

Evolving Foodways in Morocco: A Review of Dietary Transitions and the Enduring Influence of the Mediterranean Diet

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INTRODUCTION & AIM

Morocco has a diverse culinary landscape influenced by regional variations, geography, and history. The traditional Moroccan diet shares similarities with the Mediterranean diet, focusing on fresh produce, healthy fats, whole grains, and communal dining. This review examines the changing food scene in Morocco, considering historical shifts and the recent effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

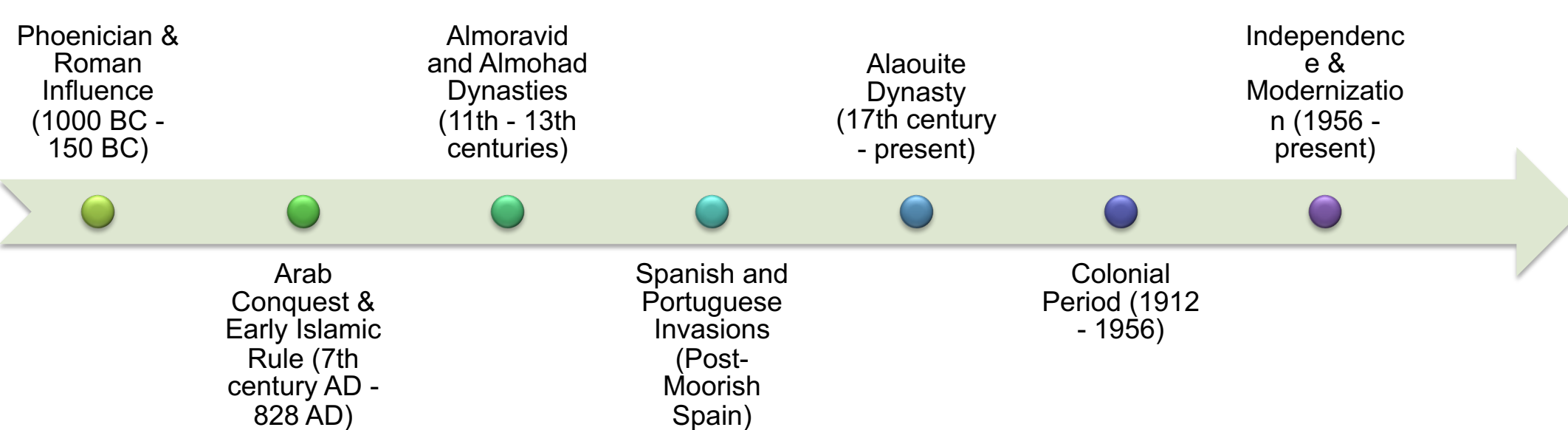
METHOD

The review examines changes in Moroccan dietary patterns from 2001 to 2023 based on existing literature from databases like Google Scholar, PubMed, Web of Science, and ResearchGate. It covers topics such as Moroccan gastronomy, the Mediterranean diet, nutritional intake, food transition, societal changes, globalization, economic development, and the COVID-19 pandemic. The data collected was analyzed to identify recurring themes and trends related to the Moroccan diet, and the quality of the included studies was assessed.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Moroccan transitions

Moroccan cuisine is a blend of diverse cultural influences, including Arab, Berber, Spanish, and French. Historical factors have shaped the introduction of new ingredients, cooking techniques, and dishes. For example, the Arab conquest brought spices and dishes like Harira, while Berber influence led to the popularity of couscous and tagines. Spanish and French colonization introduced European-style dishes like pastilla, paella, and pastries. Moroccan Jews contributed dishes like Dafina. These influences have created a rich and varied culinary landscape in Morocco.



Moroccan Dietary Habits and Nutritional Intake Characteristics

Table: Recommendations for macronutrient and micronutrient intake adapted to the local Moroccan dietary habits.

Nutritional intakes	Study 1 2021	Study 3 2021	Study 2 2020	Study 5 2019	Study 6 2018	Study 4 2017	References
Macronutrients (daily caloric intake)							
Carbohydrates	42.68-2.37g %	N/A	56%	N/A	N/A	N/A	[1], [2]
Protein	17.37-0.06%	N/A	16%	N/A	N/A	N/A	[1], [2]
Fats	19.2 -0.6 %	N/A	28%	N/A	N/A	N/A	[1], [2]
Micronutrients (daily intake)							
Vitamin A	N/A	409.3 µg (female) 294.5 µg (male)	N/A	84,6 µg	N/A	178,1 µg	[3], [4], [5]
Vitamin D	N/A	N/A	N/A	8,97 µg	N/A	2,7 µg	[4], [5]
Iron	N/A	N/A	N/A	10,02 mg	N/A	8,8 mg	[4], [5]
Calcium	N/A	N/A	N/A	404,5 mg	522.0 mg	470,4 mg	[4], [5], [6]
Zinc	N/A	N/A	N/A	8,48 mg	N/A	6,1 mg	[4], [5]
Magnesium	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	203,3 mg	[4]
Potassium	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1495,5 mg	N/A
Sodium	N/A	N/A	N/A	3616,3 mg	N/A	697,3 mg	[4], [5]
Iodine	N/A	N/A	N/A	35,1 µg	N/A	51,5 µg	[4], [5]

CONCLUSION

Morocco has seen changes in its dietary habits due to urbanization, globalization, and the availability of processed foods. Despite these changes, the Mediterranean Diet remains deeply rooted in Moroccan culture. However, updating tools to monitor dietary patterns and nutrient intake is important. Promoting sustainable agricultural practices, supporting local food production, and raising awareness of the health benefits of the Mediterranean Diet is also crucial. This diet not only symbolizes Morocco's cultural identity but also ensures the long-term health and well-being of its population.

Moroccan transitions

Moroccan cuisine, influenced by diverse historical factors, features regional variations and a focus on local ingredients. While urbanization and Westernization have introduced changes, traditional dietary practices, especially in rural areas, persist. These practices, rooted in the Mediterranean diet, offer potential health benefits. However, the country faces challenges related to micronutrient deficiencies and diet-related diseases. Government initiatives and public health efforts aim to promote healthier eating habits and address these challenges.

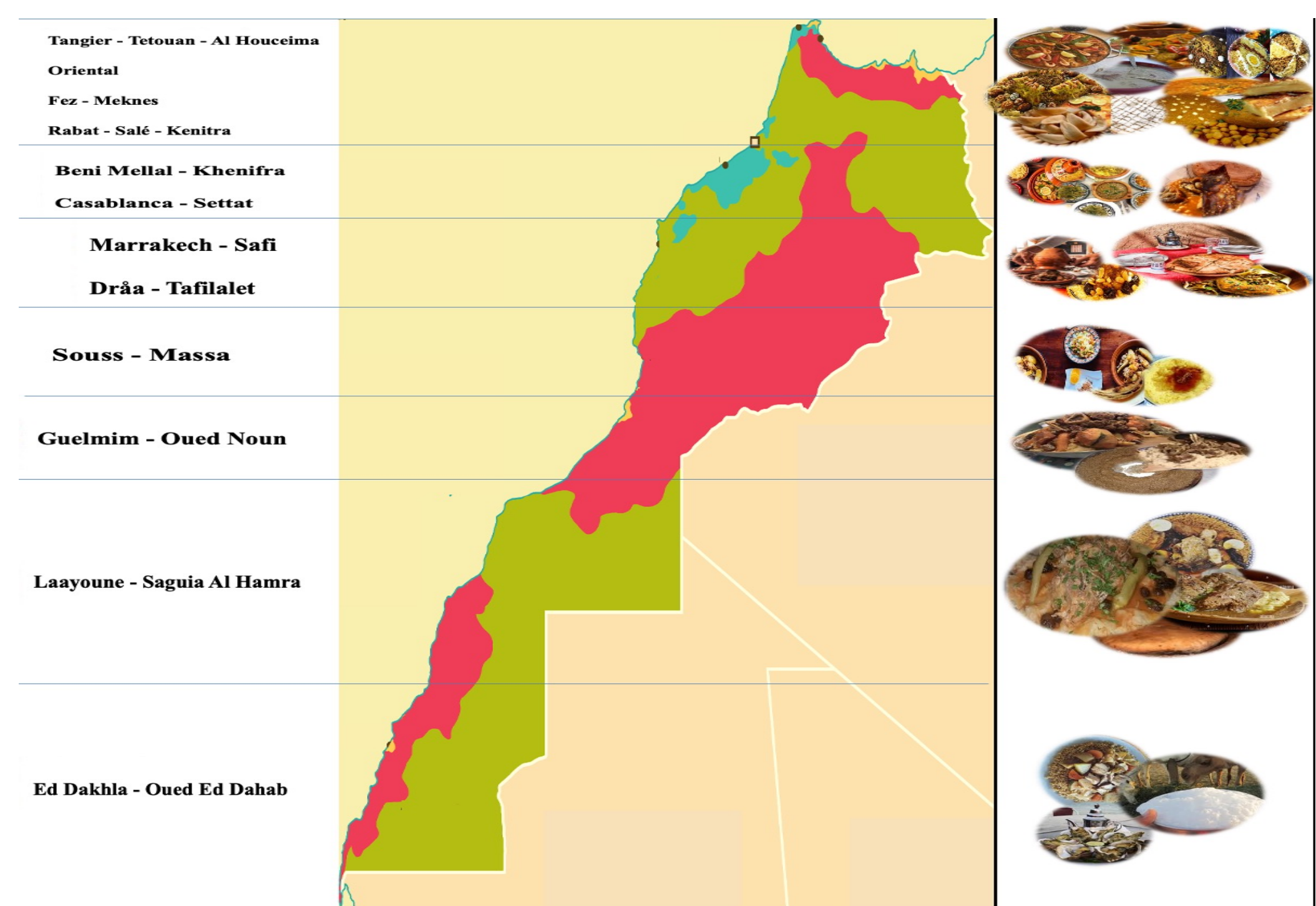


Figure: Regional Moroccan Dishes

Moroccan Dietary Resilience During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Moroccans have shown increased interest in natural and organic foods, driven by health concerns and the pandemic. Studies found that they maintained a Mediterranean diet during lockdowns and used medicinal plants for health benefits. The pandemic reinforced the importance of local, traditional foods and sustainable consumption habits.

FUTURE WORK / REFERENCES

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