

PROSPECTS OF GASTRONOMIC TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract:

Gastronomic tourism is becoming an increasingly important consideration for visitors when choosing a vacation spot. For visitors, “gastronomy” is one of the primary motivations for visiting a specific region. As a result, “Gastronomic Tourism” has emerged as a novel form of tourism. However, there has been minimal research into food tourism, particularly in Uzbekistan. The fundamental goal of this study is to explore tourist motivation at a culinary tourism site in the travel market, as well as to evaluate gastronomy as a component of visitor motivation.

Keywords: gastronomic tourism, travel market, tourist motivation, tourism development, food tourism, traveler.

Introduction:

Regardless of whether their hotels provide food and beverage services, almost all guests choose to dine outside to learn about and sample regional cuisine. In this context, regional specialties have evolved into critical instruments for understanding and learning about other cultures (Joppe, 2021). In an increasingly globalized world, travelers seek encounters that teach them about a country's traditional culture and local lifestyle. As a result, destinations have tried to profit from this tourism trend by providing vacation experiences that include “respect for culture and history, a healthy lifestyle, authenticity, and sustainability.” (UNWTO, 2012). Globally, the food industry has recently experienced a substantial shift in consumer view of food. The market is evolving due to a new, growing demand for well-being and a renewed interest in sustainability and cultural and ecological diversity (Corvo, 2015). It is creating a new horizon for tourism by focusing on discovering traditional foods and rural communities, so it opens up new markets for traditional and local items. In addition to the conventional features such as climate, lodgings, and landscape, travelers consider gastronomy to be an important factor in determining a destination's appeal. A traveler may choose to travel to a location to participate in new cultural activities, or they may simply want to sample the area's cuisine and flavors. As a result, features such as experiencing local cuisine, seeing how a dish is made, and tasting a meal made with a unique ingredient found only in that location have begun to rise to the top of the list of significant variables influencing visitors' preferences for locations. Furthermore, this will help to conserve local resources and establish alternative tourism facilities in locations where culinary culture is growing (Yuncu, 2010). Although “gastronomy” is commonly referred to as the “art of eating and drinking,” it is a branch of art and science that is closely related to chemistry, literature, biology, geology, history, music, philosophy, psychology, sociology, and other fields, as well as medicine, nutrition,

agriculture, and other fields (Kivela & Crofts, 2006). Because the topic is food and drink, it includes topics such as nutritional sciences, wine production, the physiology of taste, the functions of nutritional components in the body, identifying qualities in food selection, and developing production processes that adhere to sanitation and hygiene standards to prevent food from spoiling physically, chemically, or biologically (Shenoy, 2005). The goal of gastronomy is to maintain human health by providing the best nutrition possible while also ensuring enjoyment of life and eating; among the study topics of gastronomy are the production of food and beverages in sanitary environments and their preparation for consumption in a way that addresses palatal and visual pleasure. Tourism is one of the most important economic sectors and leisure activities in the modern world, and it can directly and indirectly engage several sub-sectors, making it a perfect development instrument (Cagl, 2022). As people spend money to meet their needs while traveling, tourism drives societal growth and provides a source of revenue for those who provide services. Tourism has an impact on nations and includes phenomena from the disciplines of culture, heritage, economy, and ecology; therefore, there are issues with its direction, coordination, and regulation (Cagl, 2022). While many terms are used in literature to describe it, including "culinary tourism," "gastronomy tourism," "gastro-tourism," "wine tourism," "food tourism," and "gourmet tourism," the most common is "gastronomic tourism," which is defined as "being in pursuit of the unique experience of eating and drinking." *Therefore, the objective of this article is to explore tourist motivation at a culinary tourism site in the travel market, as well as to evaluate gastronomy as a component of visitor motivation and prospects of gastronomic tourism in Uzbekistan.*

Literature Review:

Tourists engage in food-related activities during their travels, such as purchasing local things and eating local cuisine (Hall and Mitchell, 2001). This could be a primary or secondary purpose for traveling. Modern tourists generally seek out experiences such as eating good food, attending special meals, and engaging in food-related cultural customs (Horng and Tsai, 2012). Food tourism differs from typical food consumption in that it offers several opportunities to create food- and beverage-related narratives regarding important parts of local culture, such as its history and local attractions (Ignatov and Smith, 2006). Food tourism offers travelers authentic experiences (Sims, 2009). Food tourism, as opposed to general tourism, involves travelers having memorable and unique cultural experiences through food encounters (Chen and Huang, 2018). Special interest tourism has gained appeal as an alternative to mainstream tourism in the early twenty-first century. While natural resources like the sun, sea, and sand have always been popular tourist attractions, cuisine has emerged as a cultural pull in the last two decades (Hsu, 2014). Food is seen as a vital part of the tourism experience, providing guests with a glimpse into a destination's local culture. The literature establishes a link between food and tourism, as defined in a variety of terms such as "cuisine tourism," "culinary tourism," "gastronomy tourism," and "food tourism" (Chi,

2010). The focus on cooking processes alone does not represent the full scope of food's importance as a tourist attraction. Previous studies attempted to categorize food tourists based on their level of interest in local cuisine, participation in food-related events, and attitude toward food consumption at a certain location. First, by the classification of food tourism. Mitchell and Hall (2003) identify four types of food tourists based on their level of interest in food consumption. Gourmet tourists, gastronomy and cuisine tourists, culinary tourists, and rural/urban visitors are all included. The first two categories believe that eating is the main motivation for traveling to a location. According to Bierman (2003), a tourism destination is a country, state, region, city, or town that promotes or offers itself as a place for travelers to visit. An appealing tourism site has six components: attractions, facilities, accessibility, image, pricing, and human resources. Scholars may classify attractions in many ways. They can be natural, cultural, or artificial (UNWTO, 2007), as well as destinations, enterprises, or experiences (Getz, 2014). Attractions are described as "pull factors, or whatever meal tourists are looking for" (Getz, 2014). The UNWTO (2007) agrees that attractions must be the foremost reason for tourists to visit an area. The second component is amenities, which include a destination's core infrastructure, facilities, and services. To begin, a destination's cuisine can be both a tourist attraction and a source of risk for vacationers. On the one hand, the main appeal is to experience gourmet authenticity and local cuisine culture. Furthermore, Kivela and Crotts (2006) noted that Hong Kong attracted tourists because of its unique and authentic Chinese cuisine, which was not available in their home countries. Cultural contacts through gastronomy was extremely enticing to tourists who visited a location (Kivela, 2006). Son (2013) did another study that examined religious cuisine as a tourism draw. Food was identified as a means of seeking novelty, sensory enjoyment, and cultural inquiry; a symbol of authenticity and prestige; and a peak tourist experience.

Research Methodology:

The study on why tourists chose gastronomy tourism was a qualitative study that examined and collected data from document research and interview research. This section will include the study's methodology, study area, and data collecting, as well as data analysis. The goal of this study is to contribute to existing research on gastronomic experiences in tourism. Its main purpose is to investigate passengers' interests and motivations about Uzbekistan's indigenous gastronomy (Samarkand) throughout their travel. To understand gourmet tourism, it is necessary to explore why individuals visit restaurants to satisfy their basic requirements, as stated by Maslow's hierarchy of needs. The key idea is that, while all travelers consume meals out of necessity, their gourmet tastes and motivations may differ significantly (2004). Travelers may be interested in local food and eating experiences, therefore culinary expectations may influence which location to visit (López-Guzmán, 2017). According to Fields (2020), four forms of culinary motivations associated with tourism can be identified: physical, cultural, interpersonal, and status and prestige. Physical motivations stem from people's need to

eat; cultural motivations stem from a desire to better understand a specific geographic area or culture; interpersonal motivations are responses to social functions that require interaction with others, and status and prestige motivations stem from a desire for social differentiation.

Result and Discussion:

Gastronomic tourism is defined as travel in which travelers are curious and ready to learn about the local cuisine of the area they are visiting because the culinary experience may be added to the overall trip experience for a low cost and effort. Tourists remember the place not only via local attractions but also through the flavor of the food. The majority of respondents say that junk food is made with a lot of oil and spices, which makes it tasty, but it is not a healthy option for our health. Some people only consume fast food and junk food and avoid exercise, preferring to sit and complete their daily responsibilities. These individuals exhibit symptoms such as obesity, constipation, and heart disease. Typically, they enjoy traditional meals. Traditional cuisine is beneficial to human health as it contains minerals and healthy fats. However, consuming too much delicious food may be harmful to human health. So, to live a healthy and happy life, one can take any type of food in moderation and exercise regularly. All aspects of the food production, handling, cleaning, processing, and transportation processes are potential sources of contamination, needing the utmost attention to safety and hygiene. Uzbekistan's restaurants are clean, however, guests had few complaints about the cleanliness of the table, tablecloth, fork, knife, spoons, and plates, as well as the restaurant's windows and entertainer. The majority of respondents claimed that Uzbek food is healthy, but that it causes minimal harm to the human body if consumed without proper supervision. Foods are used to establish healthy habits early in life. Making an effort to adopt good eating habits will benefit the body in the long run. However, certain Uzbek cuisine is dominated by processed meats, which are delicious but dangerous delights packed in salt, harmful fats, and chemical additives such as nitrates and nitrites. Regular use has been related to an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, some malignancies, and chronic conditions like hypertension.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

These themes show that food tourism is becoming a global phenomenon, with significant ramifications for destinations. Destinations promote significant growth of food tourism, which has become one of the most active components of their tourism business, through effective and profitable marketing and development tactics. Foodies and food tourists must therefore be considered when designing, developing, and promoting food tourism. Previous research focused primarily on local food consumption or customer behavior towards food products or services. Finally, company leaders concur on the importance of creating collaboration tools among all local participants in the culinary tourism value chain, both in terms of conceptualization and product offer development and promotion. Tourists participate in food-related activities

throughout their travels, such as purchasing local items and sampling local cuisine (Hall and Mitchell, 2001). This may be your primary or secondary reason for traveling. Modern travelers are more likely to seek out culinary experiences, unique dinners, and food-related cultural practices (Horng and Tsai, 2012). Food tourism is distinct from traditional food consumption in that it provides several chances to build food- and beverage-related narratives about essential aspects of local culture, such as its history and local attractions (Ignatov and Smith, 2006). Food tourism provides travelers with authentic experiences (Sims, 2009).

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