

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. PREAMBLE	1
2. OBJECTIVES.....	3
3. GENERAL INTRODUCTION	5
4. <i>CHAPTER 1. Towards the enhancement of the folates stability through silica supports.....</i>	47
4.1. Introduction	49
4.2. Article 1. Protective effect of mesoporous silica particles on encapsulated folates.....	57
4.3. Article 2: Protection of folic acid through encapsulation in mesoporous silica particles included in fruit juices	85
5. <i>CHAPTER 2. Towards the development of new antimicrobial agents based on silica supports</i>	111
5.1. Introduction	113
5.2. Article 3. Bactericidal activity of caprylic acid entrapped in mesoporous silica nanoparticles	129
5.3. Article 4. Towards the development of powerful antimicrobial “nanobullets” based on functionalized mesoporous silica particles	157
5.4. Article 5. Enhanced antimicrobial activity of essential oil components immobilized in functionalized silica particles	183
6. GENERAL DISCUSSION	213
7. CONCLUSIONS AND PERSPECTIVES	221
8. APPENDICES.....	225
i. Abbreviations	227
ii. Publications object of this thesis.....	230
iii. Other scientific contributions.....	231
iv. Book chapters.....	233
v. Patents	234