken corn and a jícara of water; After 3 days a ball of brown sugar is added, it is left to ferment and later it is tasted. If brown sugar is needed, add half a brown sugar ball and if it is too sweet, add water.



Figure 7. Producer adding water to chicha drums.



Figure 8. Testing the taste of the chicha, to determine the sweetness of the drink.

In order to carry out the process of elaboration of the Chicha, you have to pray to the following saints:

- Entombment
- Jesus Sacrificed
- father jesus
- Santa Cruz

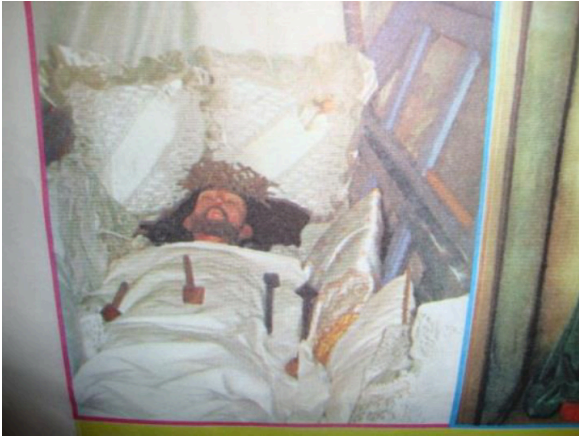


Figure 9. Entombment.

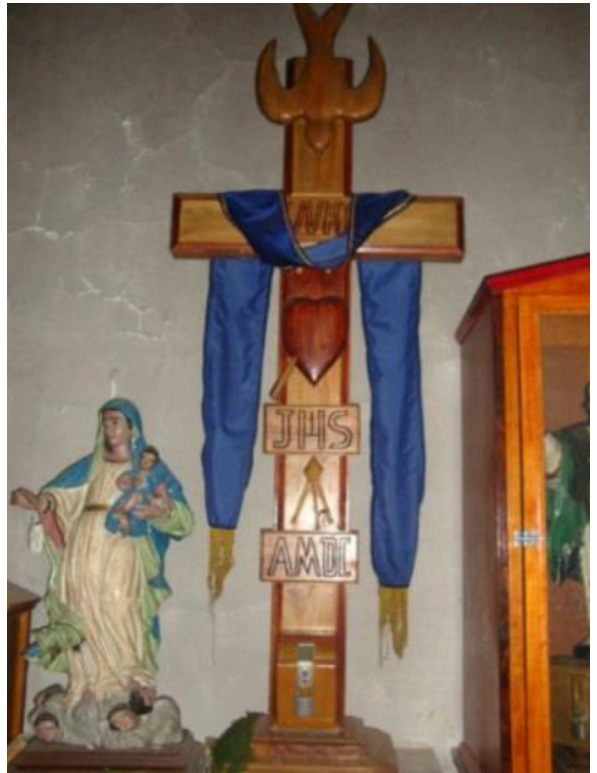


Figure 11. Santa Cruz.

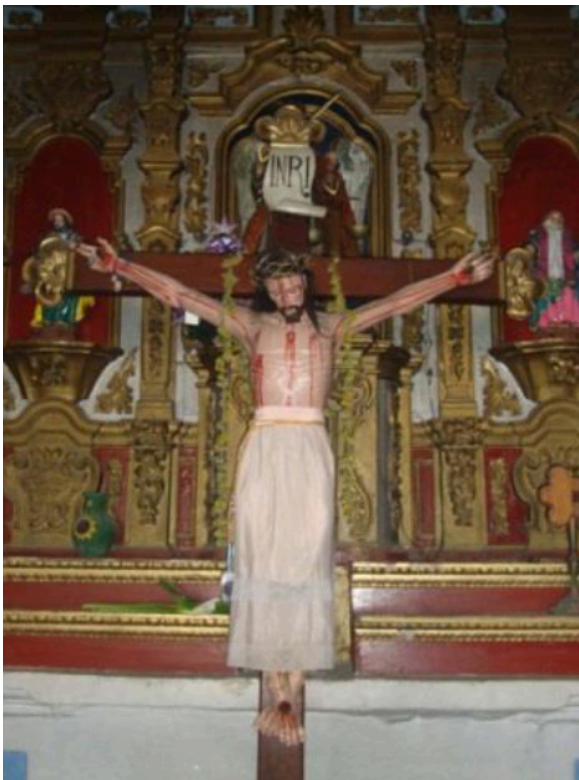


Figure 10. Jesus Sacrificed.



Figure 12. Father Jesus.

Because they are the main patron saints of the Malinaltepec community, it is worth mentioning that in honor of them, it is held on the first Friday of Lent.

Every Monday and Thursday you have to pray to these saints and to the faithful departed so that the whole process goes well.

For the process of elaboration of the traditional drink, Chicha, it has to be prepared one month in advance.



Figure 13. Praying to the faithful departed and to the chicha so that the whole process goes well.

It is essential to take into account that to prepare the chicha the following points must be followed:

- For producers it is important not to have sexual relations and no contact with their partner during the entire production process, because the drink is very delicate and can damage the entire product, as well as cause harm to those who consume it (diarrhea and threw up)
- Other producers take into account that, if the person who produces it is married or had sexual relations, they should not arrive with dirty clothes during the production process, they should arrive well bathed, so that the chicha does not get damaged.

The rest time that the drink must be is forty-two days: ten to eleven days fermenting before adding the first panela bagasse, and thirty days under constant review (Franco, 2013).

It is worth mentioning that the life span of the Chicha is three months, because the corn loses its properties; However, said drink can continue to be preserved as long as it is stored in a wide container and before consuming it, add a little brown sugar and dissolve it until it dissolves, in this way the drink will not lose its properties (Cantú R. C., 2013).

Bottled Chicha only lasts 20 days unless, each time it is consumed, a little panela is added so that it does not lose its flavor.

In addition to obtaining the chicha, another by-product can be made, such as the “atole de chicha” using the corn that remains in the pot, thus nothing is wasted (Flores, 2013).

It should be added that earlier in the years:

From 1964 - 1990 Chicha was drunk in a jícara,

From 1991 – 2000 it was served in plastic cups and,

From 2001 to the present it is ingested in disposable cups.

(Franco, 2013)

It is important to mention that at the first Friday of Lent party in Malinaltepec, various people from outside the municipality come to try and take some Chicha with them.

It is interesting to explore the possibility of promoting chicha as a tourist product, since it can be an opportunity to promote local development and also to preserve cultural traditions. The surveys that were carried out in the municipalities prone to having tourists are a good step to determine the demand and interest on the part of the visitors. It is also important to consider other aspects such as quality, availability, food safety and the proper promotion of the drink so that it can

be considered a successful tourism product. In addition, it is essential to involve the local community in the process of promoting and preserving the tradition to ensure its continuity and long-term success.

## RESULTS OF THE SURVEYS APPLIED IN MALINALTEPEC, XALPATLÁHUAC AND MARQUELIA

The general results of the surveys applied in the three different places are the following:

### ABOUT THE CHICHA

It can be seen that most of the population surveyed responded that they were unaware of the existence of the traditional drink chicha because it had never been made known before, this was mentioned by 55% of tourists, while the remaining 45% responded that he does know it and that he has also tried it.

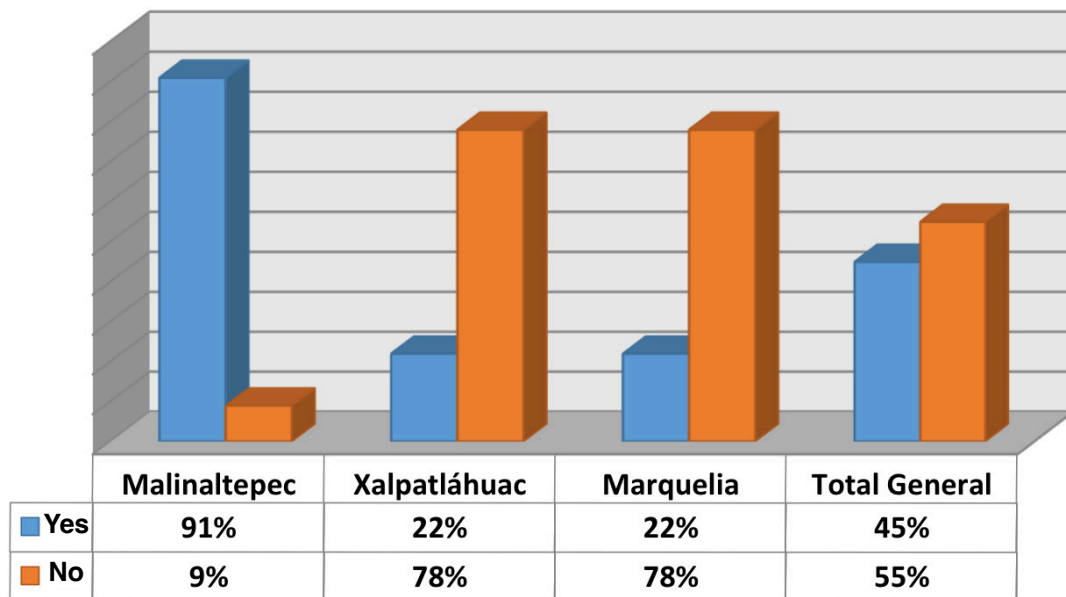
### EVALUATION OF THE CHICHA

To find out the level of acceptance and the taste that chicha has, tourists were asked

to assign a grade, 1% of the total population assigned a failing grade, 4% evaluated unfavorably, 49% designated the drink as moderately acceptable and 46% gave an acceptable rating; which indicates that most of the answers were positive, this gives chicha an advantage because it was accepted by the majority of the population surveyed.

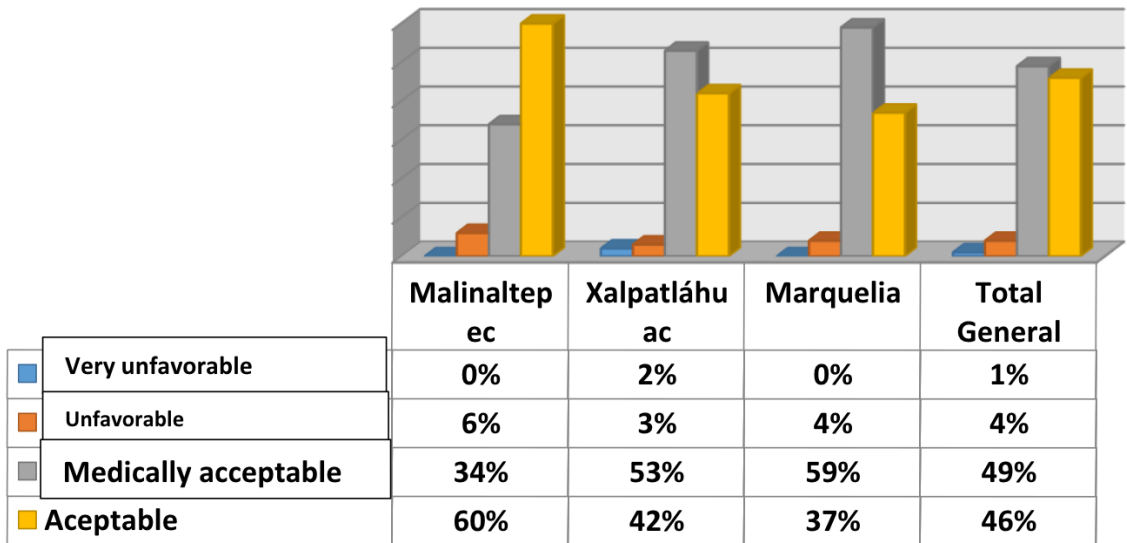
### DEDUCTION OF A POSSIBLE TOURISM PRODUCT

92% of the tourists consulted responded that they considered that chicha could be a tourist product, due to the way it is made and above all because it is a traditional and ancestral drink, because it is the plus that tourists seek, 1% said no, because it is still not very well known and because of the smell that is perceived when having it close to the nose and 7% answered that maybe yes, if from now on it begins to be made known to future buyers and that above all do not miss the traditional way of producing it.

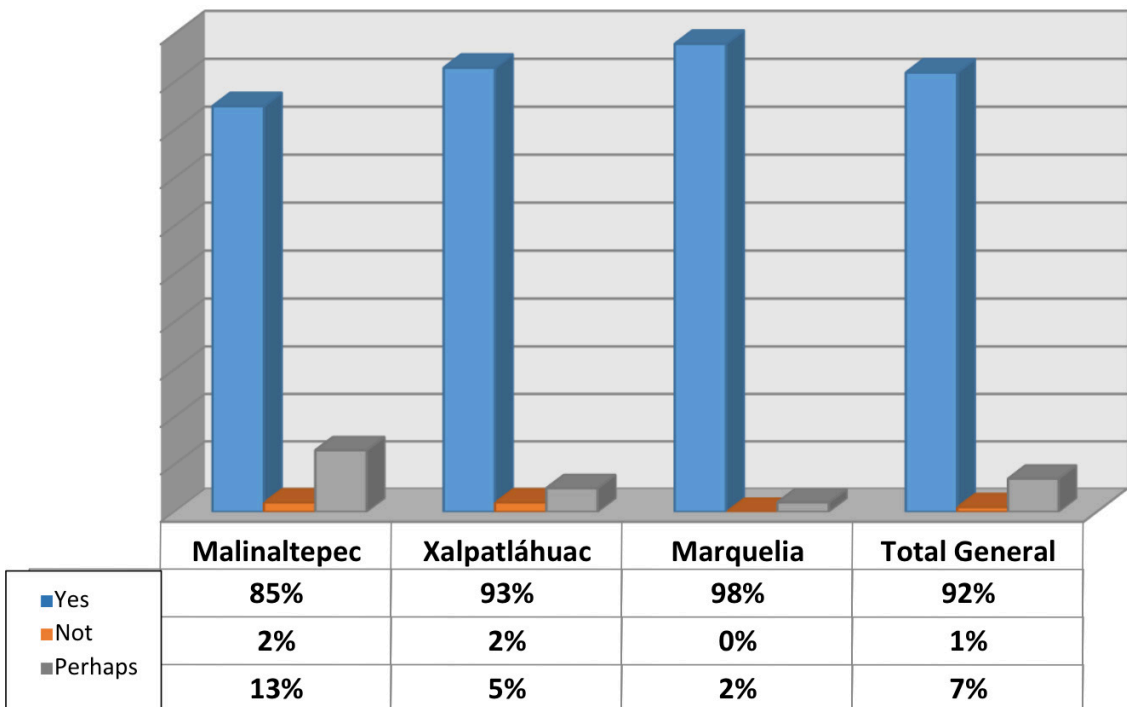


Graph 1. General percentage of people who know chicha.





Graph 2. General percentage of people who assigned a rating to the chicha.



Graph 3. General percentage of tourists who consider that chicha could be a tourist product.

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