Abstract – The aim of this article is to show how a key role in aesthetic experience, and particularly in the phenomenology of pleasure, enjoyment and taste, is played by the physiological system. Aesthetics has always considered it necessary to exclude this human dimension from philosophical reflection, whilst emphasising its ideal and immaterial side. Although it is obviously not possible to create a universally acceptable science with its own stable and fixed framework around the five senses, it must nevertheless not be forgotten that any experience, above all those ascribable to the exercise of taste, cannot fail to take into consideration the valuable contribution of the system of the senses. Some eighteenth-century thinkers and writers less academically involved in the subject reacted to the denial of this contribution. For them, in fact, physiology assumes a very important significance for the definition of feeling in its more general sense.

Keywords: aesthetics, taste, speculative theories, physiology, gastronomy