

## Article

# Conceptualization and Potential of Agritourism in Extremadura (Spain) from the Perspective of Tourism Demand

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**Abstract:** The current literature considers agritourism as a valid option for promoting the development of rural areas. This would be achieved by increasing agricultural incomes. However, numerous scientific studies have revealed the difficulty in reaching a consensus on the very concept of agritourism. In addition, the definition of agritourism is rarely related to the opinion of the demand. For this reason, this research aimed to understand the idea that tourists have about this variety. To this end, more than 500 surveys were carried out, from which the tourists' conception of agritourism and the activities it entails were deduced. Other questions were also analyzed to determine whether the conception varies between those who have already performed this type of activity and those who have not yet had the opportunity to do so. From this, we can deduce the interest that visitors have in agritourism products, evidencing their potential. This interest is deduced through the visualization of different landscapes and activities of interest to tourists. Under these four central points, the aim was to understand the aims of agritourism in Extremadura (Spain). At the methodological level, a combination of descriptive statistics and spatial statistics was used, highlighting the use of cluster analysis. The results show a significant lack of knowledge of the meaning of agritourism, especially among those who have never practiced it, and of the activities associated with it. At the same time, the selection of landscapes preferred by tourists makes it possible to establish areas with potential for the development of these activities. Likewise, knowing which activities are of interest to tourists also helps to generate complementary activities and to better target the design of agrotourism products.

**Keywords:** agritourism; tourism space; cluster analysis; planning; Geographic Information System; Extremadura (Spain)



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## 1. Introduction

The boom in tourism over the last few decades has led all areas to try to develop tourism based on the available heritage resources, although the initiatives undertaken have not always been as successful as expected. The variability in the success of tourism development depends on multiple factors and not exclusively on the presence of attractions. Tourism facilities are needed to contribute to their enhancement. It is also necessary to consider the tastes and preferences of tourists to determine the attractiveness of the territory [1].

There are places, such as historic cities, that are among the most valuable cultural resources in the world [2]. This applies to cultural heritage in its broadest sense [3], as they act as true centers of tourist attraction. They coexist with other areas where the natural heritage plays a clear role as a promoter of tourist activity. It is especially significant in inland areas that seek to develop this activity by taking advantage of the cultural and natural attractions of a territory.

When it comes to encouraging agritourism, agricultural landscapes, where natural and cultural resources coexist, are fundamental. The environmental and cultural richness

is reflected in the form of agricultural use, around which a whole culture emerges. This is clearly seen in the pasture areas, in the olive groves and vineyards, and in the fruit trees. There are ancestral constructions, such as “corralas”, where pigs are protected, “lagares”, where oil is extracted, and “chozos”, that have a clear cultural nuance. To these, we can add attractive attractions such as those related to the extraction of cork and coal, etc.

They seek to boost the economy through this activity and, at the same time, address the pressing demographic problems affecting some areas [4,5]. These problems include depopulation, aging, masculinization, and, in short, the demographic challenges they face. Obviously, they have an immediate impact on the economy of the area, which is also burdened by the lack of investment, which further reduces the possibility of achieving the desired socioeconomic development.

To overcome these obstacles, the government of Extremadura has sought to develop tourism by creating many lodging facilities over the last few decades [6]. At the same time, they are distributed in a very particular way in some inland territories of Spain [7,8]. All this encourages initiatives to create territorial groupings that consider the tourist vocation of the territory and the location of accommodations for the improvement of the tourist policies promoted in the territory [9], as well as the adaptation to the tourist-carrying capacity.

A large part of these efforts has been concentrated in inland areas, which are areas of an eminently rural character, where tourism policies implemented through LEADER or PRODER initiatives have pursued the development of rural tourism with enormous potential in these areas [10]. These European policies have reinforced the commitment to tourism as the basis for sustaining the development of rural areas in Spain since 1991. They have turned tourism into an economic activity in which most resources have been allocated [11]. This contrast becomes evident when the impacts of these investments on the rural environment are analyzed [12].

Under the auspices of such initiatives, areas such as Extremadura (Spain) have redoubled efforts to promote tourism, implementing different tourism plans. Of note are the Strategic Tourism Plan for Extremadura (2010–2015) [13], the Tourism Plan for Extremadura (2017–2020) [14], and the II Tourism Plan of Extremadura 2021–2023, which is framed in the Sustainable Tourism Strategy of Extremadura 2030 [15]. In numerous cases, tourism policies leading to the improvement of the sector have not been as successful as expected, so the proliferation of this type of document in such a short time is not surprising. It has been observed in the literature specialized in the tourism analysis of this environment that an effective planning instrument is needed, rather than a thoughtless succession of plans and policies, in which the vocation of the territory is observed and the necessary tourism products are generated for its development. Therefore, it is necessary to adapt the offer of accommodation and complementary products to the real tourist attraction capacity of each place.

Understandably, there has been a proliferation of attempts to measure the potential for tourism development in rural areas, which has led to the emergence of a wide range of methodologies. Some of them were developed for other areas (Latin America, Poland, or the United Kingdom) as early as the 1970s and 1980s [16–18], although they remain an active field of research even in recent times [1,19–22]. Extremadura, the area taken as the basis for this study, has not been alien to this trend, as shown by some of the studies carried out. The main objective of these studies was to explain the territorial distribution of accommodations according to the tourism potential obtained by means of different techniques. However, the findings of these studies corroborate the fact that some of the rural accommodations are not located in ideal places since their location is not in line with the preferences of tourists [23,24].

Along with these circumstances, there is an even greater problem when there are vague conceptions regarding the concepts of rural tourism, rural space, or agritourism. This confusion arises because rural tourism has a very generic and broad consideration, whose fundamental objective in the context of Extremadura is usually the offer of lodging and, to a lesser extent, catering. In the meantime, the offer of complementary activities promoted

by the lodging itself is rare. However, given their location, many rural lodgings can offer multiple cultural, natural, tangible, and intangible resources. In line with this, agritourism constitutes an opportunity to contribute to the socioeconomic development of battered rural economies, offering, at the same time, the possibility of retaining the population because of the creation of jobs. There is, therefore, a certain conceptual proximity between the two activities, so much so that they have even been considered interdependent [25].

A thorough review of the literature revealed numerous research topics studied in agritourism across different common areas of interest [26,27]. Despite this thematic diversity, numerous authors have concluded that agritourism is a specific part of rural tourism [28]. Perhaps the clearest difference between the two activities is evident when the lodging is not associated with an agricultural farm and does not offer agricultural activities as a tourism product: this is rural tourism [29]. According to this conception, the location of the lodging and the offer of agricultural activities mark the fundamental differences between agritourism and rural tourism.

Undoubtedly, the most complex vision of agritourism is reflected in the conceptual variability observed in the literature [30]. Research on agritourism began in the 1980s by describing its foundations through sociological and tourism approaches. However, the future appears to be marked by a converging trend between agriculture and tourism, where two types of visitors will prevail [31]: one with a special interest in observing and participating in the activities and the other seeking exclusively recreation in the agricultural environment [32].

Numerous studies refer to the terms “Agritourism”, “Agrotourism”, “Farm tourism”, “Farm-based tourism”, “Vacation farm”, and “Recreation on farms” as synonyms. At the same time, there are certain ambiguities related to the type of setting in which the tourist experience takes place, the authenticity of this or the agricultural context itself, the activities involved, and the reasons for the trip [33–35].

The literature converges in considering agritourism as a provider of multiple benefits for both visitors and residents [36,37]. In summary, the benefits can be grouped into economic, social, cultural, and environmental benefits. In line with these objectives, agritourism provides an important source of diversified income for rural communities and farms, complementing traditional agricultural activities. This type of tourism encourages the generation of employment and the development of small businesses, thus promoting the local economy [38]. It also promotes social cohesion by encouraging interaction between tourists and residents, which can enhance mutual understanding and appreciation. It also reinforces the social structure by involving different generations in tourism activities, thus facilitating the transmission of knowledge and traditions [39]. It also provides a platform for the preservation and promotion of local cultural traditions, including gastronomy, handicrafts, festivals, and agricultural practices. By allowing visitors to authentically experience rural life and its traditions, it contributes to the enhancement and preservation of cultural heritage. Similarly, it can contribute to the conservation of the environment and the rural landscape by encouraging sustainable agricultural practices and the preservation of natural areas. By educating visitors about the importance of environmental sustainability and promoting responsible tourism, it fosters greater ecological awareness [40]. In addition, agritourism has a strong educational component, offering visitors the opportunity to learn about sustainable agricultural practices, food production, and environmental sustainability. This exposure can increase the awareness and appreciation of food production processes and environmental challenges in rural areas [36].

At the same time, this activity faces important challenges, including sustainability itself, in its threefold environmental, economic, and social aspects. Environmental sustainability involves agricultural practices that do not degrade natural resources, while economic sustainability refers to the long-term financial viability of agritourism enterprises. Finally, social inclusion and equity ensure that the benefits of agritourism are widely distributed among all members of the local community [36]. Similarly, agritourism visitors seek authentic experiences that allow them to connect with rural life, farming practices,

and local traditions. However, maintaining authenticity while meeting the expectations of tourists poses a challenge. Excessive commercialization can lead to loss of authenticity, negatively affecting visitor perception [41]. On the other hand, local community involvement is critical to the success of agritourism. Challenges include ensuring that the local community benefits economically while maintaining its culture and traditions. Resistance to change and skepticism toward tourists can be significant obstacles [42]. Effective marketing is, therefore, crucial for attracting tourists to agritourism. Small agritourism businesses often struggle with a lack of visibility and difficulty of reaching target markets. Digital promotion and the use of social networks are essential but require skills and resources that are not always available [43,44]. Finally, digital technologies offer opportunities for marketing, online booking, and customer experience improvement. However, the implementation of these technologies is challenging due to a lack of knowledge or financial resources [45,46].

Extremadura has enormous potential for the development of agritourism due to its rich biodiversity and remarkable cultural heritage. However, this niche of rural tourism is not taken advantage of in most cases. In this sense, it can be affirmed that there is little offer for visitors to participate in agricultural activities. This potential would increase if some farms could offer educational workshops on sustainable agricultural practices and environmental conservation, allowing tourists to learn about the importance of organic agriculture and livestock farming in the region. Despite the potential for agritourism development, in the study area, agritourism is not usually linked to a farm stay. For this reason, some lodging owners choose to offer external services linked to agritourism, such as farm visits, animal care, or participation in various agricultural tasks. There is, therefore, a divergence between the lodgings, which choose to focus on overnight stays, and the activities necessarily involved in the practice of agritourism.

At the regulatory level, in the study area (Extremadura, Spain), Law 2/2011 of 31 January for the development and modernization of tourism in Extremadura, in its successive amendments, states in Article 22, paragraph 2, that “the Public Administrations of Extremadura with competence in tourism will give preference to projects and actions that promote and enhance rural tourism, nature tourism and agritourism, and especially those that vindicate the Extremadura meadow, a relevant ecosystem in the Autonomous Community of Extremadura, as well as other representative or unique ecosystems, nature tourism and agritourism, and, in particular, those that promote the Extremadura dehesa, a relevant ecosystem of the Autonomous Community, as well as other representative or unique ecosystems” [47]. This regulation, although it has undergone several modifications, has never gone into more depth with respect to agritourism. There is not even a mention of this tourist modality in Decree 205/2012 of 15 October, which regulates the General Registry of Tourism Companies and Activities of Extremadura [48], or in Decree 65/2015 of 14 April, which establishes the management and classification systems for rural tourism accommodations in the autonomous community of Extremadura [49].

This regulation could be a framework for collaboration between the public and private sectors, encouraging the creation of innovative and quality tourism products. For agritourism, this could translate into support for the creation of rural lodging networks, the implementation of training programs for farmers and other rural actors in hospitality and tourism services, and the promotion of sustainable agricultural practices as part of the tourism experience. In addition, the legislation contemplates the importance of certification and classification of tourism services, which includes agritourism. It establishes quality and sustainability criteria that tourism service providers must meet to be officially recognized. This is crucial to ensure that visitors enjoy authentic, safe, and high-quality experiences and to enhance the image of Extremadura as a sustainable and responsible tourist destination.

It is important to examine the opportunities and challenges facing the agritourism sector under this legal framework, including the adaptability of farmers and other rural stakeholders to the requirements of sustainable tourism and the impact of these activities on the conservation of cultural and natural heritage.

Despite everything, both the Law and the Decrees do not go in depth in the definition and regulation of agritourism as a specific segment of rural tourism. This series of inaccuracies and omissions is transferred to the tourists, who, in many cases, do not know the meaning of agritourism. At the same time, the supply is not adapted to the preferences of the demand, which makes it very difficult to generate a specific agritourism product.

To contribute as far as possible to facilitating the creation of specific products, this research was proposed with three hypotheses to be tested:

**H1.** *The conceptualization of agritourism changes according to age and whether it has been practiced before.*

**H2.** *The dehesa (The dehesa is an agro-ecosystem characteristic and practically endemic to the Iberian Peninsula subject to a system of land use and management based mainly on extensive livestock farming that takes advantage of pastures, fruits, and branches, as well as other forestry, hunting, or agricultural uses. It is mainly dominated by holm oaks, cork oaks, gall oaks, or wild olive trees and, occasionally, by other woodland) has a great potential for the practice of agritourism, especially if combined with other types of attractions.*

**H3.** *There are numerous activities that can be carried out in the dehesa and its surrounding area, adapted to the preferences of tourists.*

Likewise, the research has six specific objectives:

- O1. To understand what tourists perceive as agritourism.
- O2. To understand what activities tourists think are practiced in agritourism.
- O3. To understand which landscapes tourists prefer.
- O4. To understand what activities tourists prefer.
- O5. To determine the areas with the greatest potential for the practice of agritourism according to demand criteria.
- O6. To understand if there are differences in the conceptualization and potential of agritourism according to age and previous experience in these activities.

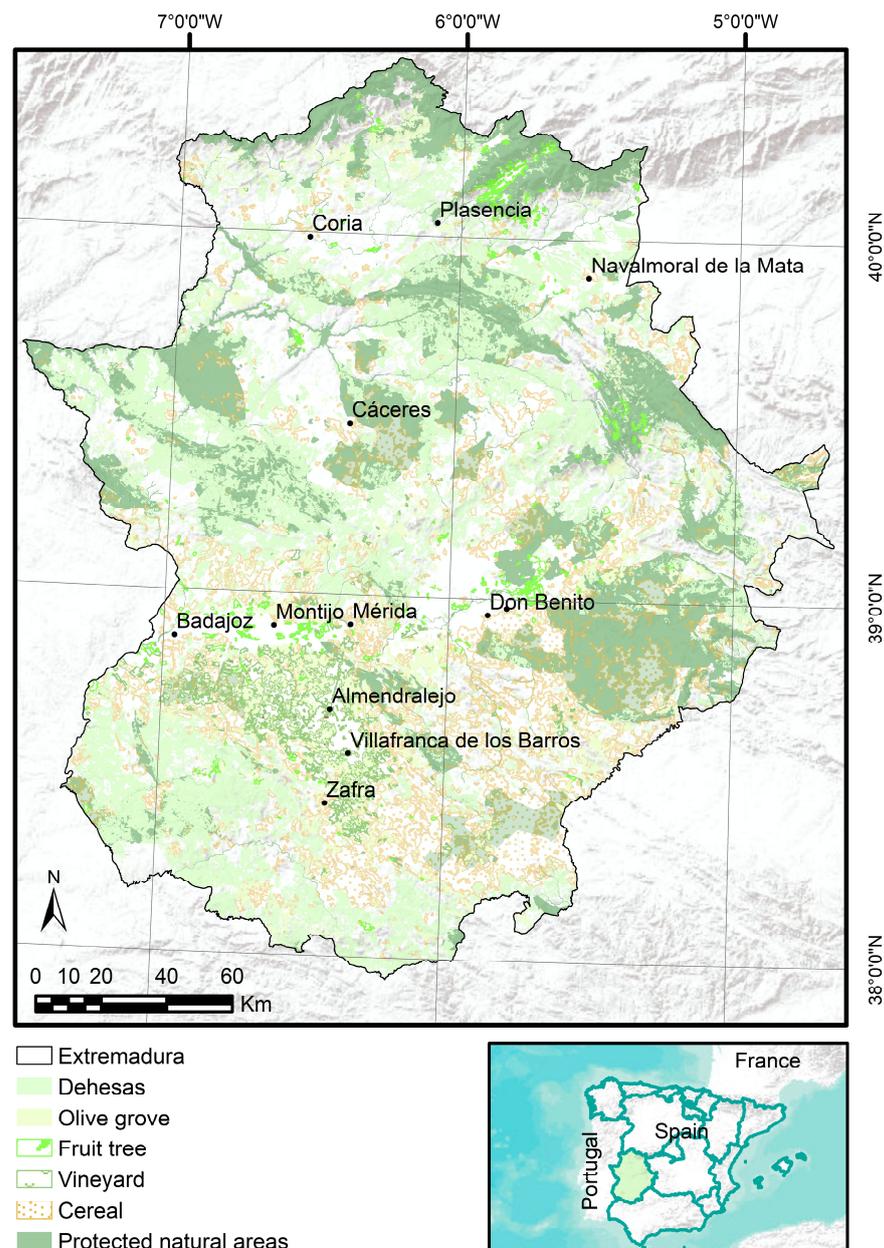
Objectives 1 and 2 are exploratory in nature since there are not many studies that consider the opinion of tourists in a broad conceptualization of agritourism. Objectives 3, 4, and 5 are analytical, while objective 6 is cross-cutting in nature.

## 2. Materials and Methods

### 2.1. Study Area

Extremadura is an autonomous community of Spain located in the center-west of the Iberian Peninsula, where its western part borders Portugal (Figure 1). It occupies a total of 41,634 km<sup>2</sup>, in which numerous protected natural areas and an enormous historical-artistic heritage are located, some of them belonging to the World Heritage (UNESCO). The number of attractions present in this community has been exposed in numerous investigations approached from the point of view of rural tourism [9,50–52].

The literature that analyzes tourism in this territory has focused on the role that its landscapes can play as tourist attractions. Among the wide variety of landscapes, the dehesa is particularly relevant, although there are others with great territorial development. This ecosystem has been seen as an opportunity to develop agritourism [53,54]. The dehesa has multiple meanings [55] from the more formal ones, such as the old Law 1/1986 of 2 May 1986 on the Dehesa in Extremadura, which defines it as “a rural estate with a surface area of more than one hundred hectares that is susceptible, according to its most suitable agricultural use, to extensive livestock farming” [56], to those more adapted to reality, such as the one in the Green Book of the Dehesa and the Montado, which states that it “fixes between 5% and 60% of the area covered by trees, a range of values that is considered necessary here as a defining criterion. . .” and specifies that experts require the predominance of species of the *Quercus* genus [57].



**Figure 1.** Study area.

In the dehesas of Extremadura, extensive livestock farming plays a crucial role in both the ecosystem and the local economy. This region has 1,016,384 hectares of pastureland, although these figures differ from those obtained from SIOSE and SIGPAC, which are 1,200,036 and 1,016,614, respectively [55]. It is an ecological paradise for various livestock species, such as the Iberian pig, the Merino sheep, and the Retinto cattle, which coexist with rich wildlife.

The extensive livestock farming model in Extremadura, characterized by its low density of livestock raised in large outdoor areas, allows the animals to move freely and feed on natural dehesas. This system not only favors the production of high-quality foods, such as the renowned Iberian ham, but also contributes significantly to the conservation of biodiversity and the prevention of soil degradation [58]. The ecosystem is also home to a number of tourism practices, as it has enormous potential for hunting [59], the breeding of fighting bulls, and intangible heritage at serious risk, as is the case with some traditional

trades (cork extraction, pruning of branches, charcoal making, etc.) [60]. It can, therefore, generate an important value chain [61].

Areas dedicated to olive cultivation also abound in the study area, which occupied an approximate area of 287.207 hectares in 2019 [62]. This crop is likely to attract a new type of tourist interested in learning about the whole culture surrounding olive groves and olive oil, serving as an alternative for the development of the rural world [63]. In fact, a series of intangible values can be deduced, such as oleotourism, oleoculture, oleoecology, olive growing, olive health, and oleoeconomy [64]. The importance of this variety of tourism has been the subject of numerous studies, many of them focused on Andalusia and Extremadura. Many of them had a special focus on the demand for olive oil and olive oil products [65,66] or the market [67].

Another peculiar landscape of Extremadura is made up of vineyards, very concentrated in the region of Tierra de Barros, although there are other areas, albeit occupying a smaller area. The total surface area of the vineyards is approximately 85,785 hectares [68]. There is consensus when considering wine tourism as a potential factor to favor the socio-economic development of rural areas [69]. For this reason, it is common to find references to wine tourism in the literature [70–73]. There is, therefore, no doubt about its consideration as a tourist resource.

Alongside these agricultural landscapes, there are those dedicated to the cultivation of fruit trees, which occupy an area of 18,834 hectares [74]. Some of them have become real tourist attractions, even if only ephemerally, as is the case with the cherry trees, which are very abundant in the Jerte Valley. During the early spring, more than 1.5 million cherry trees bloom in only two weeks. Its role as an attraction for tourists of different profiles culminated with the inclusion of the Cherry Blossom Festival as a Festival of National Tourist Interest in 2010 under the Order ITC/1763/2006 of 3 May [75]. Naturally, other fruit trees also bloom in other places, although they do not reach the spectacular nature of the former, given their enormous concentration and abundance.

Likewise, the study area has important extensions dedicated to the cultivation of cereal crops, which is a natural habitat of different characteristic species of birds. Among them, we can mention the Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*), Montagu's Harrier (*Circus pygargus*), and an endless number of steppe birds. At the same time, the chromatic range of these landscapes fluctuates throughout the different seasons of the year. In addition, this vast expanse contains an important biocultural heritage [76].

Along with the richness of the more or less anthropized landscapes, there is a rich material cultural heritage belonging to different historical periods. Among them, of special relevance are the Historic Sites and other Assets of Cultural Interest, as well as the World Heritage Cities [1,33,52].

In the autonomous community as a whole, there are no data on the agritourism modality, so only the situation of rural tourism lodgings as a whole can be analyzed. They have followed a clear trend of growth, surpassing the increase experienced by tourists. From this, we can deduce a clear mismatch between supply and demand, which was very developed during the economic and financial crisis. According to data collected by the National Statistics Institute (INE) in the Rural Tourism Accommodation Occupancy Survey (EOTR) [77], in 2001, the number of travelers amounted to 12,910 and originated 38,366 overnight stays, with an occupancy rate per place of 23.31% among only 425 offered. In 2015, the growth resulted in reaching 6737 vacancies, which accommodated 56,824 travelers, totaling 114,579 overnight stays, although the occupancy rate was reduced to 19.87%. In 2023, 9347 bed places, 229,399 travelers, and 538,785 overnight stays were reached.

This significant growth in numerical terms masks three fundamental problems in this sector. The first is the marked seasonality, with a high level of tourists and overnight stays in the months of August and July but also during Easter and some long weekends. The second is the low average length of stay, currently at 2.35 days for all accommodations. The third, perhaps the most worrying, is the low occupancy rate, currently at 15.84%.

These problems are exacerbated by the small size of the rural lodgings, which are mostly family-run establishments with little or no capacity to negotiate with tour operators. In fact, 67.4% of these lodgings have a maximum of 10 vacancies, a figure that drops to 27.6% in the case of those offering between 11 and 25 vacancies. Barely 5% of these establishments have more than 25 beds. In addition, to market their accommodations, they resort to large marketing platforms, which reduces their profit margins considerably. This fact is further aggravated by the lack of a central reservation center to manage all bookings and the dependence on external marketing platforms. Therefore, it is understandable that it is necessary to look for alternatives that serve to generate homogeneous groups of lodgings that are capable of jointly promoting the value of the attractions of the territory.

In line with this problem, it should be noted that the evolution of supply and demand parameters implies the need to undertake corrective measures in this sector, especially in those areas that are far from the main tourist area for this modality, the north of the province of Cáceres, as defined by the INE [78]. In this area, there is a concentration of bathing areas in gorges and mountains, attractions that are lacking in the rest of the territory, at least with the entity of the aforementioned area. The role of the mountain as a tourist resource is evident as a place of biodiversity, where cultural landscapes also coexist and serve to promote sustainable tourism activities [79]. This makes it necessary to seek solutions that involve taking advantage of the tourist attractions that may exist, and among them, landscapes should play a key role in the promotion of new tourism products based on different types of experiences. Among them, gastronomy, which is based on rural culinary knowledge, is trying to be promoted as a key resource for rural areas [80], complementing other attractions. There is a wide value chain around agrotourism, although it has been little studied in areas such as this study area, where one of the dominant landscapes, the *dehesa*, stands as a real business niche given the diversity of activities and experiences that can be carried out [61].

### 2.2. Workflow

The research followed a simple but rigorous methodological process (Figure 2) focused on the combination of qualitative and quantitative, numerical, and territorial aspects.

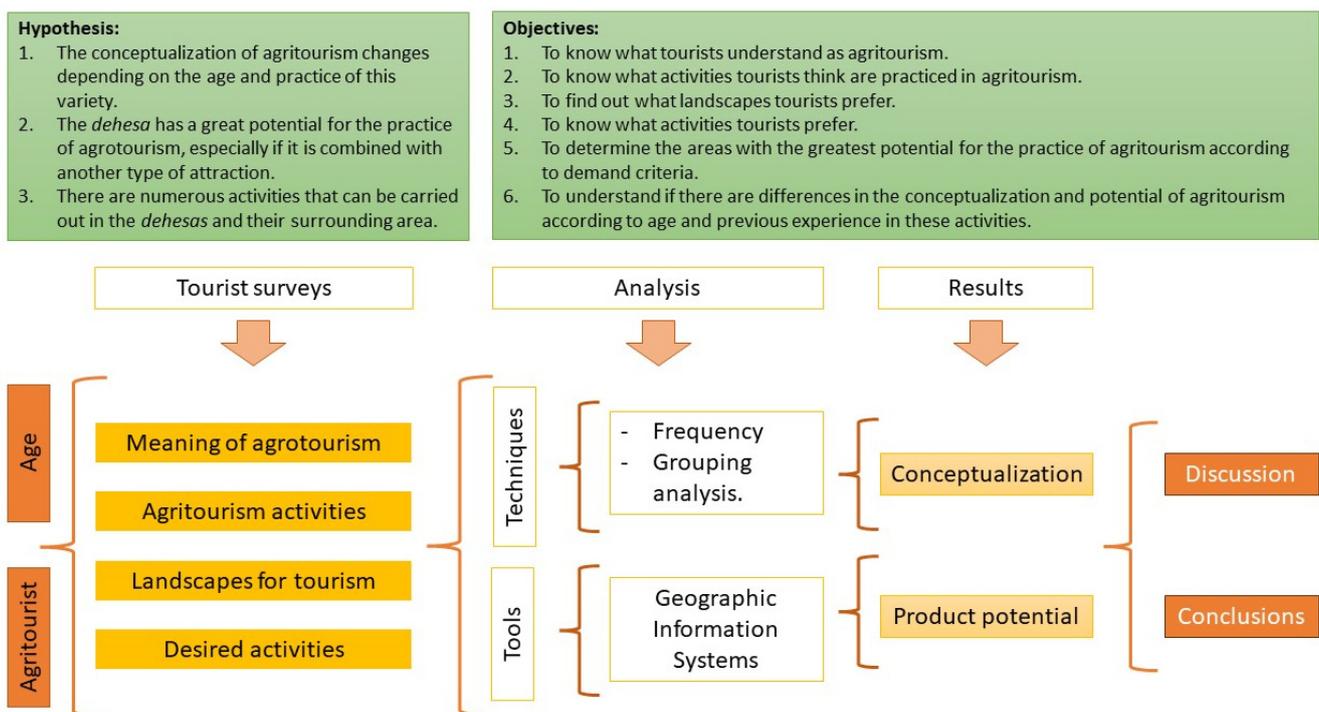


Figure 2. Methodological scheme.

First of all, it was necessary to obtain baseline information by investigating the demand. For this purpose, a questionnaire was prepared and answered by a total of 511 rural tourists. Their opinions served as the basis for the rest of the study.

Secondly, agritourism has been conceptualized according to the criteria expressed by the demand, and these views have been applied to obtain potential products [1]. Knowing the opinion of rural tourists regarding the dominant agrarian landscapes and the activities they prefer to do during their vacations is key to the development of agrotourism. This type of tourism must be oriented according to these two aspects, so we chose to apply cluster mapping tools incorporated by the GIS software (ArcGIS Pro 3.0.3) used. Specifically, grouping analysis was used as an effective tool to determine the groupings of rural lodgings. These groupings were based on the existence of common agrarian landscapes and the spatial proximity of the lodgings.

Thirdly, the information was analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques and then implemented in a Geographic Information System. Among the statistical techniques, frequency distribution was chosen. At the same time, grouping analysis was used to generate spatial clusters in line with what is advocated in other studies [9] using ArcGIS Pro [81].

The use of this geostatistical technique has a clear foundation in the literature, so, in our case, it was used to establish groups of rural lodgings that present similar agrarian landscapes. The operation of the tool has been profusely explained in the literature, which has even explained the differences between the creation of clusters by resorting to spatial restriction or omitting it. It seeks to create clusters that have the greatest similarity between all their components and the greatest difference with the rest of the clusters [9].

This tool has multiple configurations, either by applying a spatial constraint or omitting it. In the first case, the double analysis (quantitative and spatial proximity) would be used, while in the second case, only calculations based on numerical attributes would be performed. Since rural lodgings, which were created as point entities, were analyzed, the Delaunay triangulation options and the number of close neighbors were the most appropriate [81]. Of both possibilities, in the analyzed case, the second one obtained better results, especially when eight neighbors were used.

Since a spatial constraint was used to establish the groups (eight neighbors), the tool created a minimum spanning tree summarizing both the spatial relationships and the similarity of the data. It converted all rural accommodations into nodes connected by weighted boundaries, whose weight was proportional to the similarity of the accommodations it connected. From the first tree, a new branch was disaggregated, identifying a new group by selecting the edge to be cut, taking into account that it minimized the lack of similarity in the resulting groups. This procedure was repeated until the number of groups determined by the pseudo-statistical index F Calinski–Harabasz was reached.

Finally, the results obtained were discussed in line with the hypotheses and objectives, and conclusions were drawn.

### 2.3. Materials

The information that served as the basis for the study came from two distinct sources, depending on the type of data provided. On the one hand, the maps used in this study were prepared by the National Geographic Institute (IGN, Madrid, Spain) [82] and the Territorial Information System of Extremadura (SITEX) [83] and Corine LandCover [84] created under a Creative Commons CC-BY 4.0 International license, which protects their free and unrestricted use for legitimate purposes with the only obligation to acknowledge and mention their origin and ownership. The working scale chosen was 1:100,000, as it is sufficiently detailed for the purposes established in this research. Its spatial resolution was 20 m. On the other hand, the information for the demand analysis was obtained after carrying out 511 surveys of tourists who visited Extremadura in 2023.

The questionnaire was prepared by taking into account five basic sections (Table 1). On the one hand, sociodemographic information on gender and age was collected. In

addition, although it was not used in this analysis, the survey collected other information related to educational level, employment status, and origin. In the remaining sections, information was collected on the characteristics that defined agritourism; information was also collected on their previous experience in this specific segment of rural tourism. Finally, they were asked about the landscapes they preferred to spend their vacations in and the activities they preferred to do.

**Table 1.** Structure of the questionnaire.

Questions	Answers	Questions	Answers
Gender	Male	Favorite inland landscapes for vacations	Areas cultivated with fruit trees
	Female		Dehesas
	Other		Spaces dedicated to grain crops
Age	18 to 25 years old		Protected natural areas
	26 to 35 years old		Small rural communities
	36 to 45 years old		Olivares
	46 to 55 years old		Other landscapes
	56 to 65 years old		Vineyards
Meaning of agritourism	Overnight in rural accommodations		Bathing areas in rivers, gorges or reservoirs
	Overnight stay on an agricultural or livestock farm		Mountain areas
	Overnight stay on an agricultural or livestock farm and participation in farming activities.		Beekeeping
	Practice tourism in direct contact with nature		Hunting
	Tourism to learn about the way of life in the rural world	Adventure sports (zip line, mountain biking, rafting. . .)	
Aspects related to agritourism	Carrying out activities on an agricultural or livestock farm, even if you spend the night elsewhere.	Elaboration of typical homemade products (cheese, sausages, sweets. . .)	
	Lodging on agricultural and livestock farms only	Photography	
	Rural lodging	Navigation on reservoirs and rivers	
	The enjoyment of the freedom and tranquility offered by the rural world.	Observation of the sky	
	Attendance at gastronomic festivals, visits to markets of traditional food products, etc.	Participation in agricultural activities (planting, harvesting, pruning, etc.).	
	Education and awareness of the values of the rural milieu	Participation in livestock activities (grazing, milking. . .)	
	Participation in agricultural and livestock tasks	Participate in gastronomic tours	
Interest agritourism	I do not know	Participation in craft workshops	
	No, because I have no interest	Harvesting of local products (asparagus, mushrooms, etc.).	
	I have not yet had the opportunity	Hiking	
	Yes, but I don't want to repeat	Visits to olive oil mills	
	Yes, I want to repeat it	Visit to wineries	
		Activities preferred by rural tourists	Visits to natural areas to see flora and fauna
			Visits to monuments, museums and other cultural venues
			Visits to fighting bull farms
			Visits to game farms
			Visits to geological formations and mines

All the questions allowed for only one answer, so respondents had to choose the option that most suited them. Only in the questions referring to the landscapes and activities they preferred to do was it possible to assign a score from 1 to 5 for each of the questions. By using weighted averages, a summary score was obtained for each activity.

The territorial distribution of the surveys was carried out, seeking territorial representativeness based on the landscape criterion so that there would be a similar representation in all of them. This ensured that the sample was not biased toward a certain type of landscape.

On the other hand, the selection of the travelers consulted was random, although a stratification similar to that shown by the age structure of those who practice rural tourism was followed (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Age distribution of the sample.

	Encuestados
From 18 to 25 years old	15.9%
From 26 to 35 years old	20.2%
From 36 to 45 years old	22.5%
From 46 to 55 years old	17.8%
From 56 to 65 years old	13.1%
Over 65 years old	10.6%

The technical data sheet of the survey (Table 3), carried out following stratified sampling, demonstrated its statistical soundness. It was reliable since, with a 95% confidence interval, a sampling error of 4.3% was obtained. These calculations were made taking into account the data on rural tourism travelers published by the National Institute of Statistics [78].

**Table 3.** Survey data sheet.

Descriptor	
Universe	237,327 rural tourists (INE, 2023)
Sample	511
Confidence Interval	95%
Sampling error	4.3
Date	Year 2023
Type	Stratified random sampling

The selection of the travelers consulted was random, although a stratification similar to that shown by the age structure of those who practice rural tourism was followed. The fundamental axes on which the survey was developed were, on the one hand, the age structure, which was crucial for understanding whether the rest of the survey presented differences according to age interval. With this, a possible tendency to change preferences or interests could be established, circumstances that could be applied later in a tourism planning process. The conceptualization of agritourism was also considered a key factor in determining whether tourists recognize it as a specific type of tourism or, on the contrary, are unaware of what it consists of. In a complementary manner, we inquired about the activities that tourists associate with agritourism. On the other hand, the previous questions were completed, with another one related to the interest in practicing it. In addition, with a view to planning the activity and focusing on the ideal places for its practice, we asked about the preferred landscapes of tourist interest, as well as the activities in which they would be interested.

Both types of data, numerical and geographic, were conveniently treated and served as the basis for the design of a GIS project. This tool made it possible to obtain the preferred areas for agritourism according to the statistical results offered by the opinions of the demand.

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. Agritourism from the Demand Point of View

At the conceptual level, agritourism has a multitude of meanings for experts from different scientific branches. However, given that it can become a tourism product, it is useful to gather information on the demand. To this end, this analysis focused on the answers to three specific questions. The first one tried to reveal the meaning of agritourism for tourists. The second was related to the activities that tourists associate with agritourism.

Finally, the third sought to discover whether they had any previous experience that they could qualify as agritourism. In addition, in these cases, age and intention to engage in agritourism activities were used as discriminating criteria in such a way that the frequencies of responses were obtained by means of cross tables.

### 3.1.1. Significance of Agritourism

The results of the survey show that the meaning of agritourism is not clear to tourists (Table 4). In fact, when this item was analyzed globally, only 34.6% agreed with most of the literature when they defined it as “staying overnight on an agricultural or livestock farm and participating in agricultural work”. Moreover, for 18.4% of them, agritourism is centered on “carrying out activities on an agricultural or livestock farm even if they spend the night elsewhere”, from which it can be deduced that they attach little or no importance to the fact of spending the night on the farm, compared with 4.5% who conceived it as “spending the night on an agricultural or livestock farm”. Likewise, confusion increased when conceiving of types of lodging, natural environment, or rural world. Thus, the results show that 20.7% of rural tourists defined agritourism as “practicing tourism in direct contact with nature”, 17.2% as “practicing tourism to learn about the way of life in the rural world”, and 4.5% even stated that it consists of “staying overnight in rural lodgings”. There is, therefore, significant conceptual confusion despite the fact that the interviewees were tourists in rural environments.

**Table 4.** Meaning of agritourism according to age range.

	18 to 25 Years Old	26 to 35 Years Old	36 to 45 Years Old	46 to 55 Years Old	56 to 65 Years Old	More than 65 Years Old	Global
Overnight in rural accommodations	7.41%	1.94%	4.35%	6.59%	4.48%	1.85%	4.5%
Overnight stay on an agricultural or livestock farm	7.41%	5.83%	2.61%	4.40%	4.48%	1.85%	4.5%
Overnight stay on an agricultural or livestock farm and participation in farming activities.	32.10%	33.01%	25.22%	35.16%	43.28%	50.00%	34.6%
Practice tourism in direct contact with nature	18.52%	18.45%	34.78%	17.58%	16.42%	9.26%	20.7%
Tourism to learn about the way of life in the rural world	13.58%	18.45%	13.91%	16.48%	16.42%	29.63%	17.2%
Carrying out activities on an agricultural or livestock farm, even if you spend the night elsewhere.	20.99%	22.33%	19.13%	19.78%	14.93%	7.41%	18.4%

When it was decided to discern whether there were differences in the conception of agritourism according to age, it was found that they were significant in specific cases. In this sense, it is striking that, although the correct answer tended to reach high percentages across all ages, these percentages fluctuated considerably. The cohort between 36 and 45 years of age reached a minimum value of 25.22%, while it reached 50% when analyzing those over 65 years of age.

A careful analysis of the age group between 36 and 45 years shows that it tended to differ from the rest of the cohorts, either by reaching higher or lower values. This happened when agritourism was defined as the practice of tourism in contact with nature (34.78%), while the percentage dropped to 18% in the rest of the groups, except for those over 65 years of age, where it reached the lowest value. This last cohort also presented an important polarization since, although it was the one that mostly gave the correct definition, it was also the one that produced some inaccuracies by assimilating it to a type of tourism focused on getting to know the rural world. Nevertheless, it is understood that the conceptual differences are due to a lack of terminological concreteness at all levels.

The meaning of agritourism was also analyzed in terms of the interest or experience that respondents had in participating in this activity (Table 5). In this case, the results also show that the majority of respondents considered agritourism as spending the night on a farm or livestock farm and participating in agricultural work, although there were also

those who understood it as the realization of agricultural and livestock activities even when there is no overnight stay. Many tourists also assimilated it with direct contact with nature or with getting to know rural life.

**Table 5.** Meaning of agritourism according to interest in the practice of the activity.

	No, Because I Have No Interest	No, I Have Not Yet Had the Opportunity	Yes, but I Do Not Want to Repeat It	Yes, I Want to Repeat It
Overnight in rural accommodations	6.35%	3.66%	3.03%	5.24%
Overnight stay on an agricultural or livestock farm	6.35%	4.71%	6.06%	3.14%
Overnight stay on an agricultural or livestock farm and participation in farming activities.	68.25%	27.23%	33.33%	31.41%
Practice tourism in direct contact with nature	3.17%	25.65%	18.18%	22.51%
Tourism to learn about the way of life in the rural world	6.35%	16.23%	19.70%	20.94%
Carrying out activities on an agricultural or livestock farm, even if you spend the night elsewhere.	9.52%	22.51%	19.70%	16.75%

It is striking that these patterns were followed even by those who claimed to have practiced this activity. Those who had no interest in carrying it out deserve special mention since 68.25% recognized the definition most widely accepted in the literature. The important lack of knowledge that existed among those who had not yet practiced agritourism as a specific type of rural tourism stands out. Note the confusion that occurred with the practice of tourism in direct contact with nature and with the carrying out of agricultural activities even when there was no overnight stay.

This plurality of opinions, independent of previous experience in the practice of the activity or the intention to practice it, requires clarification for the correct design of agritourism products. This would avoid possible vagueness in them and, above all, greater security for the demand because they would know at all times what to expect from their tourist experience.

It is clear, therefore, that both age and previous experience in the practice of agritourism play a decisive role in the tourists' definition of this type of rural tourism.

### 3.1.2. Aspects Related to Agritourism

The analysis of the aspects that rural tourists associate with agritourism is quite interesting because it can give indications of what they expect to find in the activity (Table 6). Thus, it stands out that 45.99% of them believed that education and awareness of the values of the rural environment are unquestionable. In fact, regardless of the age of the respondents, the majority believed this to be true, although in different proportions. Next, the enjoyment of the freedom and tranquility offered by the rural world is another aspect that is clearly related to agritourism. In this case, overall, 17.61% of those surveyed reflected this.

On the other hand, 13.89% linked it to participation in agricultural tasks, 5.68% to rural lodging, and 5.48% to attendance at gastronomic festivals or visits to markets of traditional agri-food products. On the other hand, 4.5% related it exclusively to lodging on agricultural farms, and 6.8% did not know which aspects could be linked to agritourism.

These opinions reflect a clear bias on the part of tourists toward the possibility of taking advantage of the opportunity to educate and raise awareness of the problems offered by the rural world, to which other key factors can be added. These are the freedom and tranquility offered by the rural world, participation in agricultural tasks, and even attendance at gastronomic festivals and visits to markets of traditional agri-food products. It follows that there are certain immaterial values (education and tranquility) that seduce tourists and that should be taken into account when designing a possible tourism product. Something similar happens when the offer of lodging is linked to participation in agricultural activities.

**Table 6.** Aspects related to agritourism according to age range.

	18 to 25 Years Old	26 to 35 Years Old	36 to 45 Years Old	46 to 55 Years Old	56 to 65 Years Old	More than 65 Years Old	Global
Lodging on agricultural and livestock farms only	21.74%	8.70%	8.70%	39.13%	8.70%	13.04%	4.50%
Rural lodging	20.69%	10.34%	20.69%	20.69%	10.34%	17.24%	5.68%
The enjoyment of the freedom and tranquility offered by the rural world.	18.89%	17.78%	21.11%	23.33%	10.00%	8.89%	17.61%
Attendance at gastronomic festivals, visits to markets of traditional food products, etc.	17.86%	21.43%	28.57%	17.86%	3.57%	10.71%	5.48%
Education and awareness of the values of the rural milieu	14.04%	25.11%	22.13%	14.04%	14.89%	9.79%	45.99%
Participation in agricultural and livestock tasks	12.68%	16.90%	29.58%	15.49%	16.90%	8.45%	13.89%
I do not know	17.14%	14.29%	20.00%	17.14%	14.29%	17.14%	6.85%

When the opinion on each of these aspects was analyzed in detail according to age, it was observed that no common patterns were followed. This implies that, regardless of age, agritourism is linked to certain actions. At any age, it is usually assimilated with rural lodging. On the other hand, when it comes to lodging on agricultural farms, the percentages of assimilation were higher among middle-aged tourists (46 to 55 years of age) and among those under 26 years of age. On the other hand, idyllic visions, such as the enjoyment of the freedom and tranquility offered by the rural world, appeared as one of the elements associated with agritourism among those under 55 years of age. Something similar happened with the attendance of gastronomic festivals.

With more marked differences between age groups, elements such as participation in agricultural tasks appeared to be the least assimilated to this variety of rural tourism on the part of the youngest and oldest members of the population. Something similar happened with education and awareness of the values of the rural environment. Likewise, there is no clear criterion that explains the lack of knowledge of the aspects linked to agritourism.

On the other hand, previous experience in agritourism reflects two interesting realities (Table 7). The first is that there is a predominance of those who have already practiced the activity and want to repeat it; there are also those who have not had the opportunity to do so but do not rule it out. There is, therefore, an important market niche that can benefit from the implementation of agritourism products and initiatives. In addition, among them, there is the consideration of education and awareness of the values of the rural environment, as well as attendance at gastronomic festivals and, obviously, lodging on agricultural farms. The second, on the other hand, shows a certain dissatisfaction with the activity developed since there are worrying percentages of tourists who did not want to repeat the experience. This fact should be analyzed in depth to determine the possible causes and impose the necessary measures to reduce these percentages. It is worrying when 13.79% of respondents linked agritourism with rural lodging or education and awareness of the way of life in these areas.

**Table 7.** Aspects related to agritourism according to interest in the practice of the activity.

	No, Because I Have No Interest	No, I Have Not Yet Had the Opportunity	Yes, but I Do Not Want to Repeat It	Yes, I Want to Repeat It
Lodging on agricultural and livestock farms only	0.00%	47.83%	8.70%	43.48%
Rural lodging	13.79%	13.79%	13.79%	58.62%
The enjoyment of the freedom and tranquility offered by the rural world.	12.22%	26.67%	13.33%	47.78%
Attendance at gastronomic festivals, visits to markets of traditional food products, etc.	0.00%	39.29%	10.71%	50.00%

Table 7. Cont.

	No, Because I Have No Interest	No, I Have Not Yet Had the Opportunity	Yes, but I Do Not Want to Repeat It	Yes, I Want to Repeat It
Education and awareness of the values of the rural milieu	12.77%	40.85%	15.32%	31.06%
<b>Participation in agricultural and livestock tasks</b>	19.72%	39.44%	8.45%	32.39%
<b>I do not know</b>	11.43%	48.57%	8.57%	31.43%

The linking of activities to agritourism once again highlights the lack of knowledge that exists in a considerable part of the demand for rural tourism, in which age does not play as much of a role as does previous experience.

### 3.1.3. Interest in the Practice of Agritourism

A total of 25.24% of those interviewed stated that they would not be potential clients of agritourism products. This is because they lacked interest and because they had practiced agritourism but did not want to repeat the experience. In fact, 12.33% were not interested in agritourism and, even worse, 12.92% had practiced agritourism but did not plan to repeat the experience (Table 8). However, 37.38% of them had not had the opportunity to practice it, which is understandable if one takes into account the small number of rural lodgings located in the study area that could be classified as agritourism. The same percentage was found among those who wished to repeat the experience. In other words, there was a significant number of tourists who were or may have been interested in practicing agritourism, although it should be noted that their conception of this modality was disparate, as we have seen above.

Table 8. Interest in agritourism according to age range.

	18 to 25 Years Old	26 to 35 Years Old	36 to 45 Years Old	46 to 55 Years Old	56 to 65 Years Old	More than 65 Years Old	Global
No, because I have no interest	22.22%	20.63%	22.22%	11.11%	11.11%	12.70%	12.33%
I have not yet had the opportunity	19.90%	25.13%	21.47%	16.23%	10.99%	6.28%	37.38%
Yes, but I don't want to repeat	15.15%	16.67%	13.64%	27.27%	15.15%	12.12%	12.92%
Yes, I want to repeat it	9.95%	16.23%	26.70%	18.32%	15.18%	13.61%	37.38%

It is also noteworthy that those who wished to repeat the activity were between 36 and 45 years of age, as opposed to those who felt frustrated and did not want to repeat it, who occupied the upper cohort. A positive aspect is that there were significant percentages across all age groups who had not yet had the opportunity to experience agritourism, thus indicating a clear niche of potential customers.

### 3.1.4. Landscapes of Tourist Interest in Inland Areas

Knowing which landscapes are most attractive and interesting to tourists is of great importance for tourism planning and product design. The latter will be more successful if they are designed with these opinions in mind (Table 9). Thus, when the responses to this question were analyzed, it was striking that tourists preferred to spend their vacations in places where there are protected natural areas, followed, at a very short distance, by those who would opt for bathing areas in rivers, gorges, or reservoirs. Somewhat further away were those who preferred mountain areas and small rural centers. This fact is significant because, in all cases, more than 70% of participants gave these responses. It is thus understood that they are considered to be the main resources on which rural tourism in Extremadura should be based, as, in fact, is the case.

**Table 9.** Favorite inland landscapes for vacations.

	Yes	Occasionally	No
Areas cultivated with fruit trees	36.20%	44.81%	18.98%
Dehesas	61.64%	32.09%	6.26%
Spaces dedicated to grain crops	38.36%	39.53%	22.11%
Protected natural areas	78.47%	20.35%	1.17%
Small rural communities	70.45%	28.57%	0.98%
Olivares	55.97%	36.79%	7.24%
Other landscapes	64.38%	34.05%	1.57%
Vineyards	63.41%	31.70%	4.89%
Bathing areas in rivers, gorges, or reservoirs	77.89%	21.72%	0.39%
Mountain areas	72.60%	26.03%	1.37%

In spite of this, vineyards, dehesas, olive groves, and other landscapes also attract a considerable number of tourists. In the first three cases, there is a clear link with agritourism, whether oriented to the practice of the specific modality of wine tourism, olive oil tourism, or other more open ones focused on the pasture. The least valued landscapes were those dedicated to the cultivation of cereals and, surprisingly, areas with fruit crops. In both cases, less than 40% of the responders expressed a preference for these, although we should not forget that this is still a significant percentage. Moreover, in both cases, it is recognized that they could hold appeals on occasion.

Occasionally, many of these landscapes could be visited, highlighting the areas destined to the cultivation of fruit trees and cereal crops. There were also significant percentages of participants who preferred pasture areas, olive groves, and vineyards.

In addition, it should be noted that some of these landscapes overlap in territory, from which it is deduced that the attractiveness of these areas will be higher. The most significant cases are the mountain areas, very close to the bathing areas in gorges. Likewise, many of the protected natural areas are characterized by a pasture landscape, or there are SPAs in areas dedicated to cereal cultivation.

A combined analysis of the responses according to the age criterion, obtained after adding the affirmative percentage and half of the percentage expressing doubts about visiting the defined landscapes, reflected a situation very similar to that described above (Table 10). However, there were certain peculiarities that tended to affect very specific landscapes. On the one hand, bathing areas, protected natural spaces, and mountain areas showed little percentage variation when the responses were segregated by age groups. Something very similar happened in areas with lower valuations, such as those dedicated to the cultivation of cereals and fruit trees. On the other hand, some differences could be seen in the case of olive groves, vineyards, and other undetermined landscapes, which were more highly valued as the age of the respondents increased. A case apart was the dehesa, which is preferred more prominently by middle-aged people. Nevertheless, the differences between cohorts were not so significant as to be able to target specific products to specific ages.

The relationship between previous experience in agritourism and landscapes revealed very significant percentages of tourists who wished to repeat the experience (Table 11). However, the highest percentages were detected for the areas cultivated with fruit trees, not forgetting the importance of the “Cherry Blossom Festival”, for example. Next in importance were the cereal areas, possibly due to the fact that there are numerous Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for birds or Special Conservation Areas (SCAs), where many steppe birds that are protected develop their life cycle. In the rest of the landscapes, the intention to repeat the activity exceeded 35%, as was the case with the dehesas (38.78%), olive groves (39.09%), and vineyards (37.86%), from which we can deduce the importance that the creation of specific agritourism products, centered on these crops, could have.

On the other hand, there was also a significant percentage of tourists who had not had the opportunity to practice agritourism, highlighting the values achieved in protected natural areas, although they were not negligible in other landscapes. Finally, there were

about 12% of tourists who did not want to repeat the experience, which again shows the need to know how to focus on the agritourism product to avoid these dissatisfactions on the part of the demand.

**Table 10.** Preferred inland landscapes for vacations by age range.

	From 18 to 25 Years Old	From 26 to 35 Years Old	From 36 to 45 Years Old	From 46 to 55 Years Old	From 56 to 65 Years Old	Over 65 Years Old
Areas cultivated with fruit trees	13.75%	20.25%	23.93%	17.93%	14.02%	10.12%
Dehesas	15.64%	20.40%	22.94%	18.24%	12.94%	9.84%
Spaces dedicated to grain crops	12.93%	21.39%	22.37%	18.19%	13.80%	11.32%
Protected natural areas	15.15%	21.13%	23.43%	16.80%	13.12%	10.37%
Small rural communities	15.95%	20.26%	22.84%	17.53%	13.10%	10.33%
Olivares	14.82%	19.86%	22.33%	17.48%	13.93%	11.58%
Vineyards	15.64%	19.75%	22.43%	17.49%	13.58%	11.11%
Bathing areas in rivers, gorges, or reservoirs	15.03%	20.71%	23.21%	16.97%	13.61%	10.47%
Mountain areas	16.04%	20.14%	22.97%	17.34%	13.32%	10.20%
Other landscapes	15.85%	20.25%	22.20%	17.58%	13.38%	10.75%

**Table 11.** Favorite inland landscapes for vacations according to the interest in the practice of the activity.

	No, Because I Have No Interest	No, I Have Not Yet Had the Opportunity	Yes, but I Do Not Want to Repeat It	Yes, I Want to Repeat It
Areas cultivated with fruit trees	9.54%	36.34%	11.14%	42.98%
Dehesas	10.70%	37.81%	12.71%	38.78%
Spaces dedicated to grain crops	9.62%	37.25%	12.11%	41.02%
Protected natural areas	10.91%	40.04%	12.82%	36.23%
Small rural communities	12.10%	38.21%	12.77%	36.92%
Olivares	11.10%	36.87%	12.95%	39.09%
Vineyards	11.32%	37.65%	13.17%	37.86%
Bathing areas in rivers, gorges, or reservoirs	10.95%	40.32%	12.78%	35.94%
Mountain areas	11.75%	38.57%	13.17%	36.52%
Other landscapes	12.25%	37.10%	13.11%	37.54%

It is evident that there are landscapes that can play a key role in the configuration of agritourism in Extremadura since they are recognized by the tourists themselves as activities linked to this modality. Among them, there are some of the most identified with this activity, such as olive groves, vineyards, dehesas, and even areas used for growing fruit and cereal crops.

### 3.1.5. Activities of Interest

The main activities in which rural tourists showed an interest were centered on visits to monuments, wineries, and natural areas, as well as participation in gastronomic routes (Table 12). In all cases, the responses obtained exceed 70%. At the same time, the percentages, on some occasions, exceed 25%. In other words, these are activities that tourists are willing to do, so specific products aligned with them should be created. At a lower level are other activities, such as hiking, visits to olive oil mills, or sailing on reservoirs and rivers, which exceeded 60%, with a considerable percentage of people who also said that they were interested in doing them occasionally.

There were other activities that also accounted for a large number of responses. Among them, we can highlight the collection of local products, photography, participation in handicraft workshops, observation of the sky, visits to geological formations and mines, and the preparation of typical homemade products. Other activities were interesting but only for certain groups, such as hunting or beekeeping, visiting game or wild cattle farms, and participating in livestock and agricultural activities.

**Table 12.** Activities preferred by rural tourists.

	Yes	Occasionally	No
Beekeeping	10.57%	49.71%	39.73%
Hunting	14.68%	24.27%	61.06%
Adventure sports (zip line, mountain biking, rafting. . .)	49.51%	34.44%	16.05%
Elaboration of typical homemade products (cheese, sausages, sweets. . .)	50.10%	42.27%	7.63%
Photography	58.32%	36.99%	4.70%
Navigation on reservoirs and rivers	62.82%	32.68%	4.50%
Observation of the sky	56.75%	38.55%	4.70%
Participation in agricultural activities (planting, harvesting, pruning, etc.).	29.55%	45.40%	25.05%
Participation in livestock activities (grazing, milking. . .)	32.68%	40.70%	26.61%
Participate in gastronomic tours	71.62%	26.22%	2.15%
Participation in craft workshops	58.12%	35.03%	6.85%
Harvesting of local products (asparagus, mushrooms, etc.).	58.51%	32.68%	8.81%
Hiking	69.28%	27.01%	3.72%
Visits to olive oil mills	66.14%	30.33%	3.52%
Visit to wineries	72.41%	25.05%	2.54%
Visits to natural areas to see flora and fauna	71.43%	27.59%	0.98%
Visits to monuments, museums and other cultural venues	72.99%	26.03%	0.98%
Visits to fighting bull farms	44.81%	38.94%	16.24%
Visits to game farms	47.55%	38.94%	13.50%
Visits to geological formations and mines	51.27%	38.75%	9.98%

In general terms, a considerable part of these activities has a clear focus on agritourism, so it is necessary to consider them as possible niche activities that should be incorporated into rural lodgings. In fact, visits to wineries and oil mills stood out among the favorite activities that tourists would engage in, with 72.4% and 66.1% of them providing affirmative answers. These activities could be accompanied by the collection of local products (58.5%) and the preparation of typical homemade products (50.1%). On the other hand, visits to big game hunting and bullfighting ranches were also of considerable interest, according to the results, with percentages ranging between 47.6% and 44.8%, respectively. In contrast, active participation in activities such as grazing, milking, sowing, or harvesting accumulated lower percentages of response. Beekeeping stands out in this regard, with only 10.6% of respondents.

The preferences expressed by tourists corresponding to different age groups followed the same patterns described above. However, there were some interesting variations between the percentages offered by different age groups (Table 13), as in the case of activities that require a higher level of physical fitness or risk. In this sense, adventure sports and navigation on rivers and reservoirs were preferred by younger people, while older age cohorts preferred products more related to agritourism per se. Among these activities are visits to wineries and olive oil mills, the harvesting of local products, and participation in handicraft workshops. When it came to the youngest cohort, the activities that would be least likely to be carried out were beekeeping or participation in agricultural and livestock activities. The intermediate age cohorts practiced the proposed activities in a similar way.

**Table 13.** Activities preferred by rural tourists according to age range.

	18 to 25 Years Old	26 to 35 Years Old	36 to 45 Years Old	46 to 55 Years Old	56 to 65 Years Old	More than 65 Years Old
Beekeeping	10.19%	22.61%	24.63%	20.14%	14.47%	7.96%
Hunting	15.51%	20.67%	21.67%	23.15%	12.57%	6.43%
Adventure sports (zip line, mountain biking, rafting. . .)	19.26%	23.31%	25.32%	16.93%	9.82%	5.36%
Elaboration of typical homemade products (cheese, sausages, sweets. . .)	14.26%	19.38%	23.45%	18.53%	14.38%	10.01%
Photography	15.98%	20.42%	22.29%	17.82%	13.42%	10.08%
Navigation on reservoirs and rivers	16.44%	20.49%	23.32%	17.65%	13.32%	8.78%
Observation of the sky	16.45%	20.18%	22.04%	18.05%	13.56%	9.73%

Table 13. Cont.

	18 to 25 Years Old	26 to 35 Years Old	36 to 45 Years Old	46 to 55 Years Old	56 to 65 Years Old	More than 65 Years Old
Participation in agricultural activities (planting, harvesting, pruning, etc.).	11.51%	22.35%	26.28%	15.59%	13.88%	10.39%
Participation in livestock activities (grazing, milking...)	12.39%	23.18%	25.18%	15.43%	13.51%	10.31%
Participate in gastronomic tours	16.49%	20.58%	22.90%	17.79%	12.84%	9.41%
Participation in craft workshops	14.94%	19.24%	23.64%	18.05%	13.60%	10.54%
Harvesting of local products (asparagus, mushrooms, etc.).	15.26%	20.05%	22.90%	17.72%	13.05%	11.02%
Hiking	16.48%	19.92%	23.33%	17.69%	12.66%	9.92%
Visits to olive oil mills	15.09%	20.26%	22.84%	17.64%	13.28%	10.88%
Visit to wineries	15.72%	20.36%	23.33%	16.94%	13.20%	10.45%
Visits to natural areas to see flora and fauna	15.76%	20.22%	23.21%	17.38%	13.21%	10.22%
Visits to monuments, museums and other cultural sites	15.88%	20.71%	23.18%	16.95%	13.13%	10.15%
Visits to fighting bull farms	15.84%	20.34%	22.10%	16.93%	13.71%	11.09%
Visits to game farms	16.72%	19.33%	22.75%	16.44%	14.43%	10.33%
Visits to geological formations and mines	15.82%	19.11%	21.91%	18.19%	14.39%	10.57%

The situation described showed differences depending on whether the activity had been practiced (Table 14). In fact, beekeeping stood out in this aspect since 56% of those who had practiced it on some occasions wanted to repeat the experience. Something similar occurred with hunting, with over 46% of respondents having practiced it. It should also be noted that participation in agricultural and livestock activities was also among the experiences that those who wanted to repeat the experience have had, reaching 44.4% and 42.1%, respectively. The rest of the activities also reached high percentages, exceeding 36%. On the other hand, those who did not wish to repeat the agritourism experience were around 12% in most of the activities considered. However, beekeeping and participation in agricultural activities had lower percentages, below 9%, indicating that the experiences had been satisfactory.

Table 14. Activities preferred by rural tourists according to their interest in practicing the activity.

	No, Because I Have No Interest	No, I Have Not Yet Had the Opportunity	Yes, but I Do Not Want to Repeat It	Yes, I Want to Repeat It
Beekeeping	6.07%	29.64%	7.98%	56.31%
Hunting	10.69%	30.25%	12.94%	46.12%
Adventure sports (zip line, mountain biking, rafting...)	14.16%	35.64%	12.48%	37.71%
Elaboration of typical homemade products (cheese, sausages, sweets...)	12.99%	35.13%	12.18%	39.70%
Photography	12.60%	37.36%	13.28%	36.76%
Navigation on reservoirs and rivers	11.35%	37.99%	13.12%	37.54%
Observation of the sky	12.30%	36.90%	13.44%	37.36%
Participation in agricultural activities (planting, harvesting, pruning, etc.).	8.78%	38.34%	8.44%	44.44%
Participation in livestock activities (grazing, milking...)	7.99%	41.09%	8.80%	42.13%
Participate in gastronomic tours	11.58%	39.24%	12.47%	36.71%
Participation in craft workshops	12.15%	37.11%	12.97%	37.78%
Harvesting of local products (asparagus, mushrooms...)	11.89%	37.03%	12.69%	38.39%
Hiking	11.40%	38.67%	12.47%	37.45%
Visits to olive oil mills	11.47%	38.54%	12.78%	37.20%
Visit to wineries	11.51%	40.09%	12.15%	36.24%
Visits to natural areas to see flora and fauna	11.88%	38.75%	12.68%	36.69%
Visits to monuments, museums and other cultural venues	11.84%	38.99%	12.77%	36.41%
Visits to fighting bull farms	12.33%	37.03%	12.80%	37.84%
Visits to game farms	12.01%	35.21%	13.68%	39.10%
Visits to geological formations and mines	12.54%	35.92%	12.93%	38.60%

As had happened with other aspects, there was a significant percentage of tourists who had not yet enjoyed any tourism experience or even participated in activities such as those proposed. This circumstance should be taken into account when promoting them and designing tourism products. In addition to these facts, it can also be seen that an average of 11% of respondents had no interest in practicing any of these activities. The practice of adventure sports stands out in this point, with over 14% of respondents showing no interest, as opposed to activities eminently agrotouristic, such as participation in agricultural activities or beekeeping, which had values below 9%.

### 3.2. Vocation of the Territory for Agritourism Practice

The previous analyses served to determine the landscapes that those seeking rural tourism prefer for their vacations. Therefore, these analyses suggest the need to use this information to evaluate the vocation of the territory to promote agritourism initiatives (Table 15). In this sense, it was decided to evaluate these landscapes, establishing a percentage distribution for each one of them by taking into account the number of responses stating that “I would go for sure”. At the same time, lodgings and places in the rural modality that could benefit from this tourist vocation were included, as long as they were located within a radius of 2 km.

**Table 15.** Assignment of the weight of each type of landscape to the vocation of the territory for the practice of agritourism.

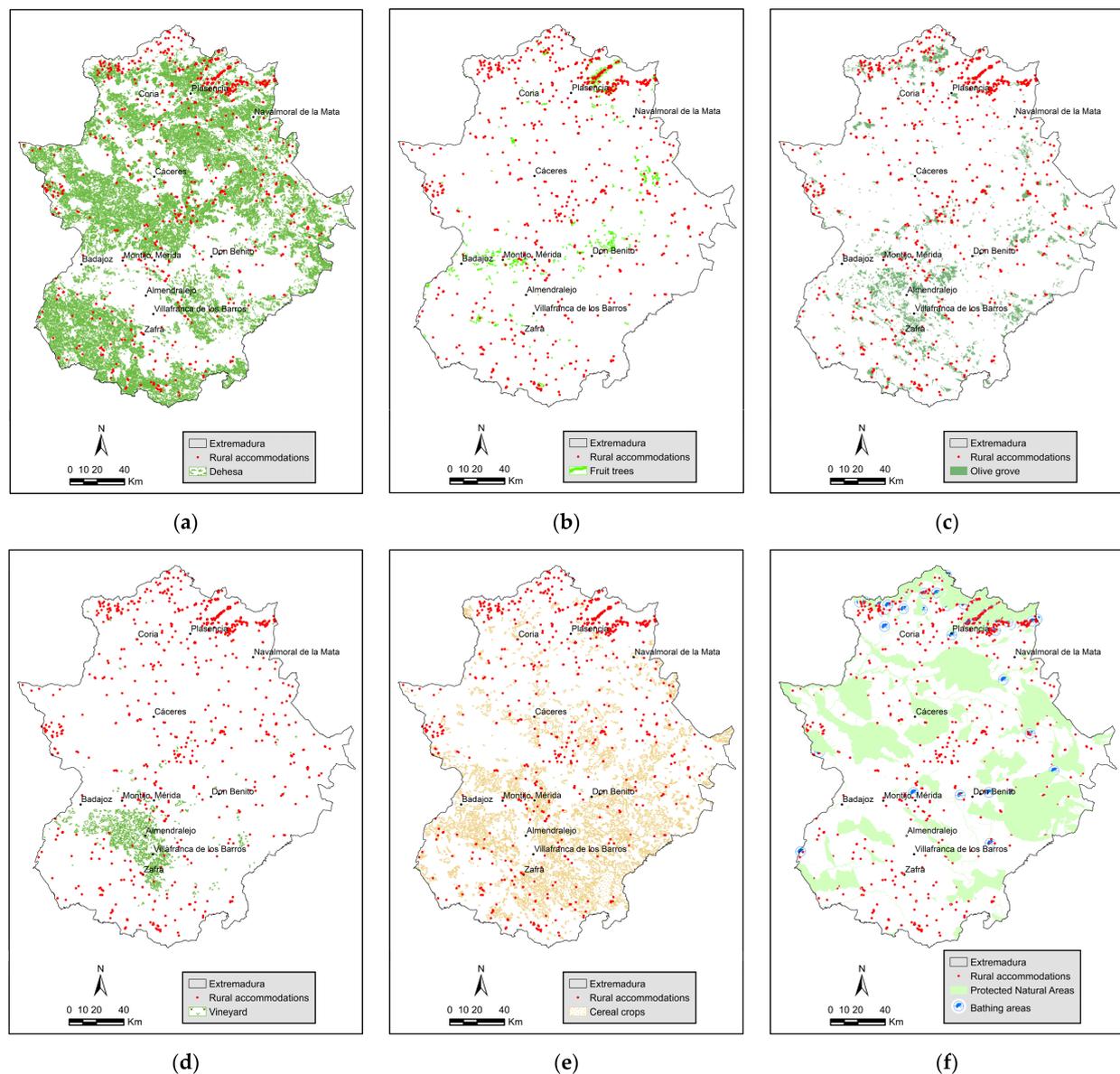
Landscape	Weight	Number of Rural Lodgings	Number of Places in Rural Lodgings.
Areas cultivated with fruit trees (*)	6%	341	3507
Dehesas (*)	10%	1042	10,314
Spaces devoted to grain crops (*)	6%	443	4730
Protected natural áreas	13%	865	8574
Small rural communities	11%	810	7910
Olivares (*)	9%	762	7742
Other landscapes	10%	NA	NA
Vineyards (*)	10%	55	577
Bathing areas in rivers, gorges, or reservoirs	13%	244	2447
Mountain áreas	12%	447	4656
Agritourism		1096	11,005
Total		1114	11,156

(\*): Agricultural landscape linked to agritourism.

#### 3.2.1. Territorial Distribution of the Agrarian Landscape Potential for Agritourism

The results show that 41% of the potential rural attractiveness was clearly linked to agritourism. To determine this percentage, fruit crops, cereal areas, dehesas, olive groves, and vineyards were taken into account. In addition, this value could be increased by adding the valuations of the Protected Natural Spaces or those referring to small population centers and even other attractions less involved with agritourism. It is clear that the potential for the practice of agritourism is enormous since, if the different types of landscape are taken into account, a good part of the establishments are located in the area of influence of the landscapes preferred by rural tourists to spend their vacations. This area of influence was set at 2 km from each establishment, a distance that allows easy access, even on foot, to any of them.

Among all the defined agrarian landscapes, the dehesas had 1042 establishments, with a total of 10,314 places (Figure 3a). It is, therefore, essential to generate a specific product for these environments based on this agrosystem, which perfectly combines agricultural and livestock use [85]. These areas are also home to the famous Iberian pig, which is famous for its Protected Designation of Origin [86].



**Figure 3.** Location of landscapes that can be used for agritourism and rural establishments: (a) dehesas; (b) fruit trees; (c) olive groves; (d) vineyards; (e) cereal areas; (f) bathing areas and Protected Natural Spaces.

In the areas cultivated with monoculture fruit trees, there were 341 accommodations, with a total of 3507 beds, 134 of which also coincided with the bathing areas, offering a total of 1345 beds. Undoubtedly, in addition to the enormous attraction of these areas for the practice of rural tourism in general, there is the possibility of taking advantage of the flowering and harvesting of fruit for agritourism (Figure 3b). Furthermore, the presence of bathing areas guarantees a greater attraction during the summer months. In the olive grove areas, there were 762 rural accommodations offering 7742 beds (Figure 3c). All this potential could be exploited to further promote the olive oil tourism product, especially in areas with Protected Designation of Origin.

Vineyards also give rise to a special form of agritourism: wine tourism. In the study area, it has little weight in the current accommodation offer, as only 55 establishments with 577 beds are located in the vicinity (Figure 3d), although there are also Protected Designations of Origin and Protected Geographical Indications [87]. On the other hand,

443 accommodation units and 4730 beds are located in the vicinity of cereal growing areas, although these are not as attractive as the other landscapes (Figure 3e).

Complementarily, there are other landscapes formed by the protected natural spaces of any type, which mark out Extremadura, in whose area of influence there are 865 rural accommodations. They offer 8574 bed places. Alongside these areas, the areas authorized for bathing, much more restricted in the territory and concentrated in the north, support 244 rural lodgings offering 2447 bed places. The small villages, meanwhile, are home to 810 rural establishments offering 7910 bed places. Despite this, this value would be considerably reduced if small municipalities with a high heritage value were taken as a reference. On the other hand, 218 accommodations and 2148 beds combine these three types of landscape (Figure 3f).

### 3.2.2. Accommodations and Tourism Potential for Agritourism

It is clear that the association between some lodgings and the landscapes preferred by the demand for rural tourism for the practice of agritourism allows for a clear association between agricultural activity and lodging. However, the same lodging can be linked to one or more activities developed in different agricultural landscapes. Therefore, it would be interesting to bet on the creation of territorial clusters according to the possible orientation of each of the rural establishments. The application of the Grouping Analysis technique in ArcGIS Pro v. 3 allowed for the establishment of rural lodging clusters in order to be able to promote activities jointly. This would allow for greater success in the creation of possible tourism products based on the vocation of the territory and, ultimately, in the design of quality brands.

After the application of this technique, by using the main agricultural landscapes recognized by the demand for rural tourism as variables and as a spatial restriction criterion for the eight closest neighbors according to Euclidean distance, 15 groups were obtained (Table 16). To determine the number of optimal groups, the Calinski–Harabasz pseudo-statistic F, which is a ratio that reflects the similarity within a group and the difference between groups, was used [81,88–90]. As can be seen in the calculations, the maximum value was reached with 15 clusters.

**Table 16.** Pseudo F-statistic per group.

Group	F-Statistic	Group	F-Statistic	Group	F-Statistic
7	14.5446	10	27.8300	13	33.5373
8	21.1025	11	30.7608	14	33.4927
9	23.8576	12	32.4198	15	37.4971 *

\* Optimal.

The summary statistics (Table 17) compared the variables (agricultural landscapes) within each group to each other. In addition to the descriptive statistical parameters, it calculated the R-value. This reflects how much of the variation in the baseline data was maintained after clustering, from which it follows that the higher the index obtained, the better the variable in question was at differentiating the entities (accommodations).

When the five selected agrarian landscapes interacted, it was clearly observed that both pasture and fruit trees had a higher  $R^2$ . This index was significantly lower in vineyards and cereal areas, although olive groves appeared to have a much lower weight. It can, therefore, be deduced that there were three key landscapes: dehesa preserved 41.89% of the initial data, fruit trees preserved 39.24%, and vineyards preserved 34.3%.

It also highlights that there were disparate means within each of these landscapes, and obviously, they exhibited different levels of variability, as can be deduced from the standard deviation. All this is related to the different distribution of lodges in each of these agrarian landscapes. In this sense, the dehesa variable had a mean of 0.94, which is very high if we take into account that the values were only 0 when the lodging was at a distance

of more than 2 km from them and 1 if they were within this radius. This also means that the standard deviation reached a value of 0.24.

**Table 17.** Group-wise summary.

Group	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	Share	Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	Share	Group
1 N = 37	1	0	1	1	0	Dehesa	0.5625	0.4961	0	1	1	9 N = 16
	0	0	0	0	0	Fruit tree	0.3125	0.4635	0	1	1	
	0.1081	0.3105	0	1	1	Vineyard	1	0	1	1	0	
	0.0811	0.2730	0	1	1	Cereal crops	1	0	1	1	0	
	0.9730	0.1622	0	1	1	Olive grove	1	0	1	1	0	
2 N = 11	1	0	1	1	0	Dehesa	1	0	1	1	0	10 N = 31
	0	0	0	0	0	Fruit tree	0.2903	0.4539	0	1	1	
	0	0	0	0	0	Vineyard	0	0	0	0	0	
	0	0	0	0	0	Cereal crops	0.8701	0.3352	0	1	1	
	1	0	1	1	0	Olive grove	0.9355	0.2457	0	1	1	
3 N = 39	1	0	1	1	0	Dehesa	0.9388	0.2397	0	1	1	11 N = 49
	1	0	1	1	0	Fruit tree	0.1224	0.3278	0	1	1	
	0	0	0	0	0	Vineyard	0.2449	0.4300	0	1	1	
	0	0	0	0	0	Cereal crops	0.8367	0.3696	0	1	1	
	0	0	0	0	0	Olive grove	0.7143	0.4518	0	1	1	
4 N = 40	1	0	1	1	0	Dehesa	0.9713	0.1671	0	1	1	12 N = 174
	1	0	1	1	0	Fruit tree	0.2874	0.4525	0	1	1	
	0	0	0	0	0	Vineyard	0	0	0	0	0	
	0	0	0	0	0	Cereal crops	0.1782	0.3826	0	1	1	
	1	0	1	1	0	Olive grove	0.7529	0.4313	0	1	1	
5 N = 10	1	0	1	1	0	Dehesa	1	0	1	1	0	13 N = 196
	0	0	0	0	0	Fruit tree	0.5051	0.5000	0	1	1	
	0	0	0	0	0	Vineyard	0.0102	0.1005	0	1	1	
	0	0	0	0	0	Cereal crops	0.2959	0.4565	0	1	1	
	0.9000	0.3000	0	1	1	Olive grove	0.7245	0.4468	0	1	1	
6 N = 15	1	0	1	1	0	Dehesa	0.9406	0.2363	0	1	1	14 N = 438
	1	0	1	1	0	Fruit tree	0.1005	0.3006	0	1	1	
	0	0	0	0	0	Vineyard	0.0411	0.1985	0	1	1	
	0	0	0	0	0	Cereal crops	0.5845	0.4928	0	1	1	
	0	0	0	0	0	Olive grove	0.6507	0.4768	0	1	1	
7 N = 27	1	0	1	1	0	Dehesa	0	0	0	0	0	15 N = 17
	1	0	1	1	0	Fruit tree	0.4118	0.4922	0	1	1	
	0	0	0	0	0	Vineyard	0.1765	0.3812	0	1	1	
	0	0	0	0	0	Cereal crops	0.6471	0.4779	0	1	1	
	0.7407	0.4382	0	1	1	Olive grove	0.4118	0.4922	0	1	1	
8 N = 8	0	0	0	0	0	Dehesa	0.9404	0.2367	0	1	0.4189	R <sup>2</sup> N = 1108
	0	0	0	0	0	Fruit tree	0.3078	0.4616	0	1	0.3924	
	0	0	0	0	0	Vineyard	0.0496	0.2172	0	1	0.3430	
	0	0	0	0	0	Cereal crops	0.3998	0.4899	0	1	0.2873	
	0.1250	0.3307	0	1	1	Olive grove	0.6877	0.4634	0	1	0.1806	

In the case of fruit orchards, the mean value was 0.31, and the standard deviation rose to 0.46, highlighting that there are many accommodations that are not within the reach of these landscapes. On the other hand, vineyards reached an average value of 0.049, with a standard deviation of 0.217. These values imply that few accommodations are found in the vicinity of this type of landscape.

Cereal areas and olive groves, with high averages and standard deviations, also corroborated that there are many lodges near these landscapes. However, their R<sup>2</sup> was lower, at 28.73% and 18.06%, respectively.

The analysis results of the 15 groups obtained reflect a different participation of agrarian landscapes, which is considered by the demand as linked to agritourism (Figure 4). They also reflect the existence of spatial agglomerations that facilitate the integration of rural lodgings in each of the groups, facilitating common actions in the face of the existing potential. In this sense, the groups followed very clear guidelines:

- Group 1: It was formed by a total of 37 rural lodgings located in the western sector of the Sierra de Gata region. Among the landscapes analyzed, the presence of dehesas and olive groves stood out. On the other hand, vineyards and areas dedicated to cereal cultivation were in the minority.
- Group 2: It was made up of 11 rural lodgings located in the western sector of the Sierra de Gata region. In this group, dehesas and olive groves were the dominant agricultural landscapes without the representation of vineyards and cereals.
- Group 3: It was made up of 39 rural lodgings located in the southwest sector of the Jerte Valley. The clearly dominant landscapes were fruit trees and dehesas.

- Group 4: It was composed of 40 rural lodgings located in the northwest sector of the Jerte Valley. It was dominated by fruit trees, olive groves, and dehesas.
- Group 5: It was made up of 10 rural lodgings located in the northeastern sector of the Jerte Valley. The dominant agricultural landscapes were dehesas and olive groves.
- Group 6: It was composed of 15 rural lodgings concentrated in the northeastern sector of the Jerte Valley. It was dominated by dehesas and fruit trees.
- Group 7: It was made up of 27 rural lodgings concentrated in the northeastern sector of the Jerte Valley. The predominant landscapes were fruit trees, dehesas, and, to a lesser extent, olive groves.
- Group 8: It was integrated by eight rural lodgings located in the region of Hurdes. The most important crop was the olive grove, although it had little weight.
- Group 9: It was made up of 16 rural lodgings located in the surroundings of Merida. It stood out for the presence of olive groves, vineyards, and cereal areas. To a lesser extent, there were also dehesas and fruit trees.
- Group 10: It was made up of 31 rural lodgings located in the surroundings of the Sierra de Montánchez. The agricultural landscapes included dehesas, olive groves, cereal areas, and fruit trees, to a lesser extent.
- Group 11: It included a total of 49 rural lodgings located in the region of Vegas Bajas del Guadiana and south of the Sierra de San Pedro. Dehesas, cereal areas, and olive groves predominated, although the rest of the landscapes analyzed also had some representation.
- Group 12: It was very complex since it was formed by a total of 174 rural lodgings located in a wide area of the northwest of the province of Cáceres. It extended through the eastern sector of Sierra de Gata, the region of Hurdes, Valle del Ambroz, and Tierras de Granadilla. The dehesas stood out, although olive groves and fruit trees also appeared in some places, albeit not in an outstanding way.
- Group 13: It was also a complicated group. It was made up of 196 rural lodgings located in the region of La Vera, which is south of Valle del Jerte and north of Campo Arañuelo. The main agricultural landscapes were pasture and olive groves, followed by fruit trees, and the rest of those considered to have agricultural potential were less representative.
- Group 14: This was the most complex group. It was formed by 438 rural lodgings distributed over a wide strip that occupies the center-south of the province of Cáceres, extending from the Sierra de San Pedro to the Geopark of Villuercas-Ibores-Jara through the entire Trujillo-Cáceres penillanura. It also occupied a large part of the southern center of the province of Badajoz, extending through most of the region of La Siberia. Dehesas, olive groves, and cereal fields predominated, while the rest of the agricultural landscapes analyzed were only occasionally represented.
- Group 15: There were 17 rural lodgings concentrated in the eastern part of La Siberia, where cereals areas, fruit trees, and olive groves predominated, although their contributions were moderate.

In summary, it can be seen that the dehesa was present in a large part of the groupings of lodgings. It covers a very large area, from which it can be deduced that it is one of the agrarian landscapes on which the practice of agritourism should be based. This agrosystem is the natural habitat of the Iberian pig, fed with acorns and recognized as the Protected Designation of Origin “Jamón ibérico Dehesa de Extremadura” [91].

On the other hand, the cultivation of fruit trees was represented in fewer groups, although there were areas where there was a high concentration of lodgings. For this reason, they should also focus on generating agritourism products specially adapted to their casuistry. The “Jerte Cherry” Denomination of Origin [92], which is produced in the Jerte and Ambroz Valleys, and in the region of La Vera, stands out.

Vineyards were present in some areas, although they stand out almost as a monoculture in some areas of Tierra de Barros, where, in addition to cultivation, there is an

important network of wineries that are committed to tourist visits. The Denomination of Origin “Vino Ribera de Extremadura” is recognized [93].

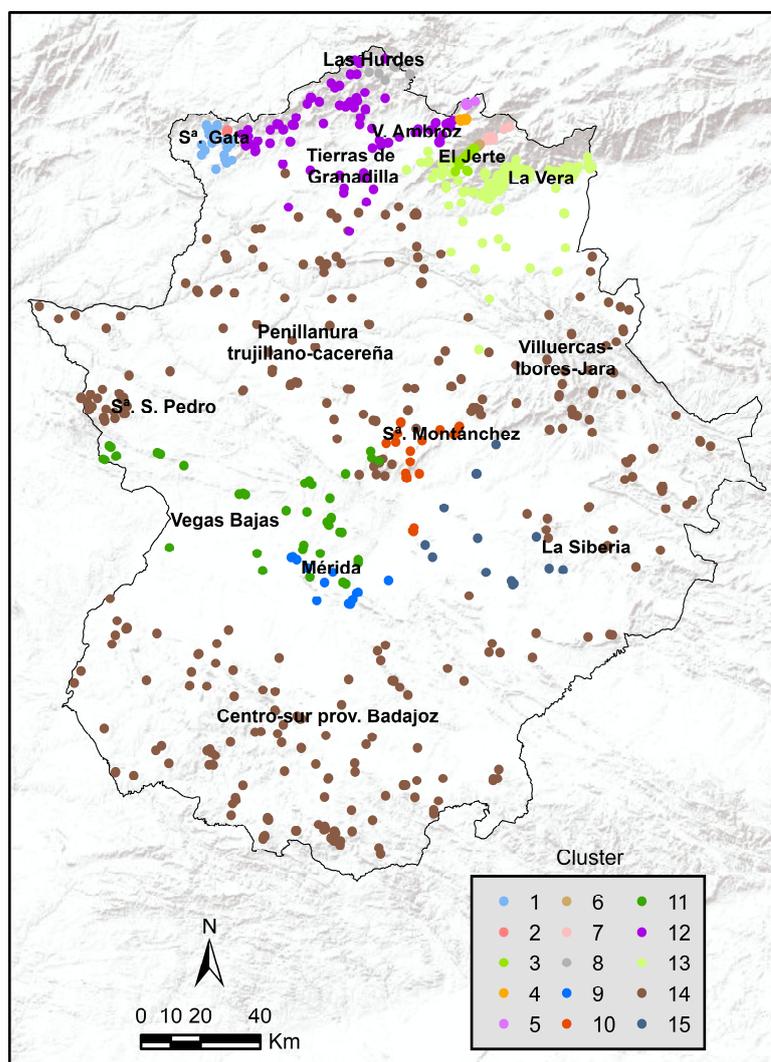


Figure 4. Location of clusters.

On the other hand, areas dedicated to cereal cultivation abound in much of the territory, although their potential must be aligned with the presence of complementary attractions. In these areas, graze sheep that produce high-quality milk are used to produce different types of cheese, some also with Protected Designation of Origin, as is the case with “Torta del Casar” [94] or “Queso de la Serena” [95]. There are also goat cheeses, such as “Acehúche” and “Ibores”.

The olive grove is predominant in some areas where it enjoys quality mentions. These include the Protected Designation of Origin “Gata-Hurdes virgin olive oil” [96], Villuercas-Ibores-Jara olive oil”, and “Monterrubio virgin olive oil” [97].

#### 4. Discussion

Rural tourism has undergone extensive development in Extremadura due to the establishment of lodgings in large part of the territory, regardless of their attractiveness [22,23], according to the preferences expressed by tourists or based on the tourism potential calculated for this territory [1,2,21]. The number of bed places in rural accommodations increased by a factor of 22 from 2001 to 2023. Meanwhile, the number of tourists has increased by almost 18 times, although the number of overnight stays has only multiplied

by 14 [77]. These values show that there is a clear mismatch between supply and demand since the degree of occupancy per vacancy is gradually and worryingly decreasing. In fact, between 2001 and 2023, its value went from 23.31% to 15.84%.

Faced with this uncertain outlook, alternatives must be sought to alleviate the situation. For this reason, it is essential to bet on the development of agritourism as an alternative to generic rural tourism. Since approximately the beginning of 1990, there has been an unusual eagerness to increase the number of lodging places in rural areas, orienting them to the rural lodging modality [98]. However, this increase was not accompanied by tourism policies leading to the development of differentiated tourism products. Among them, agrotourism should have played a transcendental role since the objective of developing rural tourism obeyed the need to complement agricultural incomes.

In part, this erroneous practice was encouraged by the lack of knowledge that existed about rural tourism in general and agrotourism in particular. Even today, there are different definitions of agrotourism both in Europe and in Spain.

In line with this, some authors have pointed out, for example, that in Italy, agritourism is considered an agricultural activity and, therefore, can only be carried out by a farmer. It has even been suggested that this type of tourism should promote the sustainability of farms [99]. On the other hand, in Spain, there is no single legislation since its configuration in autonomous communities with legislative capacity means that some regions do have legal regulations on agritourism, while others, such as the study area, do not. Basque legislation, for example, defined agrotourism in 1988 as “the provision of tourist accommodation and catering services by farmers and ranchers in farms and farmhouses” [100].

Perhaps because of this plurality of opinions, it is the moment to advocate for legal regulation in Extremadura that defines agrotourism, trying to differentiate it from rural tourism and providing it with a comprehensive framework, including not only a legally adapted definition but also the characteristics that it must fulfill, as well as the activities associated to this tourist variety.

The diversity of opinions is also reflected when considering age or previous practice of the activity. This can corroborate H1’s assumption that the conceptualization of agritourism changes according to both characteristics. It can also be understood that agritourism should be based on specific agrarian landscapes but not centered only on those mentioned in the literature, in many cases centered on vineyards and the creation of routes (enotourism) [101–103] and in its vision as a cultural tourism resource [99] and olive groves (oleotourism) [104–106]. To this end, it is necessary to focus on the need to know the landscapes that tourists prefer.

Although definitions of agritourism abound in the literature, little attention has been paid to the opinion of tourists both in terms of the concept and the activities involved in agritourism. This last aspect explores the main characteristics that tourists prefer and associate with this specific type of tourism, both in terms of landscapes and activities.

The study of the landscapes in which tourists wish to spend their vacations is of considerable importance since 78% of them pointed to areas cultivated with fruit trees, which is practically the same percentage as that obtained for the dehesas, although at some distance to that obtained for the spaces dedicated to cereal crops and, above all, from the most recognized for the practice of agrotourism, olive groves, and vineyards. These findings imply that there are large areas in Extremadura that have landscapes preferred by rural tourists, different from those that have been valued for the practice of rural tourism and agrotourism. In this sense, there are areas that concentrate large areas of cherry trees, as is the case in the Jerte Valley, where the attraction of flowering is taken advantage of, but its use in line with agrotourism goes unnoticed. In addition, this crop has an important tradition in the area.

The dehesas form a highly developed agrosystem in the studied area, and it has been trying for years to emerge as a destination and as a tourist product [54,85]. However, in spite of the high score given by the demand, there is practically no agrotourism development in this environment. The experiences that do exist are mostly linked to conservation,

ecotourism, or ornithological tourism, but little value is placed on the role they can play as one of the best examples of the Mediterranean ecosystem, where not only agricultural landscape and high-quality agricultural production but also traditional trades and other intangible values are combined [107]. The scant weight of the dehesa in agrotourism in the study area contrasts with the important role that it can generate in the value chain [61]. This attraction is complemented by other key elements, such as the presence of protected species of fauna and birdlife and the fact that it is the ecosystem where the Iberian pig and the fighting bull are raised, as well as native livestock, game species and a multitude of birds. This corroborates H2, which considered the great potential of the dehesa for the practice of agrotourism.

There are other agrarian landscapes where tourists wish to spend their vacations. These are the extensive areas dedicated to the cultivation of cereal crops, where there are strong chromatic contrasts between the seasons of the year. In addition, many of these areas coincide with Protected Natural Spaces, especially Special Protection Areas for birds, which are an added attraction. Despite this, there are no references in the literature to this type of agricultural landscape as a tourist resource.

In contrast to this situation, the model of rural tourism that prevails in Extremadura has opted for the use of bathing areas, coinciding in most cases with the areas close to the mountains. An important number of rural lodgings, highly demanded by tourists, have been concentrated around them.

Regardless of the tourist area, there are some very clear trends that inquire about the activities that tourists would like to do. Some are obvious, such as those involving visits to cultural spaces of any kind, but others are not, since 72% of those surveyed would be willing to visit wineries and another similar percentage would be willing to participate in gastronomic routes. This corroborates the idea that gastronomy can and should play an important role in tourism [108]. In fact, gastronomic tourism is a cultural experience [109]. Likewise, visits to olive oil mills also stand out, with 66% positive responses, which again corroborates that both olive oil and wine tourism should continue with a process of settlement in the market. Therefore, the decisive role of olive groves and vineyards in the development and promotion of agrotourism in this area has been demonstrated.

The richness and variety of the agricultural landscapes that characterize Extremadura translates into an enormous potential for the practice of agritourism. However, this segment of agritourism has not been developed in line with the most widely accepted definition in the literature. Establishments located on agricultural or livestock farms are not frequent, and neither are the eminent agritourist products that tourists can enjoy. In fact, taking into account the settlement of an important plant of rural lodgings, the most prudent thing is to make a reconversion of this lodging to favor agrotourism activities, hence the importance of knowing both the agricultural areas that tourists prefer and the activities in which they are interested. In line with this, the dehesas occupy a large surface area in the autonomous community, which can offer products as varied as the enjoyment of the cultural spaces that they treasure, the realization of gastronomic routes, or the observation of flora and fauna. In addition, given the quality of the skies of Extremadura, photography and sky observation, for example, can be offered as a complement. More closely linked to tourist activity would be the elaboration of homemade products, visits to farms, participation in activities, and other more specific activities, such as hunting and beekeeping. The dehesa is a first-class agricultural area, which should be promoted as a product linked to attractive activities for tourists. It should be remembered that almost all rural lodgings are located within a radius of 2 km around a dehesa. This corroborates H3, as it is clear that there are numerous activities that can be carried out in the dehesas and their immediate surroundings.

The study reveals that agrotourism has great potential in Extremadura, although tourism policies do not take into account the interests of the demand since the link between the agricultural landscape and the activities offered to tourists staying in rural establishments is not taken into account. It follows that the most visited area is the north of the province of Cáceres, where attractions such as bathing areas and the mountains converge,

but no account is taken of the sometimes critical situation affecting other establishments located in agricultural areas that could contribute to the generation of differentiated tourist spaces and modalities.

To make up for this limitation to some extent, we chose to use a clustering analysis based on the main agricultural landscapes. This allowed us to go deeper into the products that each territory and each rural lodging can offer since it has been possible to configure territorial clusters. In these clusters, given that they have the same dominant landscapes, specific products could be created, integrated with the environment, and combined with different agrarian experiences. Therefore, this research can be applicable to the administration and the lodging owners, who can create, from these territorial units, a product that integrates all the lodgings that meet the necessary requirements for the practice of some type of agritourism. It would facilitate the promotion of agrotourism through different landscape experiences. It should also be noted that landscape diversity has an important variability throughout the year since, during each season, agricultural landscapes offer different possibilities, also contributing to the deseasonalization of rural tourism, which is highly concentrated in the summer season and in very specific periods that coincide with work vacations.

In addition, it is worth noting that the commitment to successful tourism can favor local economic development, generating additional income for farmers and ranchers. This can be seen in visits to wineries that multiply their sales or in the farms dedicated to the breeding of fighting bulls. The linking of agriculture and tourism clearly benefits both parties and society, which can see how heritage is preserved in all its varieties because, in agricultural landscapes, man interacts with the environment, promoting issues such as environmental education and a commitment to sustainability. Of course, the demand can benefit from the implementation of agricultural activities because they contribute to improving health and well-being through contact with nature, as well as in terms of training since the tourists who visit us are eager for knowledge.

Despite the undeniable benefits of implementing agrotourism activities, there is no denying the possible impacts that can be generated by a bad approach. Therefore, it is recommended to always follow the planning of the activity, providing a sustainable approach in all the activities that are developed, from agriculture to livestock, including others such as harvesting or hunting [110,111].

The study carried out is applicable in the study area, where generic rural tourism is subject to strong tensions due to the low average stay and low occupancy rate. It is difficult to address the challenge of extending the length of stay due to the age profile of the tourists themselves, most of whom are of working age and working, so their available time is reduced.

As a relevant contribution of the study, beyond the applicability it may have in the study area, the need to incorporate the opinion of tourists in the design of tourism products is highlighted. More specifically, this study proposes that in any area where agrotourism is to be developed as a specific variety within rural tourism, a study should be carried out to determine the preferences of the demand with respect to agricultural landscapes and the activities they wish to carry out before beginning to design tourism products. A tourism policy that ignores the opinions of tourists could fail.

It also proposes the use of a geostatistical technique that combines quantitative analysis with spatial proximity relationships. Specifically, it opts for cluster analysis, which is part of the cluster mapping tools. Its task is none other than the creation of groups where rural lodgings are close to each other and, at the same time, have common agricultural landscapes to facilitate the creation of tourism products. The creation of these groups that present the greatest internal homogeneity and differences from the rest facilitates the orientation of the product offered to the agrarian landscapes that predominate within them.

On a critical note, this study may also have certain limitations, including the variety of landscapes used, the number of surveys conducted, and the analysis techniques used. Nevertheless, this first approach to the study of agritourism from the point of view of

tourists has been positive, as it has allowed us to corroborate the hypotheses put forward. In addition, it opens a new line of research, in which, in the future, a greater diversity of agrarian spaces will be approached for tourists to contrast their opinions and also opt to combine the questionnaires with the use of pairs of photos and thus facilitate the application of other techniques of analysis, such as the Hierarchical Analysis Process that has provided such good results in other studies [112].

## 5. Conclusions

This study concludes that Extremadura has significant potential for the practice of agritourism, although with the particularity that it should be oriented to the practice of activities linked to agricultural landscapes. This is because there are many lodging facilities in the territory, and it is not feasible to introduce more competition to the sector. It should be noted that, on average, the level of occupancy is low, even on weekends. This basically affects those rural lodgings that are located far from the main area of attraction: the north of Extremadura. Despite this, there are no legal regulations applicable to agritourism in the area analyzed, and the agrarian landscapes are not considered for the implementation of specific tourism products.

When analyzing the opinions of tourists, it is observed that they show a certain interest in agricultural landscapes, where they could spend their vacations. Among them, the dehesas occupy prominent places, as well as olive groves and vineyards, the only areas that are currently linked to agritourism, albeit only minimally. The areas dedicated to the cultivation of fruit trees and cereal crops are not unnoticed either.

Similarly, the study of the demand concludes that there is a wide diversity of opinions on the meaning of agritourism and the activities that comprise it. Moreover, this diversity of opinions varies according to age and previous experience in the practice of agritourism.

Likewise, there is unequal interest in practicing agritourism. In fact, 50% of those surveyed said that they had practiced it, although almost 25% of them would not repeat the experience compared with 75% who would. This shows that it is important to bet on this type of rural tourism. On the other hand, the other 50% of those surveyed had not practiced it. Of these, approximately 25% had no intention of practicing it, while 75% had not yet had the opportunity to enjoy it, although they did not refuse to do so. This is a significant percentage of undecided people, which makes it necessary to rethink the activity.

The landscapes preferred by tourists are those forming part of the network of Protected Natural Spaces, those with bathing areas, and those close to mountain areas. However, they also pointed out the main agricultural landscapes, with special significance in the case of vineyards, dehesas, and olive groves, followed, at some distance, by areas dedicated to the cultivation of cereal crops and fruit trees. These preferences varied slightly according to the age of the respondents and previous experience in the practice of agritourism activities.

At the same time, there were activities that they had carried out or were willing to carry out, such as visits to wineries and oil mills, which undoubtedly represent a possible step forward in wine and olive oil tourism. In addition, they were receptive to practicing other activities that have a perfect place in the rest of the agrarian landscapes, which are rich in gastronomy and heritage in every sense. However, active participation in agricultural activities was not realized by more than 30% of respondents.

On the other hand, most of the rural lodgings present in the territory are in the vicinity of one or more agrarian landscapes, so they could be used to position an offer of tourist products oriented to their specific vocation. In this sense, rural lodging places are in areas of pastureland but also in areas of olive groves, cereal farms, and, to a lesser extent, vineyards.

Finally, the use of spatial statistics by means of cluster analysis made it possible to detect 15 territorial clusters with similar characteristics in addition to proximity. This should serve as a basis for positioning establishments in line with the development of agritourism products.

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