

**Advances in Hospitality and Tourism Research (AHTR)**  
is the official and international scholarly research journal of  
Akdeniz University Tourism Faculty

**Address** Akdeniz University, Tourism Faculty  
Dumlupınar Boulevard  
Post Code: 07058 Campus ANTALYA,  
TURKEY

**Telephone** + 90 242 227 45 50  
+ 90 242 310 20 20

**Fax** + 90 242 227 46 70

Full-text articles of AHTR can be downloaded freely from the journal website, at <http://www.ahtrjournal.org>

© Akdeniz University Tourism Faculty. Printed in Turkey. Some rights reserved.

You are free to copy, distribute, display and perform the work as long as you give the original author(s) credit, do not use this work for commercial purposes, and do not alter, transform, or build upon this work.

Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors, and are not the views of or endorsed by Akdeniz University Tourism Faculty.

**Abstracting and indexing:** Scopus; Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI); Ebsco; Leisure, Recreation, and Tourism Abstracts, CAB International; CABI full text; Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ); Research Bible; Directory of Research Journals Indexing (DRJI); Scientific Indexing Services; Science Library Index; Index Copernicus; C.I.R.E.T; Open Academic Journals Index (OAJI); MIAR; Sherpa/Romeo; ULAKBIM TR Index.

Volume 7, Issue 2, ISSN: 2147-9100 (Print), 2148-7316 (Online)



**EDITORIAL BOARD**

**Akdeniz University Tourism Faculty**  
(the Owner)

**Guest Editor**

Prof. Bahattin ÖZDEMİR

**Editor-in-Chief**

Prof. Beykan ÇİZEL

**Co-Editors**

Prof. A. Akın AKSU  
Prof. Cihan COBANOGLU  
Prof. Hazel TUCKER  
Prof. Mehmet MEHMETOGLU  
Dr. Edina AJANOVIC  
Assoc. Prof. Filareti KOTSI

**Journal Editorial Office**

Res. Asst. Zeynep KARSAVURAN

#### INTERNATIONAL EDITORIAL BOARD

- Prof. Levent ALTINAY, *Oxford Brookes University, UK*  
Prof. Maria D. ALVAREZ, *Boğaziçi University, Turkey*  
Prof. Seyhmus BALOGLU, *University of Nevada, USA*  
Dr. John BOWEN, *University of Houston, USA*  
Assoc. Prof. Carina BREGNHOLM REN, *Aalborg University, Denmark*  
Prof. Dimitrios BUHALIS, *Bournemouth University, UK*  
Prof. Nevenka CAVLEK, *University of Zagreb, Croatia*  
Prof. Prakash CHATHOTH, *American University of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates*  
Prof. Ming-Hsiang CHEN, *National Chung Cheng University, Taiwan*  
Assoc. Prof. Brendan CHEN, *National Chin-Yi University of Technology, Taiwan*  
Prof. Kaye CHON, *The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong*  
Dr. Erdoğan EKİZ, *King Abdulaziz University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*  
Prof. Francisco J. GARCÍA-RODRÍGUEZ, *University of La Laguna, Spain*  
Assoc. Prof. María Rosario GONZÁLEZ-RODRÍGUEZ, *University of Seville, Spain*  
Prof. Stefan GROSCHL, *ESSEC Business School, France*  
Prof. Doğan GÜRISOY, *Washington State University, USA*  
Dr. Tobias HELDT, *Höskolan Dalarna, Sweden*  
Assoc. Prof. Yeşim HELHEL, *Akdeniz University, Turkey*  
Prof. Ram HERSTEIN, *College of Law and Business, Israel*  
Prof. Osman M. KARATEPE, *Eastern Mediterranean University, Northern Cyprus*  
Prof. Metin KOZAK, *Dokuz Eylül University, Turkey*  
Prof. Salih KUŞLUVAN, *İstanbul Medeniyet University, Turkey*  
Prof. Rob LAW, *The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong*  
Prof. Jingyan LIU, *Sun Yat-Sen University, China*  
Prof. Eleanor LOIACONO, *Worcester Polytechnic Institute, USA*  
Prof. Oswin MAURER, *Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Italy*  
Prof. Mehmet MEHMETOĞLU, *Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway*  
Prof. Luiz MOUTINHO, *University of Glasgow, Scotland*  
Prof. Yasuo OHE, *Chiba University, Japan*  
Prof. Fevzi OKUMUŞ, *University of Central Florida, USA*  
Prof. Bahattin ÖZDEMİR, *Akdeniz University, Turkey*  
Prof. Jovan POPESKU, *Singidunum University, Serbia*  
Prof. Richard SHARPLEY, *University of Central Lancashire, UK*  
Prof. Marianna SIGALA, *University of South Australia, Australia*  
Prof. Juan José TARÍ, *University of Alicante, Spain*  
Prof. Özkan TÛTÛNCÛ, *Dokuz Eylül University, Turkey*  
Prof. Manuela TVARONAVIČIENĖ, *Vilnius Gediminas Technical University, Lithuania*  
Prof. Jean-Pierre VAN DER REST, *Hotelschool The Hague, The Netherlands*  
Prof. Alfonso VARGAS SANCHEZ, *Huelva University, Spain*  
Dr. Adam WEAVER, *Niagara College, Canada*  
Assoc. Prof. Yıldırım YILMAZ, *Akdeniz University, Turkey*  
Prof. Atilla YÛKSEL, *Adnan Menderes University, Turkey*  
Prof. Nedim YÛZBAŞIOĞLU, *Akdeniz University, Turkey*

## CONTENTS

EDITORIAL..... *vii*

### Research articles

GASTRONOMIC IDENTITY OF GAZIANTEP: PERCEPTIONS OF TOURISTS AND RESIDENTS..... *167*

*Belma SUNA and Maria D. ALVAREZ*

INSIGHT FROM INSIDERS: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY FOR EXPLORING FOOD TOURISM POLICY IN IRELAND 2009-2019..... *188*

*Ketty QUIGLEY, Margaret CONNOLLY, Elaine MAHON, and Máirtín MAC CON IOMAIRÉ*

ENOGASTRONOMY IN NORTHERN PORTUGAL: DESTINATION COOPERATION AND REGIONAL IDENTITY..... *216*

*Susana RACHÃO, Zélia BREDA, Carlos FERNANDES, and Veronika JOUKES*

THE EFFECTS OF FOOD-RELATED MOTIVATION, LOCAL FOOD INVOLVEMENT, AND FOOD SATISFACTION ON DESTINATION LOYALTY: THE CASE OF ANGELES CITY, PHILIPPINES..... *238*

*Jean Paolo G. LACAP*

THE PARADOX OF CRACKER BARREL: A CASE STUDY ON PLACE AND PLACELESSNESS ..... *258*

*Meredith GREGORY and Caitlin FINLAYSON*

THANKS TO REVIEWERS. .... *277*



## EDITORIAL

First and foremost, on behalf of the whole AHTR editorial team, I would like to express our deep appreciation and gratitude to all authors and reviewers who contributed to the Volume VII of the *Advances in Hospitality and Tourism Research (AHTR) Journal* for 2019. This issue is dedicated to the growing field of the interaction of gastronomy and tourism. Gastronomy is increasingly attracting scholars' attention and has become one of the latest academic fields which explores the knowledge and understanding of human nutrition. Gastronomy includes discovering, experiencing, researching, understanding and writing of food production and consumption. It is predicted that multidisciplinary studies will help to understand the phenomenon of gastronomy. To understand the gastronomic experience of tourists, it is useful to take advantage of the interaction of many basic disciplines such as geography, anthropology, psychology, sociology, and economics. In this context, AHTR has intended to provide an academic platform for discussions on the latest developments and issues on explaining how gastronomy and tourism are interdependent and interactive. 33 manuscripts have been submitted on the topic of "gastronomy and tourism" and five of them have been accepted for publication in this issue. The issue includes significant papers exploring interesting cases from distinct destinations. These papers address the important topics of the gastronomy and tourism fields which are gastronomic identity, food tourism policy, enogastronomy, the role of local food in explaining destination loyalty of tourists, and creating sense of place in restaurant settings.

Once again we would like to thank firstly guest-editor Professor Dr. Bahattin Özdemir and all the contributors for their support to the journal. We wish you to enjoy reading the seventh volume of AHTR.

Yours sincerely,

Prof. Dr. Beykan Çizel (PhD)  
Editor in Chief of AHTR





## GASTRONOMIC IDENTITY OF GAZIANTEP: PERCEPTIONS OF TOURISTS AND RESIDENTS

Belma SUNA<sup>1</sup>

*Tourism and Hotel Management, Gaziantep University, Gaziantep, Turkey*  
ORCID: 0000-0003-0710-2678

Maria D. ALVAREZ

*Department of Tourism Administration, Boğaziçi University, Istanbul, Turkey*  
ORCID: 0000-0003-4986-5702

### ABSTRACT

Tasting local flavours is often an important motivation for tourists visiting a particular destination. A destination's richness in terms of cuisine increases its attractiveness and may be an important element of its branding identity. Gaziantep is one of the cities that is known for its gastronomy and unique foods. The purpose of this research is to explore the concept of gastronomic identity, seeking to better understand the elements that construct it in the case of Gaziantep. In addition, the study looks at the differences between tourists and local residents in relation to the gastronomic identity of this city. According to the results, gastronomic identity is formed by four dimensions; namely Gastronomic Culture and Reputation, Food Quality, Food Outlets and Gastronomic Activities. Besides, significant differences between the tourists and residents are found in the dimensions of Food Quality and Gastronomic Activities.

### Article History

Received 29 May 2019

Revised 22 November 2019

Accepted 5 December 2019

### Keywords

gastronomic identity  
stakeholders  
Gaziantep  
destination branding  
destination marketing

### INTRODUCTION

Traveling to a destination with the specific purpose of tasting its unique dishes has become increasingly common, and subsequently many researchers have focused on identifying the contribution of local food to

---

<sup>1</sup> Address correspondence to Belma Suna, Tourism and Hotel Management, Gaziantep University, Gaziantep, TURKEY. Email: suna@gantep.edu.tr

tourism (Horng & Tsai, 2010; Jiménez-Beltrán et al., 2016a; Kivela, 2017; Lai et al., 2018; Okumuş et al., 2018; Sirse, 2014; Sormaz et al., 2016; Stavrianea et al., 2017). Gastronomy tourism is defined as travel with the aim of experiencing the unique culinary specialities and traditions of a destination (Long, 2004). According to the World Tourism Organisation, gastronomy helps develop the communication between diverse cultures, facilitating multiculturalism (UNWTO, 2016). Gastronomy has become a fundamental component of travel (Cohen, 2003; Correia et al., 2008; Kivela & Crofts, 2006) and a significant motivator for visiting a particular destination (McKercher et al., 2008). Indeed, when people choose a place to visit, they generally make a deep research about the presence and richness of the local foods during the decision-making phase (Okumuş et al., 2007; Boyne et al., 2003). Thus, gastronomy and unique food-related aspects of the place may become important resources that are used in the creation of a unique value proposition for the destination (Horng & Tsai, 2012). According to Haugland et al. (2011), destinations' competitiveness is dependent on the place's ability to convert existing resources into competencies through the coordination of stakeholders' activities and inter-destination ties. Thus, following a resource-based view of destination development (Barney, 1996; Haugland et al., 2011; Horng & Tsai, 2012), gastronomy and local food culture should be evaluated in relation to its potential to contribute to the destination's brand.

Given the importance of gastronomy and gastronomy tourism, a growing literature on the topic is emerging. While several papers analyse gastronomy tourism from the tourist's point of view (for example, Correia et al., 2008; Kivela & Crofts, 2006), others have begun to look at the topic from the perspective of the destination's branding activity, with an examination of the gastronomic identity within the overall brand strategy of the destination (Lai et al., 2018; Lin et al., 2011). Thus, Fox (2007, p. 546) states that "a unique and memorable gastronomic identity is an indispensable strength to any successful tourist destination". Even though gastronomic identity is often viewed from the tourist's perspective, the point of view of the local people who help create the destination's experience is critical. In this sense, the role of residents in the creation of a destination's brand is considered as important, since local people are a part of the destination's experience, may act as ambassadors of the destination brand and may participate in the process of defining the destination's identity (Braun et al., 2013). A successful brand strategy is that which achieves an alignment of the views of local people with the image of place that is portrayed to tourists (Kong et al., 2015).

Furthermore, the ability of the destination to coordinate and integrate the efforts of various actors is essential for the success of the destination, as well as that of the individual producers (Haugland et al., 2011).

There are many destinations known for the richness of their gastronomy worldwide. The increasing interest in gastronomy as a cultural element of the destination has led to the establishment of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) in 2004, incorporating gastronomy as one of the intangible heritage elements fostering the development of the destination via creativity and culture (Xiaomin, 2017). One of the cities included in this network is Gaziantep, which constitutes an example of an increasingly popular gastronomic destination in Turkey. It was included in 2015 in the UCCN network under the category of gastronomy. However, this destination is not only rich in gastronomic elements; it also encompasses a significant historical heritage derived from the existence of ancient civilizations and different cultures within its territory. Therefore, Gaziantep is a good example of a destination where historical, cultural and gastronomic elements interact to create a highly attractive tourism offering (Birdir et al., 2015). The current study aims to explore the concept of gastronomic identity as a destination's strategic competency that is based on existing culinary resources (Haugland et al., 2011), seeking to better understand the elements that construct it in the case of Gaziantep. In addition, the study also attempts to determine whether there are differences between tourists and residents in terms of their understanding of the gastronomic identity of the city, providing suggestions on how different culinary elements may come together to enhance the city's competency in terms of gastronomy.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### **Gastronomy from a Resource-Based View of Destination Development**

Destinations are composed of amalgams of individual products that are combined to create an integrated experience for the tourists (Buhalis, 2000), thus generating the need for strategies that go beyond single organizational actors. According to a resource-based view of the firm (Barney, 1996) organizations become competitive when they are able to use their unique resources to create a sustained competitive advantage. However, destinations are faced with a situation in which multiple actors and levels of decision-making exist (Haugland et al., 2011). Thus, the destination's ability to turn the individual resources of each actor into

destination competencies and to coordinate the actions of different players is paramount to achieve success (Haugland et al., 2011). Evaluating the destination's resources from the perspective of the resource-based theory of the firm can also provide insights to guide policy making and resource allocation (Duarte Alonso, 2017). For example, Duarte Alonso et al. (2018) use the resource-based theory of the firm to evaluate the potential of Peru as a culinary destination. In addition, as the destination evolves through different stages of its life cycle (Butler, 1980), so its resources and competencies may also change (Rodríguez-Díaz & Espino-Rodríguez, 2008).

The resource-based view of the firm has been applied to the evaluation of gastronomy as an important competency that is based on the culinary resources of the destination (Horng & Tsai, 2012). Gastronomy can be defined as a multifaceted process that encompasses choosing, cooking, serving and enjoying satisfying foods (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2019). Accordingly, gastronomy may be thought to include reflexive eating and cooking, encompassing food preparation, production and presentation of different dishes with the aim of achieving excellence in this process (Hjalager & Richards, 2002; Scarpato, 2000,2001; Symons 1998). As travellers are becoming more interested in getting detailed information about what they can eat at the destination, a new type of tourism which is based on the culinary qualities of the destination has emerged. Thus, gastronomy tourism may be defined as "travelling for the purpose of exploring and enjoying the destination's food and beverage and to savour unique and memorable gastronomy experiences" (Kivela & Crofts, 2005, p. 42).

Gastronomy is considered as being a part of the destination's culture (Jiménez-Beltrán et al., 2016a), and is increasingly viewed in the literature as one of the main resources that the destination may have (Horng & Tsai, 2012; Okumuş et al., 2007; Presenza & Del Chiappa, 2013; Sánchez-Cañizares & López-Guzman, 2012). According to a research carried out by the World Tourism Organization on a panel of tourism experts, gastronomy is considered a distinctive and strategic component in defining the image and brand of the destination and a driving force for tourism development (UNWTO, 2017). While eating food was formerly the first step in Maslow's needs hierarchy, it has now become a symbol of people's lifestyles. The food may be an indicator of prestige, also leading to the development of cuisine-based new lifestyles (Hjalager & Richards, 2002; Horng & Tsai, 2010; Kivela & Crofts, 2006; Riley, 1994). This trend is compounded by the use of social media, since tourists share the pictures of

the food they taste while on vacation, influencing other individuals' destination choices (Eröz & Doğdubay, 2012; Tuç & Özkanlı, 2017). Gastronomy tourism is thus favoured by those tourists who want to come across different culinary cultures and share their experiences with other individuals (Şahin & Unver, 2015). As a result, gastronomical elements in the destination have become significant features to draw international and national tourists (Horng & Tsai, 2010). Furthermore, many destinations use food components as a source of attraction, including these in their tourism marketing activities (Lin et al., 2011) to differentiate themselves from other competing places. Thus, the cuisine and culinary products at the destination may be considered as strategic resources that constitute a differentiating factor and a source of competitive advantage for the place (Okumus & Çetin, 2018). The importance given and use of culinary resources in the destination's overall strategy is also dependent on the stage of the destination's life cycle (Harrington & Ottenbacher, 2010). Using the case of Lyon as an example, Harrington and Ottenbacher (2010) remark that as destinations become more mature, they rely less on their culinary attributes for promotion.

Gastronomy tourism also supports regional development by linking food and beverages that are indigenous to the place to the tourism activity, thus strengthening local identity (Everett & Aitchison, 2008). Each destination decides to focus on specific local foods and create food-related experiences that will be used to brand and market the place in order to attract tourists (Williams et al., 2014). However, this unique identity needs to be supported by overlapping elements at the destination that constitute the overall product (Williams et al., 2014).

### **Gastronomic Identity of the Tourist Destination**

Gastronomic identity has been the subject of several research studies in recent years. Harrington is one of the first researchers to analyse the concept of gastronomic identity. According to Harrington (2005) the destination's gastronomic identity emerges from the environment and culture of the region, which affects the flavours and tastes in food and beverages. While geography and climate are part of the environment, ethnic and historical elements that form a part of the place's culture may affect tastes, food textures and flavours. Thus, environmental and cultural factors of the destination are influential in shaping the unique characteristics of the destination's cuisine, in other words, its gastronomic identity (Harrington, 2005; Nebioğlu, 2016).

Danhi (2003) refers to the gastronomic identity of a place as being determined by the use of dominant tastes, techniques and presentations in the recipes in a region. Danhi (2003) pointed that six main elements are critical in shaping a place's gastronomic identity. These factors consist of geographical elements, historical aspects, diversity of ethnicities, culinary customs or etiquette, dominant tastes and recipes. The culinary etiquette, which determines the characteristics of a local cuisine, refers to the eating habits of a certain culture (Danhi, 2003). Rao et al. (2003) argue that some of these dimensions have changed over time. These authors state that there are five dimensions that determine the gastronomic identity: the culinary discourses, the rules of cooking, the different contents, the chef's ability and the structure of the menu (Rao et al., 2003).

Based on the above-mentioned literature, Lai et al. (2018) define the different elements that constitute the gastronomic identity of Australia as including six components. These encompass geographical components, cultural culinary characteristics, aspects related to food consumption as a lifestyle, the quality of the food, the existing restaurants and other dining places and the culinary activities organized. The current study is based on Lai et al.'s conceptualization and aims to measure the gastronomic identity of Gaziantep through perceptions of both tourists and residents.

Regardless of the nature of the destination, taking the views of different stakeholders' groups when marketing the place has become increasingly important (Ferrell et al., 2010; Gundlach & Wilkie, 2010; Line & Wang, 2017; Lusch, 2007; Lusch & Webster, 2011). Haugland et al. (2011) also remark that resources that are available to different individual players may only be turned into specific destination competencies through collaboration and integration of the different actors involved. In this instance, network and stakeholder theories may be used to obtain insights into the mechanisms for collaboration (Haugland et al., 2011) and to look at the destination product from the perspective of the various interested parties. Indeed, stakeholder theory constitutes an approach to marketing in which the destination's stakeholders are taken into account while marketing destinations, instead of focusing on the customer and the market (d'Angella & Go, 2009). Within this approach, the aim of marketing is not only to please customers, but also to increase the value for all the stakeholders involved (Line & Wang, 2017). When a destination adopts a market orientation approach that involves multiple stakeholders, its brand identity should be defined taking these different parties into consideration (Garcia et al., 2012; Line and Wang, 2017; Özdemir et al., 2015; Yusof & Ismail, 2014). In particular, the residents of a city have an important role to

play in defining the identity of the place (Everett & Aitchison, 2008). Considering the view of residents who contribute to the creation of the city's character, and tourists, who will choose the destination based on a particular image portrayed (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2016) is also important for Gaziantep. This city identifies itself as a city of gastronomy, focusing its marketing efforts on the tourists' gastronomic experience (Özdemir, 2018).

### **Gaziantep as a Destination for Gastronomy Tourism**

The popularity of Gaziantep, selected for the UNESCO Creative Cities Network, has been increasing since 2015 (UCCN, n.d.). Gaziantep is a city rich in cultural heritage due to its deep-rooted history. The city is one of the first settlements of Anatolia, being located between Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean, and having witnessed many civilizations and different cultures throughout history. Because the province of Gaziantep was on the Silk Road, and since Arabs, Kurds, Armenians and Turkmens lived together in this city during the Ottoman period, the destination may be considered as a place of cultural interaction (Aksoy & Sezgi, 2015). This diversity enriches the cultural texture of the city and this richness is reflected in the city's cuisine (GMM, 2019; Koçoğlu, 2019; Özdemir, 2018). This cultural wealth results in more than 400 types of food in Gaziantep's cuisine, of which 291 are registered through geographical indication (GMM, 2019). Gaziantep's dishes have an important position in Turkish and World cuisines. Baklava, Katmer, Beyran, and various types of kebabs are among the most familiar foods of the city (GMM, 2019). Pistachio is a local product that is registered through geographical indication and that is used in food and many kinds of sweets in Gaziantep (TPTO, 2019). This culinary wealth has allowed the city to be chosen in 2015 as a city of gastronomy under the UCCN framework.

In addition to its culinary richness, Gaziantep is also endowed with many historical and cultural resources that add to the city's attractiveness. For example, the Zeugma Mosaic Museum is the biggest mosaic and open-air museum in the world (GMM, 2019), exhibiting spectacular mosaics. Gaziantep also has a rich culture in terms of traditional handicrafts. Among these, copper has an important place in the city's history and culture (Özdemir & Kaya, 2011). Other traditional handicrafts in Gaziantep include embroidery of silver, weaving of carpets and rugs, textile silk weaving, inlaying of mother of pearl, production of clay-based kitchen materials, etc. (GMM, 2019).

Before being selected to the UNESCO Creative Cities Network in 2015, Gaziantep was mainly known for its industrial activity. The inscription of the city in the Creative Cities Network has contributed to raise awareness about the city and its gastronomical wealth (GCC, 2019). The increasing popularity of Gaziantep as a gastronomic destination has led to a significant growth in the number of tours organized in the city. In this way, almost 600,000 local and foreign tourists visit this magnificent city annually. There are also 15 tourism investment certified hotels in the city, of which 5 have been opened only in recent years (GPDCT, 2019). While most of the restaurants and shops that sell food produce, such as baklava or pistachios, already existed before the popularization of the city as a gastronomy destination, the level of production and revenues of these places has also significantly increased in the last few years (Gaziantep27, 2017; Posta, 2019). Given these characteristics, Gaziantep may be considered as being at the development stage of the destination life-cycle (Butler, 1980), although at certain times during the year the number of tourists significantly exceeds the existing capacity (GPDCT, 2019; Gaziantep27, 2019), showing signs of consolidation. Gaziantep is also currently relying significantly on its culinary attributes to promote and differentiate itself from other competing cities.

Therefore, the city of Gaziantep provides a suitable setting to investigate gastronomic identity of various tourists and residents in a destination that incorporates a wealth of both culinary and non-culinary cultural elements. While many researches have focused on the view of tourists (Chi et al., 2013; Correia et al., 2008; Horng et al., 2012; Jiménez-Beltrán et al., 2016b; Kivela & Crofts, 2006) some papers also address the perspective of the residents (Hillel et al., 2013). The current research aims to investigate the views of both stakeholder groups, tourists and residents, looking at how the destination's culinary resources come together to define Gaziantep's gastronomic identity. The paper provides a more comprehensive and holistic view as it examines gastronomic identity from a wider perspective.

## METHODOLOGY

The study aims to explore the attributes of the gastronomic identity of Gaziantep as a tourist destination, looking at the dimensionality and measurement of this concept. In addition, differences between the perceptions of tourists and residents are examined. Gaziantep's population is almost 2 million and according to Provincial Culture



Tourism Directorate's information, which was obtained via official correspondence, 560,000 domestic tourists (out of a total of 600,000 tourists) have visited the city in 2018. The population of the research consists of local people and visitors to Gaziantep. The data were collected between March and April 2019. Local people were administered an online questionnaire, which was shared through social media accounts using a combination of convenience and snowball sampling. Care was ensured to access residents from varied backgrounds and who are not working in the tourism industry, since it was thought that those working on tourism would have a different view of the city. The tourists that participated in the research include only domestic tourists, who were accessed at the city's main touristic attractions in Gaziantep. The locations where these respondents were approached include the Elmacı Bazaar and the Zeugma Mosaic Museum. These respondents were asked to fill in a paper-based format of the questionnaire. In total, 214 questionnaires from tourists and 164 from residents were obtained. Table 1 provides information on the profile of both samples separately.

Table 1. *Frequency distribution of demographic profiles of participants*

	Residents	Visitors
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	66	89
Female	98	125
<b>Age</b>		
18-25	50	48
26-35	45	67
36-45	43	56
46-55	17	32
56 and up	9	11
<b>Education Level</b>		
Elementary	14	21
High School	39	57
Associate Degree	41	42
Undergraduate	56	85
Graduate	14	9
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	68	87
Married	91	122
Other	5	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>214</b>

In the current study in order to measure the gastronomic identity of Gaziantep, the scale from Lai et al (2018) was used. In order to adapt the measure of gastronomic identity to the particular situation of Gaziantep interviews with five experts were carried out. These experts included respondents from the local government and from the tourism sector from five-star hotels and first-class restaurants. The interviews revolved around the main gastronomical aspects of Gaziantep according to the interviewees. The resulting questionnaire form was piloted before being applied to the target group.

As in the original scale from Lai et al. (2018), the measure of gastronomic identity used consists of 6 dimensions; geographic environment, food culture, food as lifestyle, food quality, dining places/restaurants and food activities. All the items in the utilized measurement tool were rated using a seven-point Likert scale. The data were analysed using SPSS software and AMOS version 25.

## FINDINGS

In order to explore the dimensionality of the scale, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using the principal components method was carried out. The adequacy of the sample and the suitability of the data is confirmed through the KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) test, which is 0.954, and the Barlett's Test of Sphericity, which is significant ( $p = 0.00$ ). This analysis was also used to refine the scale and some of the items with low commonalities were eliminated. The final analysis revealed a four-factor solution that explains 73.89% of the variation. The factors obtained are named as "Gastronomic culture and reputation", "Food quality", "Food outlets" and "Gastronomic activities". Detailed information on each of the factors may be seen in Table 2.

As observed in Table 2, the means of the various items are high, all of them above 4.6. The highest means correspond to those items that are under the gastronomic culture and reputation dimension. In contrast, the lowest means are those of the items concerning gastronomic activities in Gaziantep, such as festivals and cooking classes, as well as those pertaining to the language of the menus in the restaurants and the availability of fresh produce. Nevertheless, these means are also high.

Table 2. *Gastronomic Identity: Exploratory Factor Analysis*

Items	Common- alities	Mean	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
<b>Gastronomic culture and reputation</b>						
Gaziantep has its own unique food history, tradition and culture (G4)	.814	5.91	.831			
Gaziantep offers an attractive local food culture (G5)	.806	5.93	.812			
Gaziantep offers local dishes and local cuisine with a true local flavour (G6)	.835	5.92	.810			
Gaziantep offers a wide variety of foods and dishes (G8)	.824	5.88	.808			
Gaziantep's food and cuisine are well-known and recognized (G10)	.812	5.92	.795			
Gaziantep offers unique food with cuisine styles unique to Gaziantep (G7)	.797	5.89	.795			
Gaziantep is well-known as a pistachio producer (G3)	.701	5.75	.780			
Food culture is an essential element in Gaziantep's lifestyle (G11)	.792	5.96	.771			
Gaziantep offers authentic food using local ingredients (G9)	.764	5.89	.745			
Gaziantep's food is delicious, colourful, aromatic, and tasty (G14)	.763	5.80	.709			
<b>Food quality</b>						
Gaziantep offers healthy and nutritious food (G17)	.769	5.08		.772		
Gaziantep offers a high standard of safety/hygienic food (G16)	.720	5.10		.742		
Gaziantep offers fresh produce (e.g. fresh fruits, vegetables, and high-grade meat) (G18)	.707	4.95		.737		
Gaziantep produces high-quality food with food quality labels (G15)	.639	5.31		.630		
Gaziantep's cuisine expresses the eating habits of all social classes (G12)	.523	5.31		.564		
<b>Food outlets</b>						
Gaziantep offers restaurant menus in Turkish and other languages (G27)	.782	4.65			.853	
Gaziantep offers friendly service personnel in its restaurants (G28)	.664	5.00			.687	
Gaziantep offers easy access to restaurants (G29)	.686	5.11			.677	
Gaziantep offers attractive markets that provide farm-direct fresh produce (G26)	.595	5.01			.649	
<b>Gastronomic activities</b>						
Gaziantep offers various food festivals/events (G22)	.803	4.97				.833
Gaziantep offers cooking classes that involve tourists cooking with local chefs and learning how to cook local dishes (G21)	.723	4.66				.762
Chronbach's Alpha (Total = .952)			.968	.871	.830	.713
Percentage Variance (Total = 73.89)			52.89	13.04	4.37	3.59

Principal Component Analysis; Rotation Method: Equamax with Kaiser Normalization

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy = 0.954; Barlett's Test of Sphericity: Significance = 0.000

Only factor loadings greater than 0.5 are included in the table

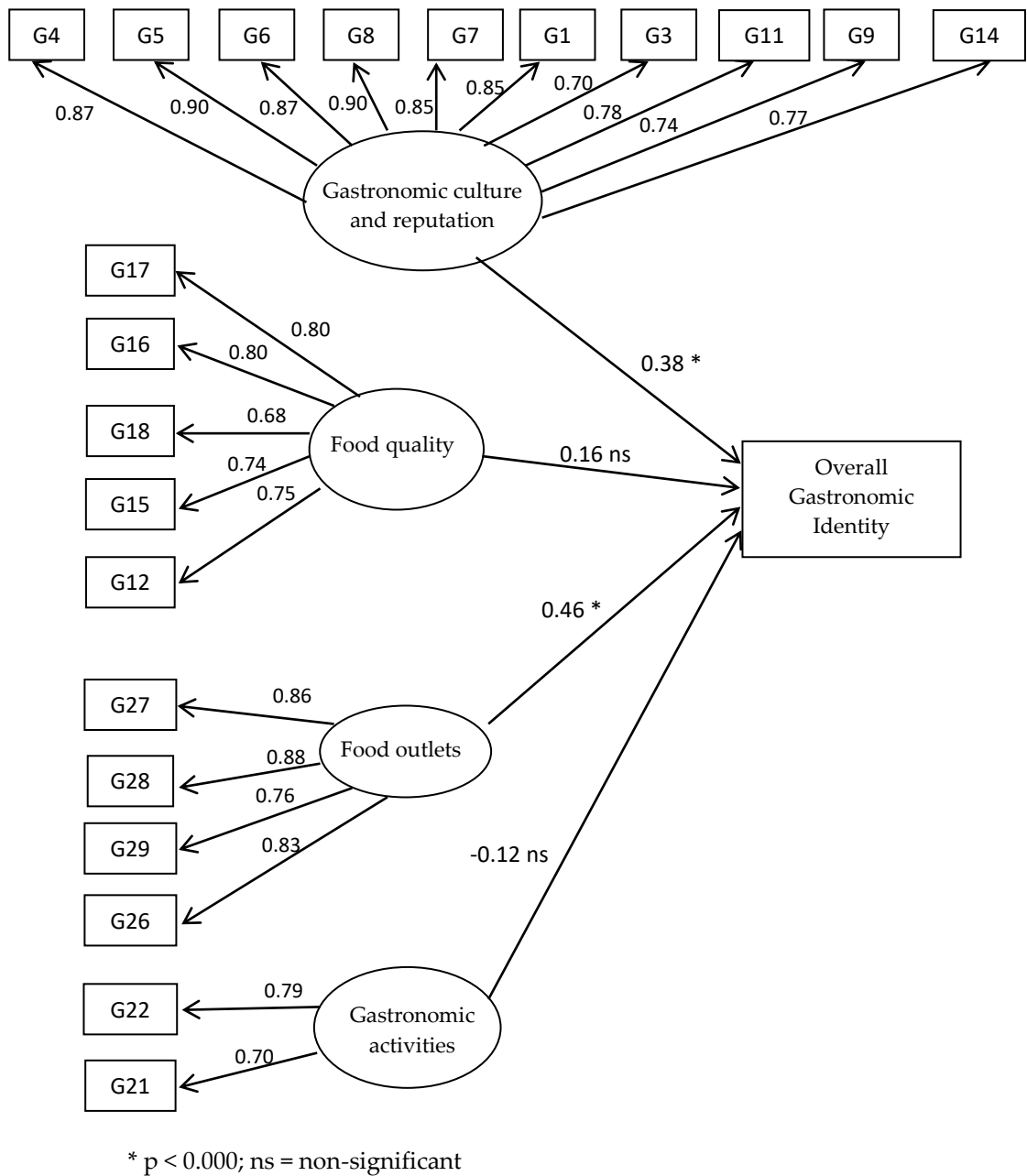


Figure 1. CFA Measurement Model

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used in order to test the dimensionality of the scale obtained through the EFA. The results of this analysis are shown in Figure 1 and Table 3. The reliability is confirmed, as the Composite Reliability (CR) figures are all above 0.8 or close to it, indicating the internal consistency of the constructs (Hatcher, 1994). This finding is also supported by the Cronbach’s Alpha figures obtained for each of the dimensions of gastronomic identity. In addition, the Average

Variance Extracted (AVE) is greater than 0.5 for all constructs, except in the case of Food quality, which is very close (Hatcher, 1994). This finding confirms the convergent validity of the various dimensions of gastronomic identity of Gaziantep. The goodness of fit of the model is also confirmed since the AGFI is 0.90, the CFI is 0.98, the GFI is 0.92 and the RMSEA is 0.05. These numbers are all within the recommended critical values (Bollen, 1989; Engel et al., 2003). The CFA Measurement Model is shown in Figure 1 and Table 3.

Table 3. *Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Gastronomic Identity*

			Standardized Regression Weights	t- value	P
G4	←	Gastronomic culture and reputation	0.871		
G5	←	Gastronomic culture and reputation	0.905	25.60	0.000
G6	←	Gastronomic culture and reputation	0.868	27.87	0.000
G8	←	Gastronomic culture and reputation	0.905	25.59	0.000
G7	←	Gastronomic culture and reputation	0.855	22.66	0.000
G10	←	Gastronomic culture and reputation	0.848	22.38	0.000
G3	←	Gastronomic culture and reputation	0.703		
G11	←	Gastronomic culture and reputation	0.776	13.83	0.000
G9	←	Gastronomic culture and reputation	0.743	13.13	0.000
G14	←	Gastronomic culture and reputation	0.766	13.62	0.000
G17	←	Food quality	0.798	13.10	0.000
G16	←	Food quality	0.799		
G18	←	Food quality	0.677	13.28	0.000
G15	←	Food quality	0.738		
G12	←	Food quality	0.753	12.34	0.000
G27	←	Restaurants and food outlets	0.863	23.16	0.000
G28	←	Restaurants and food outlets	0.884	24.20	0.000
G29	←	Restaurants and food outlets	0.763	22.23	0.000
G26	←	Restaurants and food outlets	0.827	21.30	0.000
G22	←	Gastronomic activities	0.792	16.02	0.000
G21	←	Gastronomic activities	0.704	12.50	0.000
Overall gastronomic identity	←	Gastronomic culture and reputation	0.382	7.27	0.000
Overall gastronomic identity	←	Food quality	0.164	1.57	0.117
Overall gastronomic identity	←	Restaurants and food outlets	0.456	4.17	0.000
Overall gastronomic identity	←	Gastronomic activities	-0.120	-1.18	0.237
Chi-square = 353.578; Degrees of freedom = 183; Probability level = 0.00					
GFI = 0.92; AGFI = 0.90; CFI = 0.98; RMSEA = 0.05					
			CR	AVE	Cronbach's Alpha
Gastronomic culture and reputation			0.94	0.62	0.968
Food quality			0.82	0.48	0.871
Restaurants and food outlets			0.81	0.53	0.830
Gastronomic activities			0.78	0.64	0.713

The gastronomic identity scale is defined as a second order formative construct (first order formation and second order reflectivity). In addition, the four dimensions obtained in the EFA are confirmed through the CFA. However, of the four different aspects of gastronomic identity only two of them form the overall gastronomic identity of Gaziantep. That is, the gastronomic identity of Gaziantep is formed by its restaurants and food outlets (weight of 0.456;  $p < 0.000$ ), as well as by its gastronomic culture and reputation (weight of 0.382;  $p < 0.000$ ). In contrast, for Gaziantep, the food quality and gastronomic activities dimensions do not significantly form its overall gastronomic identity. This finding may be explained by the fact that these dimensions are not strongly associated to Gaziantep, as for example activities related to its food and gastronomy are not very well known and its gastronomy festival has only been implemented since 2018 (Hurriyet, 2018). This result may be different for other destinations in which these dimensions may be more influential in the formation of the place's gastronomic identity.

In order to determine whether there are differences between the perspective of the tourists and locals concerning Gaziantep's gastronomic identity, an independent samples t-test was applied. According to the findings, a significant difference between the groups is found in the food quality and gastronomic activities dimensions (Table 4). That is, residents of Gaziantep perceive food quality (mean=5.39) significantly ( $p = 0.019$ ) higher than tourists (mean=5.11). Similarly, the local people see Gaziantep's gastronomic activities (mean=4.62) as being significantly ( $p = 0.032$ ) more numerous than the visitors (mean=4.39). However, as seen in Table 4, there is no significant difference between the groups in relation to the gastronomic culture and reputation and the restaurants and food outlets dimensions.

Table 4. *Differences between residents and tourists*

Dimensions of gastronomic identity	Groups	Mean	t-value	Significance
Gastronomic culture and reputation	Resident	5.74	1.459	0.145
	Tourist	5.56		
Food quality	Resident	5.39	2.352	0.019
	Tourist	5.12		
Food outlets	Resident	5.17	1.174	0.241
	Tourist	5.02		
Gastronomic activities	Resident	4.62	2.148	0.032
	Tourist	4.39		

## CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

This study examines the dimensions of gastronomic identity from the point of view of visitors and residents in Gaziantep. The research establishes the city's gastronomic identity as encompassing four dimensions, namely Gastronomic Culture and Reputation, Food Quality, Food Outlets and Gastronomic Activities. This finding shows a difference between the dimensionality of gastronomic identity in the study of Lai et al. (2018) and that obtained in the current research. In addition, among the four different aspects of gastronomic identity only two of them, food outlets and gastronomic culture and reputation, form Gaziantep's overall gastronomic identity. Thus, for this city, certain aspects in the gastronomic identity scale are not well known to tourists and may not yet be associated to the identity of Gaziantep. This result implies that contextual elements referring to the particular situation of the gastronomic destination may be present and shows the need to adapt existing scales measuring gastronomic identity to the particular situation of that destination. A better understanding of what constitutes gastronomic identity of a place for different types of destinations may be achieved by investigating the topic in more detail, comparing destinations that are both dissimilar and akin. For example, Antakya is another city in Turkey that was chosen in 2017 to be part of UNESCO's UCCN in the field of gastronomy. The comparison of Antakya and Gaziantep would shed light on the construct of gastronomic identity and its dimensionality.

Furthermore, according to the findings in this research, the main difference between visitors and residents concerns perceptions of food quality and gastronomic activities. According to these results, the residents have a more favourable perception of the quality of the food and the variety of activities provided in the city. This difference in perceptions may be due to the local inhabitants being more aware of the city's gastronomic activities and to the existence of several restaurants that cater mainly to the tourists and which may not reflect well Gaziantep's food quality. However, this topic should be investigated further in future research, since it is important for the management of the destination's brand. Indeed, previous studies have stressed the importance of aligning the views of tourists with those of the local people, since a gap in the destination image between the visitors and the residents may result on a lower support of the community for tourism (Compte-Pujol et al., 2018; Ryan & Aicken, 2010). As branding is also important in order to strengthen the community's sense of identity and pride (Campelo et al., 2014), so in the case of Gaziantep it is paramount that the community's

positive perceptions concerning the city's gastronomic aspects be also conveyed to the tourists. This result also indicates that in addition to better promoting the city's gastronomic resources to the tourists, it may be necessary to identify gaps between the service that is provided to the tourists and that which is available to the local people.

Thus, as this research points out, the construction of the gastronomic identity of a destination with the purpose of using it for branding purposes needs to incorporate the views of different stakeholder groups and to carefully examine any potential gaps in the perceptions of varied interested parties. In the case of Gaziantep, despite the differences between residents and visitors in the dimensions of food quality and gastronomic activities, differences are not seen in terms of gastronomic culture and reputation, and food outlets. In addition, the means for the various dimensions of gastronomic identity of Gaziantep are very high for both stakeholder groups, especially for the culture and reputation aspect of gastronomic identity. Thus, following Haugland et al. (2011) and Horng and Tsai (2012), gastronomy and culinary resources seem to constitute an important competency of the city, supporting the current promotional efforts being carried out for this destination. Notwithstanding this positive result, attention may need to be paid to further promoting gastronomic activities so that they become associated with the destination's brand and included as part of its identity. A more detailed investigation of the food quality of existing food outlets may also reveal a difference between those establishments that cater to residents and those that are more touristic, thus indicating the need for a more integrated management of culinary resources that are produced by the various individual actors. Such a research should also take into consideration the destination's life cycle stage, as Gaziantep shows signs of moving from a development to a consolidation stage in which some of the food services provided may become more commodified and lose their authentic flavours.

The current investigation is limited in that it includes only the opinions of tourists and local residents. Other influential stakeholders, such as the local government and the private sector are not included in the research. Future studies should be more comprehensive, including these important interested parties, since the destination's brand identity should ideally be constructed based on a shared view of various stakeholders (Yusof & Ismail, 2014). In addition, the gastronomic identity should also be identified as part of the overall branding strategy for the destination (Okumuş & Çetin, 2018).



## REFERENCES

- Aksoy, M., & Sezgi, G. (2015). Gastronomy tourism and South-eastern Anatolia region gastronomic elements. *Journal of Tourism and Gastronomy Studies*, 3(3), 79-89.
- Barney, J. B. (1996). The resource-based theory of the firm. *Organization Science*, 7(5), 469-470.
- Birdir, K. Karakan, İ. H., & Çolak, O. (2015). SWOT Analysis of Gaziantep province in terms of tourism and suggestions for the development of tourism. *Journal of Travel and Hospitality Management*, 13(1), 77-92.
- Björk, P., & Kauppinen-Räisänen, H. (2016). Local food: A source for destination attraction. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 28(1), 177-194.
- Bollen, K. A. (1989). *Structural Equations with Latent Variables*. NY: Wiley
- Boyne, S., Hall, D., & Williams, F., (2003). Policy, support and promotion for food related tourism initiatives: A marketing approach to regional development. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 14(3-4), 131-154.
- Braun, E., Kavartzis, M., & Zenker, S. (2013). My city-my brand: The different roles of residents in place branding. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 6(1), 18-28.
- Buhalis, D. (2000). Marketing the competitive destination of the future. *Tourism management*, 21(1), 97-116.
- Butler, R. (1980). The Concept of a Tourist Area Cycle of Evolution: Implications for Management of Resources. *Canadian Geographer*, 24(1): 5-2.
- Campelo, A., Aitken, R., Thyne, M., & Gnoth, J. (2014). Sense of place: The importance for destination branding. *Journal of Travel Research*, 53(2), 154-166.
- Chi, C. G. Q., Chua, B. L., Othman, M., & Karim, A. S. (2013). Investigating the structural relationships between food image, food satisfaction, culinary quality, and behavioral intentions: The case of Malaysia. *International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Administration*, 14(2), 99-120.
- Cohen, E. (2003). Tourism and gastronomy. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 31(3), 731-733.
- Compte-Pujol, M., de San Eugenio-Vela, J., & Frigola-Reig, J. (2018). Key elements in defining Barcelona's place values: The contribution of residents' perceptions from an internal place branding perspective. *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, 14(4), 245-259.
- Correia, A., Moital, M., Ferreira da Costa, C., & Peres, R. (2008). The determinants of gastronomic tourists' satisfaction: A second-order factor analysis. *Blackwell Publishing Journal of Foodservice*, 19, 164-176.
- D'Angella, F., & Go, F. M. (2009). Tale of two cities' collaborative tourism marketing: Towards a theory of destination stakeholder assessment. *Tourism Management*, 30(3), 429-440.
- Danhi, R. (2003). What is your country's culinary identity? *Culinology Currents*, Winter 2003, 4-5.
- Duarte Alonso, A. (2017). Exploring a developing tourism industry: A resource-based view approach. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 42(1), 45-58.
- Duarte Alonso, A., Kok, S., & O'Brien, S. (2018). 'We are only scratching the surface' - A resource-based and dynamic capabilities approach in the context of culinary tourism development. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 43(4), 511-526.
- Encyclopaedia Britannica. (2019). The definition of gastronomy. Retrieved May 01, 2019, from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/gastronomy>.

- Engel, K. S., Moosbrugger, H., & Müller, H. (2003). Evaluating the fit of structural equation models: Tests of significance and descriptive goodness-of-fit measures. *Methods of Psychological Research Online*, 8(2), 23-74
- Eröz, S. S., & Doğubay, M. (2012). Turistik ürün tercihinde sosyal medyanın rolü ve etik ilişkisi. *Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi*, 27(1), 133-157.
- Everett, S., & Aitchison, C. (2008). The role of food tourism in sustaining regional identity: A case study of Cornwall, South West England. *Journal of Sustainable tourism*, 16(2), 150-167.
- Ferrell, O. C., Gonzalez-Padron, T. L., Hult, T. M., & Maignan, I. (2010). From marketing orientation to stakeholder orientation. *Journal of Public Policy Marketing*, 29(1), 93-96.
- Fox, R. (2007). Reinventing the gastronomic identity of Croatian tourist destinations. *Science Direct Hospitality Management*, 26, 546-559.
- Garcia, J. A., Gomez, M., & Molina, A. (2012). A Destination-branding model: An Empirical analysis based on stakeholders. *Tourism Management*, 33(3), 646-661.
- Gaziantep27 (2019, March 12). Otellerde yer yok. Retrieved November 22, 2019, from <https://www.gaziantep27.net/otellerde-yer-yok-527327h.htm>
- Gaziantep27 (2017). Baklavanın ünü sınırları aşıyor. Retrieved November 22, 2019, from <https://www.gaziantep27.net/baklavanin-unu-sinirlari-asiyor-507803h.htm>
- GCC, Gaziantep Chamber of Commerce, (2019). Gaziantep'te Turizm. Retrieved November 19, 2019, from <https://www.gto.org.tr/tr/genel-sayfa/turizm-5.html>
- GMM, Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality, (2019). Gaziantep City of History and Culture.
- GPDCT (2019). Gaziantep Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism.
- Gundlach, G. T., & Wilkie, W. L. (2010). Stakeholder marketing: Why 'stakeholder' was omitted from the American Marketing Association's official 2007 definition of marketing and why the future is bright for stakeholder marketing. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 29(1), 89-92.
- Harrington, R. J. (2005). Defining Gastronomic Identity: The impact of environment and culture on prevailing components, texture and flavours in wine and food. *Journal of Culinary Science and Technology*, 4(2/3), 129-152.
- Harrington, R. J., & Ottenbacher, M.C. (2010). Culinary Tourism—A Case Study of the Gastronomic Capital. *Journal of Culinary Science & Technology* 8(1),14-32.
- Hatcher, L. (1994). *A Step-By-Step Approach to Using SAS System for Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Modelling*. Cary, NC: SAS Institute Inc.
- Haugland, S. A., Ness, H., Grønseth, B. O., & Aarstad, J. (2011). Development of Tourism Destinations: An Integrated Multilevel Perspective. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 38(1), 268-290.
- Hillel, D., Belhassen, Y., & Shani, A. (2013). What makes a gastronomic destination attractive? Evidence from the Israeli Negev. *Tourism Management*, 36, 200-209.
- Hjalager, A. M., & Richards, G. (2002). *Tourism and Gastronomy*. Routledge.
- Horng, J. S., Liu C. H., Chiu, H. Y., & Tsai, C. Y. (2012). The role of international tourist perceptions of brand equity and travel intention in culinary tourism. *The Service Industries Journal*, 32(1)6, 2607-2621.
- Horng, J. S., & Tsai, C. T. (2010). Government websites for promoting East Asian culinary tourism: A cross-national analysis. *Tourism Management*, 31, 74-85.

- Hong, J. S., & Tsai, C. T. (2012). Constructing indicators of culinary tourism strategy: An application of resource-based theory. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 29(8), 796-816.
- Hurriyet Newspaper. (2018). Gaziantep'te "Gastronomi" Festivali. Retrieved November 22, 2019, from <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gaziantep-te-gastronomi-festivali-40906579>.
- Jiménez-Beltrán, F., López-Guzmán, T., & González Santa Cruz, F. (2016a). Analysis of the relationship between tourism and food culture. *Sustainability*, 8(5), 418.
- Jiménez Beltrán, F.J., López-Guzmán, T. & Santa Cruz, F. G. (2016b). Gastronomy and Tourism: Profile and motivation of international tourism in the city of Córdoba, Spain. *Journal of Culinary Science & Technology* 14(4), 347-362.
- Kivela, J. (2017). Gastronomy tourism: Croatia, a land of wine and plenty, or beyond pizza and grill! In L. Dwyer, R. Tomljenović, S. Čorak (Eds.), *Evolution of Destination Planning and Strategy* (pp. 265-278). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-42246-6\_13
- Kivela, J., & Crofts, J. C. (2005). Gastronomy tourism: A meaningful travel market segment. *Journal of Culinary Science & Technology*, 4(2-3), 39-55.
- Kivela, J., & Crofts, C. (2006). Tourism and gastronomy: Gastronomy's influence on how tourists experience a destination. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 30(3), 354-377.
- Koçoğlu, C. M. (2019). Yerli turistlerin gastronomi turizmine yönelik tutumlarının demografik özellikler açısından incelenmesi: Gaziantep örneği. *Gastroia: Journal of Gastronomy and Travel Research*, 3(2), 366-380.
- Kong, W. H., du Cros, H., & Ong, C. E. (2015). Tourism destination image development: A lesson from Macau. *International Journal of Tourism Cities*, 1(4), 299-316.
- Lai, M. Y., Khoo-Lattimore, C., & Wang, Y. (2018). A perception gap investigation in to food and cuisine image attributes for destination branding from the host perspective: The case of Australia. *Tourism Management*, 69, 579-595.
- Lin, Y. C., Pearson, T. E., & Cai, L. A. (2011). Food as a form of destination identity: A tourism destination brand perspective. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 11(1), 30-48.
- Line, N. D., & Wang, Y. (2017). A multi-stakeholder market-oriented approach to destination marketing. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 6(1), 84-93.
- Lusch, R. F. (2007). Marketing's evolving identity: Defining our future. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 26(2), 261-268.
- Lusch, R. F., & Webster, F. E., Jr. (2011). A stakeholder-unifying, co-creation philosophy for marketing. *Journal of Macro Marketing*, 31(2), 129-134
- Long, L. M. (Ed.). (2004). *Culinary tourism*. Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky.
- McKercher, B., Okumus, F., & Okumus, B. (2008). Food tourism as a viable market segment: It's all how you cook the numbers! *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 25(2), 137-148.
- Nebioğlu, O. (2016). A qualitative research on gastronomic identity and gastronomic tourism products typology: Alanya sample. *Journal of Tourism and Gastronomy Studies*, 5(2), 39-60.
- Okumus, B., & Cetin, G. (2018). Marketing Istanbul as a culinary destination. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 9, 340-346.
- Okumuş, B., Köseoğlu, M. A., & Ma, F. (2018). Food and gastronomy research in tourism and hospitality: A bibliometric analysis. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 73, 64-74.

- Okumuş, B., Okumuş, F., & McKercher, B. (2007). Incorporating local and international cuisines in the marketing of tourism destinations: The cases of Hong Kong and Turkey. *Tourism Management*, 28(1), 253-261
- Özdemir, G., Yılmaz, M., Yalçın, M., & Alvarez, D. M. (2015). Stakeholders' perception of Istanbul's historical peninsula as a sustainable destination. *Tourism Planning & Development*, 12(1), 87-98.
- Özdemir, M., & Kaya, F. O. (2011). Today, coppersmith's business in the city of Gaziantep. *Gaziantep University Social Science Journal*, 10(3), 1149-1170.
- Özdemir, P. (2018). Branding a millennia-old Turkish city: Case of Gaziantep. *ilef journal*, 5(2), 121-140.
- Posta (2019, June 1). Siparişler Geri Çevriliyor. Retrieved November 22, 2019, from <https://www.posta.com.tr/antep-baklavasinda-siparisler-geri-cevriliyor-2163017>
- Prezenza, A., & Del Chiappa, G. (2013). Entrepreneurial strategies in leveraging food as a tourist resource: A cross-regional analysis in Italy. *Journal of Heritage Tourism*, 8(2-3), 182-192.
- Rao, H., Monin, P., & Durand, R. (2003). Institutional change in Toque Ville: Nouvellecuisine as an identity movement in French gastronomy. *The American Journal of Sociology*, 108(4), 795-843.
- Riley, M. (1994). Marketing out: the influence of social culture and innovation. *British Journal of Food*, 96(10), 15-19.
- Rodríguez-Díaz, M., & Espino-Rodríguez, T. F. (2008). A model of strategic evaluation of a tourism destination based on internal and relational capabilities. *Journal of Travel Research*, 46(4), 368-380.
- Ryan, C., & Aicken, M. (2010). The destination image gap—visitors' and residents' perceptions of place: evidence from Waiheke Island, New Zealand. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 13(6), 541-561.
- Sánchez-Cañizares, S. M., & López-Guzmán, T. (2012). Gastronomy as a tourism resource: Profile of the culinary tourist. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 15(3), 229-245.
- Scarpato, R. (2000). New global cuisine: The perspective of postmodern gastronomy studies. Unpublished master's thesis, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia.
- Scarpato, R. (2001). Figli dei fiori? No, di cavoli e fornelli. *Gambero Rosso*, Monthly, April, 41-43.
- Sirše, M. C. J. (2014). Gastronomic cities: City strategy on gastronomy as a tool for tourism and employment development. Baseline study, connecting cities building successes, European Union, March 2014.
- Sormaz, Ü., Akmeseb, H., Gunes, E., & Aras, S. (2016). Gastronomy in Tourism. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 39(2016), 725 – 730.
- Stavrianea, A., Dipidis, C., & Siomkos, G. (2017). Gastronomy tourism: An examination of the "Greek Breakfast Initiative" potential. In N. Tsounis & A. Vlachvei (Eds.), *Advances in Applied Economic Research* (pp. 841-848). Springer, Cham.
- Symons, M. (1998). *The pudding that took a thousand cooks: The story of cooking in civilisation and daily life*. Melbourne: Viking.
- Şahin, G. G., & Ünver, G. (2015). Destinasyon pazarlama aracı olarak gastronomi turizmi: İstanbul'un gastronomi turizmi potansiyeli üzerine bir araştırma. *Journal of Tourism and Gastronomy Studies*, 3(2), 63-73.
- Tuç, Z., & Özkanlı, O. (2017). Resource about reshaping of food and beverage culture by social media: Sample Gaziantep City. *Journal of Urban Culture and Management*, 10(2), 216-239.

- TPTO (2019). Turkish Patent and Trademark Office. Retrieved April 22, 2019, from <https://www.turkpatent.gov.tr/TURKPATENT/geographicalRegisteredList/>.
- UCCN (n.d.). UNESCO Creative Cities Network. Retrieved April 22, 2019, from <https://en.unesco.org/creative-cities/gaziantep>.
- UNWTO, World Tourism Organisation. (2016). Gastronomy Tourism Network. Retrieved April 22, 2019, from <http://affiliatemembers.unwto.org/content/gastronomy-tourism-network>
- UNWTO, World Tourism Organisation, (2017). Second Global Report on Gastronomy Tourism. Retrieved April 01, 2019, from [http://cf.cdn.unwto.org/sites/all/files/pdf/gastronomy\\_report\\_web.pdf](http://cf.cdn.unwto.org/sites/all/files/pdf/gastronomy_report_web.pdf)
- Williams, H. A., Williams Jr, R. L., & Omar, M. (2014). Gastro-tourism as destination branding in emerging markets. *International Journal of Leisure and Tourism Marketing*, 4(1), 1-18.
- Xiaomin, C. (2017). "City of Gastronomy" of UNESCO Creative Cities Network: From international criteria to local practice. *Social Systems Studies*, 55-67.
- Yusof, M. F. M., & Ismail, H. N. (2014). Destination branding identity from the stakeholders' perspectives. *International Journal of Built Environment and Sustainability*, 1(1), 71-75.

## INSIGHT FROM INSIDERS: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY FOR EXPLORING FOOD TOURISM POLICY IN IRELAND 2009-2019

Ketty QUIGLEY

*Graduate MA Gastronomy and Food Studies, TU Dublin, Ireland*  
ORCID: 0000-0001-6311-9496

Margaret CONNOLLY

*School of Culinary Arts and Food Technology, TU Dublin, Ireland*  
ORCID: 0000-0002-2674-5559

Elaine MAHON

*School of Culinary Arts and Food Technology, TU Dublin, Ireland*  
ORCID: 0000-0002-9406-6777

Máirtín MAC CON IOMAIRE<sup>1</sup>

*School of Culinary Arts and Food Technology, TU Dublin, Ireland*  
ORCID: 0000-0001-6622-3299

### ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on how the phenomenon of food tourism developed in Ireland between 2009 and 2019. Employing a phenomenological epistemology, a qualitative methodology was adopted to explore key stakeholder's lived experience of the Irish government's approach to food tourism, identifying the primary drivers and key moments during the ten-year period. Extant literature was reviewed and critically evaluated. Using purposive sampling, and employing an emic posture, ten semi-structured interviews were conducted with senior governmental and tourism industry figures until saturation occurred. The findings highlight the influence that key policy makers, the formation of networks, clusters, and the role social entrepreneurs had on developing food tourism in Ireland. The influence of the economic downturn in 2008 was a force for change and creativity

### Article History

Received 10 June 2019

Revised 26 October 2019

Accepted 1 November 2019

### Keywords

gastronomy  
food tourism  
food networks  
tourism policy  
food champions  
social entrepreneurs

---

<sup>1</sup> Address correspondence to Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire, PhD, TU Dublin, City Campus, Cathal Brugha Street, Dublin, IRELAND. Email: [mairtin.macconiomaire@tudublin.ie](mailto:mairtin.macconiomaire@tudublin.ie)

among both government agencies and the broader tourism and hospitality industry. Food tourism policy was aligned with broader government policy, the creation of regional tourism brands (Wild Atlantic Way etc.), linking gastronomy with cultural and other tourism initiatives and marketing strategies. Whereas food in tourism in Ireland is well established, only ten per cent of overseas visitors are travelling specifically for food experiences.

## INTRODUCTION

The World Tourism Organisation (WTO) defines tourism as being the 'activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes' (De Esteban et al., 2015, p. 9). Globalisation has brought about cultural changes which have impacted tourism activities, leading to the appearance of many niche markets within the tourism offering (Everett, 2016). Food tourism, defined by Hall and Sharples (2003, p. 10) as 'visitation to primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants and specific locations for which food tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of specialist food production region are the primary motivating factor for travel', has now emerged as one of those key tourism activities, offering as it does the opportunity for food lovers to seek out culturally authentic food experiences (Getz et al., 2014). Ellis et al. (2018) suggest that food not only defines the cuisine of a country but also represents the traditions, stories and symbols of a nation. Therefore, interacting with the food of a place provides tourists with an opportunity to co-create a unique and memorable tourism experience (Kivela & Crofts, 2006).

The academic literature suggests some blurring of the lines between the concepts of 'Food Tourism' and that of 'Food in Tourism' (Mulcahy, 2019a), however, there is widespread acceptance of the pivotal role (about 33% of tourist spend) that food now plays in the tourism product of any country (Fáilte Ireland, 2018). With food so deeply connected to its origin, many destinations are focussing their marketing efforts and product development strategies on their own unique food offerings (UNWTO, 2012). Ireland is no exception in this regard. Mac Con Iomaire (2018a) concedes that Ireland has a greater historical connection in the public imagination with drink rather than food, yet he argues for food to be recognized as part of Ireland's intangible cultural heritage. There is growing international recognition of the quality of food produced in

Ireland and increased priority given to the promotion of food and food related activities within government agencies (Allen & Mac Con Iomaire, 2017; Healy & Mac Con Iomaire, 2019). Since 2009, Fáilte Ireland, the National Tourism Development Agency, has begun to develop policies and strategies for food tourism in Ireland (Mulcahy, 2019a). Both tourism and food tourism have become incorporated into rural policy making in Ireland, acknowledging not only the greater economic role of non-agricultural actors in rural economies but also the growing importance of environmental and sustainability imperatives (Hall & Gossling, 2016).

This paper will briefly outline the history of food tourism globally before discussing the growth and development of food tourism/food in tourism in Ireland from 2009 to 2019. The main aim is to examine the Irish government's approach to food tourism by exploring the major developments and identifying the primary drivers of Irish food tourism during this ten-year period. The objective of this paper is to explore the development of food tourism policy in Ireland from 2009-2019. This research attempts to answer the following research questions:

RQ1. What are the historical origins of food tourism phenomenon in Ireland?

RQ2. How did food tourism policy develop in Ireland from 2009-2019?

RQ3. What was the lived experience of various stakeholders of the development of food tourism policy in Ireland?

The first section explores the current literature relevant to food tourism, its growth and development and reviews international cases as well as significant developments in Ireland. An outline of the methodology used to gather the primary data is then offered. This is followed by the presentation of the key results derived from the data analysis, and the development of a contextual framework. A discussion of the results obtained in the context of addressing the overall research aim follows, together with conclusions incorporating both the practical and theoretical contributions of the findings relating to the relevant stakeholders.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The increasing interest in food tourism as a field of study has generated the emergence of several definitions of the term 'food tourism'



(Henderson, 2009; Mulcahy, 2017). These definitions aim at distinguishing those who eat by necessity during their travels, from people deliberately looking for food and drink experiences or traveling for food-related motives. There have been a number of different terms used to describe the combination of food activities and tourism such as 'food tourism' (Getz et al., 2014), 'culinary tourism' (Long, 2004), 'gastronomic tourism' (UNWTO, 2012) and 'tasting tourism' (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2014). Everett (2016) suggests that the complex and ever-evolving nature of food tourism justifies the use of several terms to designate it. In fact, she advances that using one definition would undermine and simplify food tourism: in many cases food and drink activities overlap with other wider forms of tourism, hence the need for different definitions (Everett, 2016).

### **Historical Origins**

Historical evidence has shown that food has played a key role in the experience of travellers for many centuries. However, it is suggested that perhaps food tourism as we know it dates back to the 18th century, when people first started exploring other cuisines during their travels, be they based on war, commerce or leisure (Mulcahy, 2019b). Tannahill (1991) notes that there was culinary engagement on the part of people who travelled around different countries, tasting foreign food and drinks. Professional tour guiding can be traced back to the tutors who accompanied the young aristocrats on the 'Grand Tours' in that their roles of mentor and pathfinder were antecedents of Cohen's (1985) theories of contemporary tour guide roles. In the 18th century, nations such as France and Italy were becoming famous for their culinary identities and the theme of food emerged in travel writing, suggesting that food was part of the overall tourist experience (Everett, 2016; Mac Con Iomaire, 2018b).

### **New Tourism - the Experience Economy**

From the 1990s there was a shift from mass tourism and package holidays characteristic of 'old tourism' to more flexible, segmented and more authentic tourism experiences which led to a form of 'new tourism' (Boyd, 2015, p. 13). This coincided with a general recognition of the experiential elements of the tourism offering within the wider context of the new 'experience economy' (Pine & Gilmore, 1998, p. 98). In this new era, if a business intentionally used its 'services as the stage, and goods as props,

to engage individual customers in a way that created a memorable event', they were no longer selling mere products but were in fact selling experiences.

The culturally symbolic role of food thus gained greater significance for tourists seeking out new travel experiences. Indeed, Scarpato (2002, cited in Kivela & Crofts, 2006) suggests that because gastronomy is considered a cultural element, it can also be seen as a cultural tourism product. Tourism therefore can be seen as an unusual context in which food consumption gains special meaning and pleasure (Hjalager & Richards, 2003), while others such as Quan and Wang (2004, p. 302) suggest that within food tourism activities, the consumption of food can be considered a 'peak touristic experience' by many individuals. It is not surprising therefore that the literature on the development of food tourism internationally shows the importance of local food and drink and its ability to contribute to a destination's 'sense of place' (Yeoman et al., 2015).

Fox (2007, cited in Henderson, 2009) suggests that a distinct gastronomic identity and culinary heritage can be used by regions and nations for both differentiation and revival. While some destinations have traditionally benefited from the positive image of their food, other destinations such as Canada, Australia and South Africa have actively sought to promote and highlight their food and wine as part of their destination image (Henderson, 2009). Mulcahy (2014) notes that Norway, Singapore, New Zealand and Scotland each use food as a marker of identity to promote tourism and exports. Similarly, Hjalager and Richards (2003) highlight how destinations like Scotland and Portugal, not necessarily known for their food, began to use their gastronomy as part of the tourism experience and destination marketing. The Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance included Ireland as a case study in its special *The Rise of Food Tourism* report, where it noted that Ireland was a 'great example of an emerging culinary destination because it is not necessarily top of mind for culinary tourists' (Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance, 2015, p. 13).

### **Food Tourism and Ireland**

Ireland is the most westerly country in Europe. The island of Ireland has thirty-two counties, six of which form Northern Ireland which is part of the United Kingdom. The other twenty-six counties gained independence from Great Britain in 1921 and was known as the Irish Free State until

1947, when the Republic of Ireland was declared. Although there are only five million people currently living on the island of Ireland, there are over eighty million people around the world who claim Irish lineage, thanks in part to the mass emigration of the mid-19th century (Mac Con Iomaire, 2011).

Both commercial food provision and tourism were well established in Ireland long before the country gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1921 (Mac Con Iomaire, 2013). It will surprise some to find that neutral Ireland, and especially Dublin, experienced an influx of 'gastro-tourists' during the years of World War II (1939-1945) and that in the 1950s, two Dublin restaurants, Hotel Russell and Jammet's were among the most outstanding restaurants in Europe (Mac Con Iomaire, 2015). These 'haute cuisine' restaurants, with their French head chefs and managers, were not the norm in 1950s Ireland.

Bord Fáilte (The Irish Tourism Board) was created in the 1950s, and indeed, for the decades that followed, Ireland's food was not perceived positively (Deleuze, 2014). Bord Fáilte began to put in place initiatives to promote Irish food and change the quality standards. This new-found emphasis on food is illustrated with the publication in 1972 of its first Guide to Good Eating. Conflict between nationalists and unionists in Northern Ireland between 1969 and 1994, known as 'The Troubles', severely curtailed tourism development in Ireland for decades. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Bord Fáilte took more interest in the food sector and invested in training and education projects to improve the quality of food standards up to 2003, when it merged with Tourism Ireland into Fáilte Ireland, the National Tourism Development Authority (Deleuze, 2014).

Mac Con Iomaire (2018b) highlighted that dramatic changes in the Irish foodscape arose during the 'Celtic Tiger' (1994-2007) boom years and later during the economic recession (2008-2014) that followed, noting that in 2011, the editor of *Le Guide du Routard*, Pierre Josse, wrote 'the Irish food experience is now as good if not better than anywhere in the world' (Mac Con Iomaire, 2018b, p. 59). This economic downturn generated a boost in creativity along with a focus on local quality produce within the restaurant industry. It appears that during this time state bodies such as Bord Bia (The Irish Food Board) also started considering food as a driver of economic development (Mac Con Iomaire, 2018a, 2018b). Fáilte Ireland (2018) accepts that the perception of Irish food has improved, however the government agency admitted that there remains a considerable amount of

work to be done. A signal moment for Irish gastronomy was when Mark Moriarty won the San Pellegrino Young Chef of the Year 2015, beating nineteen other regional finalists from all over the world (Mac Con Iomaire, 2018b).

### **Visitors' Perceptions of Irish Food**

In 2016, the World Food Travel Association (WFTA) conducted a survey on food expectations regarding Irish food and drinks of respondents who had not visited Ireland (Fáilte Ireland, 2018). Findings showed that beer was the first thing that came to mind (32%), followed by potatoes (15%), whiskey (14%), Guinness (10%) and corned beef and cabbage (10%). Generally, respondents associated Ireland with its alcoholic beverages more than its food. Fáilte Ireland (2018) stated that prior to visiting Ireland, tourists did not see Ireland as a food destination and had low expectations regarding the food offering. However, a 2016 survey showed that 76 per cent of respondents were satisfied with the food offering they experienced when visiting the country, which identified a gap in perception (Fáilte Ireland, 2018). Fáilte Ireland (2018) recognised that an adequate marketing approach is required for the Irish food and drink offering to gain a positive global reputation.

### **Tourism Policy and Policy Makers in Ireland**

The strategic development of tourism in Ireland started with the creation of the Irish Tourism Association at the start of the 20th century (Fáilte Ireland, n.d.). Bord Fáilte Éireann was then formed in 1955 to facilitate the development and promotion of Irish tourism in the Irish Republic at both domestic and international levels (Fáilte Ireland, n.d.). This was followed by the establishment of CERT (the Council for Education, Recruitment and Training) in 1963, which aimed at providing training for the tourism sector (Fáilte Ireland, n.d.). In 1998, as part of the Good Friday Agreement, tourism was identified as an area of cooperation. A new entity, Tourism Ireland Ltd. was established in 2002 to manage the promotion of tourism for the island of Ireland. This function was previously managed by Bórd Fáilte Éireann in the Republic of Ireland and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board in Northern Ireland (Fáilte Ireland, n.d.). In 2003, Fáilte Ireland was formed as the 'National Tourism Development Authority', a new agency which replaced Bord Fáilte Éireann and CERT (Fáilte Ireland, n.d.).

The dramatic rise in Irish tourism during the 'Celtic Tiger' years is charted by O'Brien (2012) who points out that between 1996 and 2006, the number of hotel rooms doubled from 26,000 to 52,000. She noted that a dramatic collapse occurred in the second half of 2008, and in just 18 months, tourism numbers fell by one million. Applying Wilson's (2000) policy regime model, O'Brien (2012) maps the state and private sector interactions that led to developmental failure. In September 2009, the Tourism Renewal Group published a mid-term report *Survival, Recovery, and Growth – a Strategy for Renewing Irish Tourism 2009-2013*. The Tourism Recovery Taskforce was established in 2010 and *The Gathering Ireland 2013* was a government led grassroots tourism initiative run by Fáilte Ireland to mobilize the Irish diaspora to return to Ireland during the year. Mottiar (2016) examines *The Gathering* in the context of social entrepreneurship. Prior to 2010, the lack of a national food tourism policy was criticised by Mulcahy (2009) who highlighted the potential of food tourism as a driver of Ireland's economy and the impact it could have on the tourism sector generally.

### **Developments in Food Tourism in Ireland**

John Mulcahy can undoubtedly be viewed as the architect and instigator of food's role in Irish tourism development, originally stemming from a Masters' thesis (Mulcahy, 2009). In his position as senior manager for the Irish state agency, Fáilte Ireland, Mulcahy played a central role in the shaping and implementing of a food tourism / food in tourism policy and strategy in Ireland from 2008-2018. The trajectory of this evolution can be seen in his academic publications (Mulcahy, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2019a, 2019b) and many of the individual developments are outlined in the state agency's policy documents (Fáilte Ireland, 2011, 2014, 2018).

It was during the recession (2008-2014) that Fáilte Ireland came up with a new approach in terms of food tourism. In 2010, Fáilte Ireland created a working group comprised of stakeholders and government agencies (Mulcahy, 2019a). This led to the development of the National Food Tourism Implementation Framework 2011- 2013. The aim was to develop a vision and plan for food tourism as part of the overall tourism destination marketing strategy (Fáilte Ireland, 2011). The framework aimed at highlighting Ireland's ability to offer unique food experiences: 'Ireland will be recognised by visitors for the availability, quality and value of our local and regional food experiences which evokes a unique sense of place, culture and hospitality' (Fáilte Ireland, 2011, p. 17).

Mulcahy (2019a) presents a case study of Ireland's Food Champions network, and outlines how the model of lifestyle entrepreneurship first applied in the Auckland and Hawkes Bay area of New Zealand inspired him to set up the network. In 2012, Fáilte Ireland created a 'Food Tourism Team' within its organisation and launched their Food Champion programme (Mulcahy, 2019a). An initial group of 14 Food Champions were chosen by Fáilte Ireland in 2012. This was followed in 2013 by the addition of eight individuals to the list of Fáilte Ireland's Food Ambassadors to support the Wild Atlantic Way brand. Consequently, the Food Tourism Activity Plan 2014-2016 was created, seeking to 'shift the perception that Ireland is a producer of great ingredients to that of a nation with an authentic cuisine (Mac Con Iomaire, 2018a, p. 1). In 2016, Fáilte Ireland selected 16 new individuals from the Irish food scene and kept six existing Food Champions from the previous group (Mulcahy, 2019a). In a case study, Mulcahy (2019a) showed that the tourism agency adopted a creative collaboration approach between 2012 and 2017 to develop food tourism in Ireland. Sustainability has been core to the approach, and Carruthers et al. (2015), using the County of Cork as a case study, proposed gastronomic tourism as a viable option for sustainability on the island of Ireland in terms of economy, environment and society. Mulcahy (2019a) concludes that the critical success factors for gastronomic tourism experiences are:

- Start with the basics (quality, authenticity, and locality)
- Build coalitions (public private partnerships)
- Spread the message (build a brand, communicate clearly)
- Develop and promote a holistic approach (gastronomic tourism should be seen as one aspect of the entire food value network)
- Ensure a solid base of local food culture
- Develop a network abroad that helps to profile national and/or regional cuisine

More recently, Fáilte Ireland's Food and Drink Development Strategy 2018-2023 was launched, which demonstrated a clear interest in making Irish food and drink a more important component of the overall tourism experience in Ireland. The strategy was based on Fáilte Ireland's Food Tourism Activity Plan 2014-2016, which generated successful food initiatives such as the Boyne Valley Food Series and the Burren Food Trail (Fáilte Ireland, 2018). The aim of the current food and drink strategy is to 'enhance the visitor experience through food and drink and make a strong contribution to overall tourism revenue growth' (Fáilte Ireland, 2018, p. 33). The food and drink strategy relies on four main pillars 'insights and

innovation', 'strengthening Ireland's appeal', 'driving industry capacity' and 'building great visitor experiences' (Fáilte Ireland, 2018, p. 35). According to Fáilte Ireland (2018) the strategy will enable it to measure the impact of food in tourism and demonstrate how it contributes to Ireland's economic growth. Finally, the strategy will be reviewed by Fáilte Ireland in 2020 in order to identify its strengths and weaknesses.

The latest food tourism initiative is an all-island project entitled Taste the Island (Fáilte Ireland, 2019). The report outlines how far food tourism has progressed in the decade since it was first proposed by Mulcahy (2009). Fáilte Ireland (2019, p. 14) estimates Ireland's food and drink tourism landscape to include 8000+ pubs, 3000 restaurants (including 16 Michelin stars and 31 Bib Gourmands), 966 hotels, 170 farmers markets, 60+ food festivals, 60+ food producer experiences, 40 food and drink tours, 31 cookery schools, 27+ brewery experiences, 17 whiskey distillery experiences, 9 gin distillery experiences, and 4 cider distillery experiences. Food tourism in Ireland appears to be firmly part of the 'experience economy' (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). In October 2019, the Michelin Guide 2020 awarded stars to five new Irish restaurants, resulting in 21 Michelin starred restaurants including three two-starred establishments.

## METHODOLOGY

Phenomenology as an established philosophical movement gained credence with the writings of Edmond Husserl, Martin Heidegger and later Maurice Merleau-Ponty among others (Gill, 2014). Ontological and epistemological views of leading phenomenologists differ from its two orientations (descriptive or hermeneutic) or its three associated methods (descriptive phenomenology, hermeneutic phenomenology, and interpretative phenomenological analysis) (Pernecky & Jamal, 2010; Jackson et al., 2018). Pernecky and Jamal (2010, p. 1056) note 'significant variations within the phenomenological tradition', pointing out that Heidegger's 'hermeneutic phenomenology', which is the approach adopted in this article, 'addresses experience from the perspective of meanings, understandings and interpretations'. Jonathan Smith's interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) is within the Heideggarian orientation and since its emergence (Smith, 1996), has become increasingly popular in psychology. IPA employs flexible guidelines and its idiographic nature distinguishes it from other phenomenological methodologies (Gill, 2014), making it apposite for this research.

The first step of the research project was to conduct a comprehensive review of the extant literature on the topic of food tourism globally and then in Ireland. A desk-based, online review was undertaken on the grey literature, various strategy documents, frameworks, policies and initiatives that have been published or launched by the Irish government or its agencies. Peer reviewed journal articles and book chapters were examined on the broader field of gastronomy and tourism, covering the various terms adapted within the canon (food tourism, culinary tourism, gastronomic tourism etc.). Academic literature on gastronomic tourism in Ireland is dominated by one key researcher (Mulcahy, 2009, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2019a, 2019b) and the grey literature stems principally from a single state tourism agency (Fáilte Ireland, 2011, 2014, 2018, 2019). Therefore, a phenomenological epistemology was adopted to uncover the 'lived experiences' of key governmental and industry figures to see how their perceptions of the development of food tourism in Ireland 2009-2019 triangulated with the published literature.

To achieve the objectives of this exploratory study, constructivist ontology, an interpretivist phenomenological epistemology and a qualitative methodology was adopted. This can help to get close to the professional life and 'lived experience' of the participating food tourism professionals to explore how they conceive and experience the phenomenon of food tourism (Gill, 2014; Hillman & Radel, 2018).

Data was collected by the use of face-to-face semi-structured interviews with nine food tourism professionals and, due to logistical and time limitations, one telephone interview, between February 2018 and May 2019 until saturation was achieved (Denscombe, 2003; Gill, 2014). Potential interviewees were contacted, the research background and goals were outlined, and following which each interviewee was invited to participate. Purposive sampling (Smith, 1996) was used and the majority of interviewees held senior positions with many years of experience in various sectors of the tourism hospitality industry. They included social entrepreneurs, food champions, tour guides, culinary educators, and managers in state agencies and beverage attractions.

The researchers constructed a flexible interview schedule in a way which aimed at answering the research objectives but allowed room for issues to emerge (see Appendix 1). Notes and memos were taken during each interview; these were appended to the typewritten transcripts for use at the data analysis stage. The longest interview took 54 minutes while the shortest interview lasted for 26 minutes. Interviews were transcribed



verbatim. The transcripts were then checked against the recordings for accuracy. Participants were asked to sign a consent form. Each was assured of complete anonymity— of both identity and operation— and data confidentiality. Names used within this paper are pseudonyms (Table 1).

Table 1. *Demographic of Interviewees*

Code Alias	Gender	Age	Position	Years in Tourism/ Hospitality	Other Role / Details	Location
George	Male	51-65	Senior Manager	40 years	State Tourism Agency	Urban
David	Male	51-65	Entrepreneur	35 years	Food Champion	Urban
James	Male	41-50	Educator / Tour Guide	28 years	Social Entrepreneur	Rural
Deirdre	Female	31-40	Tour Guide	13 years	Food Champion	Urban
Martina	Female	51-65	Artisan Producer	17 years	Food Champion	Rural
Linda	Female	31-40	Manager	20 years	Beverage Attraction	Urban
Patricia	Female	41-50	Beverage / Tour operator	25 years	Social Entrepreneur	Rural
Kate	Female	31-40	Beverages / Education	20 years	Food Champion	Rural
Joy	Female	31-40	Tour Guide	20 years	Food Champion	Urban
Mary	Female	41-50	Tour Guide	10 years	Social Entrepreneur	Rural
Amy	Female	31-40	Manager	13 years	Beverage Attraction	Urban

### Data analysis

The data were subjected to qualitative inductive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), which involved a process of data familiarisation, coding and gradual data reduction as coded comments were brought together under higher order themes. Codes were subjected to a process of continual comparison, and the data were refined through several stages using procedures outlined in the literature (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Gill, 2014). Analysis in qualitative research does not stop by summarizing data; it digs deeper to recognize patterns and themes envisaging the relationships among these reaching to an elucidation of the phenomenon. It should be noted, however, that this process was an iterative one (Gill, 2014). The final outcome of the analytical process is a narrative account where the researchers' analytic interpretation is presented with verbatim extracts from the interviewees (Gill, 2014).

As the four researchers held occupational experience within the tourism / hospitality industry, an 'emic' or 'insider's' rapport (Robinson et al., 2014) was developed with the interviewees. An emic perspective is fundamental to understanding how people perceive the world around them and is one of the principal concepts guiding qualitative research (Given, 2008). This facilitated a greater level of insights and a reflective hermeneutic cycle (Heidegger, 1962) which continued into the analysis and beyond, thus strengthening the rigor of the project. Interviews are clearly reflexive, but reflexivity comes into its own in the interpretation and reinterpretation of data – Heidegger's (1962) 'double hermeneutic' manifest. May (1999) describes knowledge derived from the shared understanding of a community (tourism professionals in this case) based on the emic posture of the researchers as 'endogenous reflexivity'.

## RESULTS

### **Participant's profiles**

The demographics of the interviewees are discussed in this section and an outline of participants is shown in Table 1. Male interviewees constituted 30% of the sample while female interviewees accounted for 70%. The majority of the participants were aged between 31 and 40 years, three participants were in the 41-50 bracket, and three participants were over 50. Most of the participants had a long history of working in tourism and/or hospitality - 241 years in total; the mean was 24.1 years. Half of the interviewees were self-employed entrepreneurs, with three employed by the State, and two employed in the private sphere. All were highly-socially networked in their local communities, with five individuals having been chosen by their peers as Food Champions or ambassadors at some stage of their career (see Table 1).

The interviews provided insight into the development of food tourism not available in the literature, including how food tourism strategy was influenced by other overarching developments in tourism policy in Ireland and how politics and a change in either government or minister can affect policy and direction. The 'lived experiences' of various individuals who were affected, or not, by changing policies or strategies depending on which parts of the industry or country in which they worked proved illuminating. Also of note was the power of volunteerism and social entrepreneurship within the tourism / hospitality industry where networks, clusters, and concepts of supporting local businesses and

producers helped to build a more sustainable future through the multiplier effect. Quantifying the social value of this in financial terms proved difficult for food tourism policy advocates, who battled with finance directors in justifying spending on projects whose return seemed intangible or required long term vision. Additionally, thought-provoking was hearing from those at the coalface on how policy initiatives such as the 'Food Story Toolkit' and the promotion of local seasonal food, through initiatives such as 'Place on a Plate', actually transformed businesses. The findings can be divided into three main themes: The Economy, Government Policies and Strategies, and finally, Food and Drink Initiatives and Experiences. The key themes and sub-themes are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. *Identified Themes and Sub-Themes*

<b>Main themes</b>	<b>Sub-themes</b>
The economy	The creative economy The experience economy
Government policies and strategies	Major developments in Irish food tourism 2009 and 2019 (Networks, Events, Food Trails) Food champions Networking Social value of volunteerism
Food and drink initiatives and experiences	Social entrepreneurs Bureaucracy Education Clusters

### **The Economy**

Some of the initial codes emerging from the data can be grouped under the theme of the economy. Naturally, recession featured strongly in the analysis, as the dramatic collapse of tourism from 2008 through 2009 took hold and, as O'Brien (2012) noted by September 2009, unemployment had reached 429,400, a rise of 75% in the course of a single year. However, some interviewees such as Amy stated *'I think the recession was the best thing that happened to Irish food'*.

### *The creative economy*

Creativity often stems from crisis, and Mary expanded on this sentiment noting *'the crash came and a lot of people went back to their roots, working on their parents' farms and started looking at things differently, looking for it to be more sustainable in the future.'* Entrepreneurs such as David suddenly found that they had to *'reign in [their] spending and cut [their] cloth to measure'* thereby transforming their businesses into much leaner operations. For others, such as Patricia, recession allowed them to change career and explore new opportunities.

Creativity and the opportunity to try new directions also influenced government departments. Initiatives such as 'The Gathering' based on a previous concept, *'An Tóstal'* which started in the 1950s recession encouraged each parish in Ireland to organise events, such as clan reunions, to entice some of the large Irish diaspora to return home. This boosted the local economy and also reinforced the traditional Irish concept of the *'meitheal'* or volunteerism for the greater social good. It also reinforced the role of social entrepreneurs who emerged as leaders within each parish or community.

George noted that around 2009 there was *'no appreciation of the fact that we could offer food tourism as a product here'*; but as it did develop in very small ways, *'it became more about food in tourism than food tourism.'* The Gathering was followed by the formation of regional tourism brands such as *'Wild Atlantic Way'*, *'Dublin, a Breath of Fresh Air'* and *'Ireland's Ancient East'* as strategies to entice tourists and business out of city centres and around the country.

### *The experience economy*

Linda could have been quoting Pine and Gilmore (1998) when she posited that *'food is not just a functional piece anymore, it's experiential.'* Both she and Amy, who both work in one of Ireland's most visited tourist attractions, noted that the role of food moved from sustenance to an important part of the tourist experience. Linda noted that although theirs is a beverage experience, the number of people who eat onsite now represents about 30% of visitors. This contrasts with 2009, when food was functional as a *'comfort stop'*, in more recent years *'food has become central to what the visitor is expecting, also what the brand has to communicate. The role of food is totally unrecognizable.'* Amy elaborated that if visitors have food onsite; their

experience is clearly enhanced, stating '*If you get people to come in and eat here they're having a much deeper experience than they would have otherwise had, so it's a huge opportunity*'.

### **Government Policies and Strategies**

The creation of regional tourism brands has been one of the most prominent tourism developments in Ireland of the last ten years. This research reveals that food was not a formal part of the tourism strategy until a 'food tourism team' was created within Fáilte Ireland in 2012. This implies that rather than promoting food tourism, Fáilte Ireland has progressively integrated food as a part of the overall Irish tourism experience. This gradual incorporation as a minor element of the overall strategy has taken place against the backdrop of the development of regional brands. It is evident, however, that during the ten-year period between 2009 and 2019, a concerted effort has been made to promote food tourism as well as food within Irish tourism, through a range of strategy commitments and policy initiatives. This marks an increased focus on food tourism from a policy perspective.

#### ***Major developments in Irish food tourism 2009 and 2019 (networks, events, food trails)***

The three main policy developments in Irish food tourism during the period studied were the *National Food Tourism Implementation Framework 2011-2013* which was followed by the *Food Tourism Activity Plan 2014-2016* and the *Food and Drink Development Strategy 2018-2023*. The research showed that the creation of the Fáilte Ireland Food Champions was one of the first food tourism initiatives developed. Generally, the agency looked at developing collaborations with the private sector as well as providing business support to food and tourism industry professionals. Fáilte Ireland also increased the availability of food tourism tools in order to facilitate the development of food tourism products. The major developments in Irish food tourism were identified as the creation of networks (e.g. Fáilte Ireland Food Champions, Boyne Valley Food Series), food events (Food on the Edge, Dingle Food Festival, Ballymaloe LitFest, Dublin Gastronomy Symposium) and food trails (The Burren Food Trail, Taste the Atlantic).

### ***Food champions***

The creation of the Fáilte Ireland Food Champions was mentioned by nearly all of the participants. Although Mulcahy (2019a) provides a case study of the Champions, it was revealing to hear some of them tell of their own 'lived experiences' and to see how they were perceived by others within the industry. George highlighted that the traditional route to engage with industry professionals was through the representative organisations (Irish Hotel's Federation, Restaurant Association of Ireland, Tourist Guide Association) who would disseminate information downwards. He noted that many of these organisations '*act as trade unions for employers and therefore might not be the best way to get your message out to an industry constituted of large number of microbusinesses.*' The idea of the Food Champions, according to George, was to form a network of individuals to facilitate exchanges between the government agency and the private sector: '*People who are on the ground doing stuff, who are seen by their peers as somebody that knew what they were doing or they had a very strong interest in and through that to create a community who are all the more or less saying the same thing.*'

With this network, Fáilte Ireland created an opportunity to use the social and professional capital of this group of individuals in a comparable way to the local champions in New Zealand. While the role of the Food Champions was not clearly defined at first, their individual experiences have still been useful. George pointed out that these individuals provided useful insights to the government agency from a business perspective, noting '*the earlier Food Champions were all commercial people, if they thought something was nonsense, they would blow it down straight away.*' George noted that the second group of Food Champions was strategically chosen along the Wild Atlantic Way. Indeed, eight individuals were added to the list of Fáilte Ireland's Food Ambassadors in 2013 to support the Wild Atlantic Way brand. The third group of Food Champions comprised of three groups of 22 individuals based in the three different branded areas. Again, this was a strategic move to align with overall national tourism strategy.

### ***Networking***

The Food Champion programme involved several benchmarking trips and George stated that a trip to Canada inspired Michelin-starred chef J. P. Mac Mahon, who was one of the first Food Champions to be selected, to create his food symposium 'Food on the Edge' in October 2015. Mac Con

Iomaire (2016) analysed the inaugural event, which comprised 350 symposiasts and 40 speakers, 'three-quarters of whom either have or had been awarded Michelin stars at some time, and one quarter of whom currently feature in the 2015 world's top 100 restaurants' (2016, p. 107). Food on the Edge has been running annually each October in Galway and was one of the key events of Galway's European Region of Gastronomy program in 2018. Some of the Champions interviewed mentioned that the value of the benchmarking trips was as much about networking with fellow Champions as it was about observing international best practice. Joy discussed how this network grew and commented that '*a message to the Champions' WhatsApp group would get a quick answer to nearly any question you posed*', so diverse was the expertise within the group. Kate noted that these trips gave them confidence in Ireland's food offering, as quite often what was available at home was far superior to what was benchmarked internationally as 'cutting edge'. George suggested that '*it was more about raising the confidence to say "Actually, we don't have to go overseas, we actually have the things ourselves", and the three benchmarking trips showed that.*' With events such as Food on the Edge, many of the Champions got the opportunity to network at home, not just amongst themselves but with a host of international culinary stars. This worked both ways, as Mac Con Iomaire (2018a) noted that chefs Albert Adria and Nathan Outlaw both put local Galway oysters on their respective menus on their return to Barcelona and London.

### *Social value of volunteerism*

One factor that was brought up by more than one Champion was that the benchmarking trips were not 'junkets' but that the champions contributed to the trips financially as well as giving their time and energy. This was an unpaid volunteer role which they were happy to perform, and from which they benefited in the social and cultural capital derived from the network and new friendships. Another insight gleaned from the interviews was the surprise and shock some champions felt when they were brought together in late 2018 and informed that their contracts would expire in June 2019. Some, such as Kate, had realized that it was a limited time contract when signing. A new CEO was appointed to Fáilte Ireland in 2016. The head of food tourism retired in 2017, but was not replaced until 2019 with appointment of a Food and Drink Tourism manager.

## **Food and Drinks Initiatives and Experiences**

The *Taste the Island* report (Failte Ireland, 2019) documents the dramatic growth in food and drink experiences (festivals, markets, tours, cookery schools, beverage experiences etc.) which have mushroomed since 2012. Interviewees identified some of the early regions to organize networks and clusters, such as Cork, The Burren, Boyne Valley and Kilkenny.

### ***Social entrepreneurs***

A common theme among these regions was the presence of one or two dynamic social entrepreneurs who had strong leadership capabilities. James identified individuals such as Olivia Duff, *'who nearly singlehandedly transformed the Boyne Valley into a thriving food destination by her ability to energise the local producers and bring people with her.'* Joy also noted how, as a tour guide, she would *'recommend my fellow Champions' businesses and others that I knew were special to foreign visitors on my tours.'*

### ***Bureaucracy***

Things were not always smooth and more than one of the interviewees had issues with other industry professionals being unaware of some of the Fáilte Ireland initiatives. Bureaucracy was also mentioned as an issue in some interviews. Mary recalled attempts to convince a regional tourist office of her idea to bring French tourists on food tours falling on deaf ears until a new manager was appointed and finally listened to her idea. Mary noted her pride in changing tourists' perception of Irish food. *'When I have my French customers on a tour, getting them to try air-dried lamb for example, it's something that you don't necessarily see everywhere and it's a beautiful product,... showing them the reality of what we're actually making now. I suppose it's innovative.'* The role of other agencies such as the rural development agency, LEADER, and Local Enterprise Office (LEO) was mentioned by some. James noted that *'over time I learned how the system worked and became good at drawing down available grants for artisan producers in my area to develop websites, fund training workshops, or scale up for a food visit to their farm.'*



### *Education*

Continuous professional development and education featured, with David noting how *'going back to college and studying gastronomy and the history of food helped me return to the business and transform it.'* David funded bursaries for Irish students to research Irish food history. George also recognized the importance of having solid research on Ireland's gastronomic history and heritage *'to shape authentic storytelling, folklore not fakelore'*, and noted that Fáilte Ireland over this period funded a number of PhD projects and initiatives such as the Dublin Gastronomy Symposium and Food on the Edge.

### *Clusters*

Kachniewska (2013, p. 38) extends her definition of clusters to include educational establishments and research institutes which provide a large part of their human and technological capital. The networking of the Galway Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) with Food on the Edge and with the Galway European Region of Gastronomy 2018 is a great example of this. Mac Con Iomaire (2018a) has argued that the new paradigm of liberal / vocational education, with gastronomy at its core, offered by the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT, now Technological University Dublin) since 1999, was a factor in the Irish food renaissance. Finally, nearly all interviewees would agree with Mary who when asked if Ireland was a food tourism destination, said: *'Not yet. I think it will in the next ten years.'*

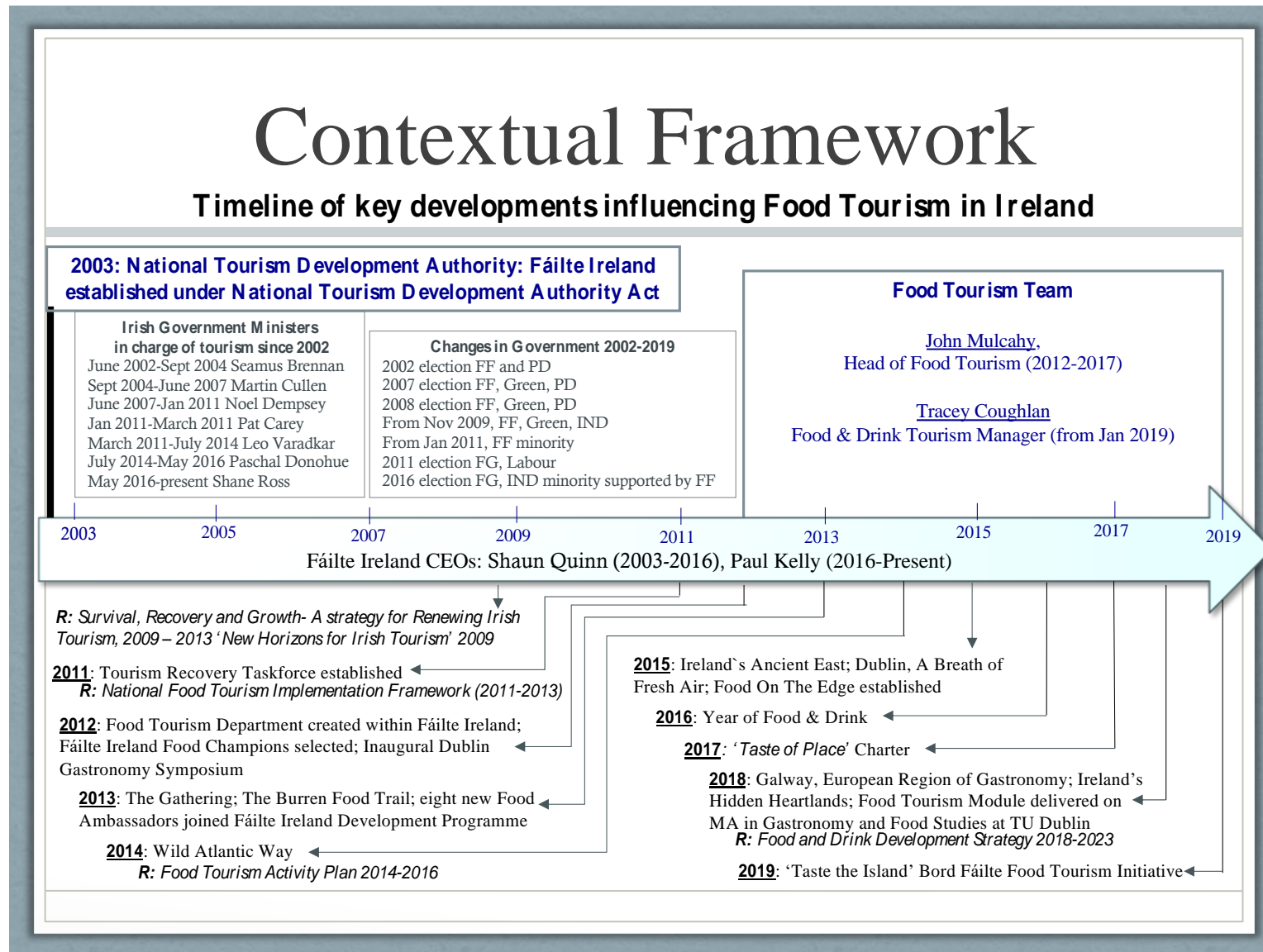


Figure 1. Contextual Framework

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The development of food tourism in Ireland 2009-2019 can broadly be conceptualized into four factors: economic, political, societal and environmental, as can be seen in Figure 1. It is clear from reviewing the academic and grey literature, and analysing the interview transcripts and notes, that the recession was a major factor in driving change and creativity in both Fáilte Ireland and in the broader food tourism/hospitality industry. Some of this creativity was fiscal, with the lowering of the VAT rate from 13.5% to 9% in July 2011, a change that was reversed in January 2019. As the 2009 Tourism Renewal Group report proclaimed, what was required first was survival, then recovery, and growth would flow from recovery.

From a political perspective, a major revelation from the interviews was the influence a change in government or minister could have on policy makers. Since the establishment of Fáilte Ireland in 2003, up until today, there have been only two CEOs, Shaun Quinn (2003-2016) and Paul Kelly (2016 onwards), yet there have been eight changes in government, seven changes in minister, and the government department responsible for tourism has been re-named and re-structured twice. Long-term planning is difficult during periods of political instability. Restructuring in state agencies based on incentivized early retirements at the beginning of the recession helped reduce the wages bill, but also meant a significant loss in expertise and institutional memory. There were three changes in ministers of tourism over a six-month period from late 2010 to early 2011, a fact which must have delayed recovery somewhat (O'Brien, 2012). This is clearly identified in Figure 1 which outlines the contextual framework of this study.

From a societal perspective, initiatives such as The Gathering (Mottiar, 2016) helped draw citizens and communities throughout the length and breadth of the country together in a collective and volunteering mind-set, which differed hugely with some of the neo-liberal individualism and greed that had been prevalent during the worst excesses of the Celtic Tiger boom in Ireland. The creation of regional tourism brands aimed to spread the recovery around the country and out of the large urban areas that were not as hard hit by the recession. Initiatives such as the Food Champions (Mulcahy, 2019a) drew on social entrepreneurs and leaders from communities around the country and networked them. Fáilte Ireland (2019, p. 23) grouped foreign visitors into the 'Culturally curious', 'Social energizers', and 'Great escapers', and

communicated the different food and beverage demands of each group to the industry. Story toolkits and most recently Taste the Island toolkits and workshops enabled communities to improve their own food and drinks experiences and, with initiatives such as 'Taste of Place', to promote local food and boost the local economy through the multiplier effect (Yeoman et al., 2015).

The creation of networks and clusters carried with them not only economic but important societal rewards through interaction, social capital, volunteerism and friendship. A recent publication of calculating social value (Whitebarn Consulting, 2019) might provide a model for illustrating the monetary value of volunteerism. CLG Na Fianna, a Dublin sports and cultural organisation with 3000 members, was shown to have created €50 million of social value in the local community in the years 2017-2018. For every €1 equivalent invested into CLG Na Fianna, in the region of €15 of social value was created, resulting in a 15:1 return on investment ratio. This is a model which social entrepreneurs in tourism might explore in order to justify investment in programs such as The Food Champions.

The environmental factors are diverse and many. They include the impact that using local food has on building sustainable tourism and on sustainable societies, allowing rural dwellers, farmers and food producers to remain in their environment and safeguard that environment for the next generation. A large number of the food and beverage experiences listed in the Taste the Island report (Fáilte Ireland, 2019) are members of 'Origin Green' and are committed to sustainable food production. In Ireland, the landscape and the wild beauty of the countryside are also a large part of our tourist offering along with the warm hospitality and great food.

To conclude, this paper has explored the development of food tourism policy in Ireland from 2009-2019. The research questions were answered by exploring the historical origins of food tourism. Figure 1 contextualizes the primary drivers and key moments in food tourism policy development in Ireland. The 'lived experiences' of ten key tourism stakeholders from across the industry have been analysed and compared with the academic and grey literature to form a narrative account of the phenomenon of the development of food tourism in Ireland from 2009-2019.

### **Practical Implications**

The practical implications of this journal article for the future of the food tourism policy of Ireland are fourfold. First, government agencies must endeavour to ensure cross-political party backing for medium to long term strategies so that changes in government or minister do not side track or jeopardise tourism policy. Secondly the role of social entrepreneurs and volunteerism in developing tourism needs to be valued. The social value of these initiatives can provide returns in multiples of the initial financial outlay. Thirdly, the environmental implications of sustainable tourism can ensure the next generation of rural farmers and communities can remain on the land and as custodians of the rural communities and landscape, which forms such a part of Ireland's unique tourism attraction. Finally, the value of networking both nationally and internationally needs to be embraced so that all stakeholders can learn from each other and realise the quality of the product they are selling and be proud of the work that they do.

### **Limitations of the research**

One of the limitations of this research is the difficulty in getting current policymakers to go on record. Another limitation is that as an under-researched area, most of the published research is dominated by a small number of researchers which limits the perspective and research outlook.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The authors would like to thank the interviewees for their time, and to colleagues in TU Dublin who have read and commented on early versions of the text.

### **REFERENCES**

- Allen, H., & Mac Con Iomaire, M. (2017). Secrets of a head chef: Exploring factors influencing success in Irish kitchens. *Journal of Culinary Science & Technology*, 15(3), 187-222.
- Björk, P., & Kauppinen-Räsänen, H. (2014). Culinary-gastronomic tourism—a search for local food experiences. *Nutrition & Food Science*, 44(4), 294- 309.
- Boyd, S. (2015). The 'past' and 'present' of food tourism. In I. Yeoman, U. McMahon-Beatie, K. Fields, J. N. Albrecht, & K. Meethan (Eds.), *The future of food tourism:*

- Foodies, experiences, exclusivity, visions and political capital* (pp. 11-22). Bristol: Channel View Publications.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77-101.
- Carruthers, C., Burns, A., & Elliot, G. (2015). Gastronomic tourism: Development, sustainability and applications – a case study of County Cork, Republic of Ireland. In P. Sloan, W. Legrand, & C. Hindley (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Sustainable Food and Gastronomy* (pp. 360-369). London: Routledge.
- Cohen, E. (1985). The tourist guide: The origins, structure, and dynamics of a role. *Annals of Tourism Research, 12*(1), 5-29.
- De Esteban, J., Cetin, G., & Antonovica, A. (2015). Theory of knowledge of tourism: A sociological and epistemological reflection. *Journal of Tourismology, 1*(1), 2-15.
- Deleuze, M. (2014). A new craze for food: Why is Ireland turning into a foodie nation? In M. Mac Con Iomaire & E. Maher (Eds.), *Tickling the Palate: Gastronomy in Irish Literature and Culture* (pp. 143-158). Bern: Peter Lang.
- Denscombe, M. (2003). *The good research guide: For small-scale social research projects* (2nd ed.). Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Ellis, A., Park, E., Kim, S., & Yeoman, I. (2018). Progress in tourism management, what is food tourism? *Tourism Management, 68*, 250-263.
- Everett, S. (2016). *Food & Drink Tourism. Principles and Practice*. London: Sage Publications.
- Fáilte Ireland (2011). National Food Tourism Implementation Framework 2011-2013. Retrieved April 3, 2018, from [http://www.failteireland.ie/FailteIreland/media/WebsiteStructure/Documents/3\\_Research\\_Insights/1\\_Sectoral\\_SurveysReports/FoodTourismImplementationFramework.pdf?ext=.pdf](http://www.failteireland.ie/FailteIreland/media/WebsiteStructure/Documents/3_Research_Insights/1_Sectoral_SurveysReports/FoodTourismImplementationFramework.pdf?ext=.pdf)
- Fáilte Ireland (2014). Enhancing Irish Food Experiences - The Way Forward: Food Tourism Activity Plan 2014-2016. Retrieved March 28, 2019, from [http://www.failteireland.ie/FailteIreland/media/WebsiteStructure/Documents/2\\_Develop\\_Your\\_Business/3\\_Marketing\\_Toolkit/6\\_Food\\_Tourism/Food-Tourism-Activity-Plan-2014-2016.pdf?ext=.pdf](http://www.failteireland.ie/FailteIreland/media/WebsiteStructure/Documents/2_Develop_Your_Business/3_Marketing_Toolkit/6_Food_Tourism/Food-Tourism-Activity-Plan-2014-2016.pdf?ext=.pdf)
- Fáilte Ireland (2018). Food and Drink Strategy 2018-2023. Retrieved April 3, 2019, from <http://www.failteireland.ie/FailteIreland/media/WebsiteStructure/Documents/Publications/FI-Food-Strategy-Document.pdf>
- Fáilte Ireland (2019). Taste the Island: A Celebration of Ireland's Food and Drink - A guide for the delivery of world-class food and drink experiences. Retrieved May 28, 2019, from [http://www.failteireland.ie/FailteIreland/media/WebsiteStructure/Documents/4\\_Corporate\\_Documents/Corporate\\_Guides/6396\\_FAI\\_TTI\\_Toolkit\\_Online\\_20190501\\_SH-FINAL\(1\).pdf](http://www.failteireland.ie/FailteIreland/media/WebsiteStructure/Documents/4_Corporate_Documents/Corporate_Guides/6396_FAI_TTI_Toolkit_Online_20190501_SH-FINAL(1).pdf)
- Fáilte Ireland. (n.d.). Our History. Retrieved May 26, 2019, from <http://www.failteireland.ie/Footer/What-We-Do/Our-History.aspx>
- Getz, D., Robinson, R., Andersson, T., & Vujicic, S. (2014). *Foodies and food tourism*. Oxford: Goodfellow Publishers.
- Gill, M. J. (2014). The possibilities of phenomenology for organizational research. *Organizational Research Methods, 17*(2), 118-137.
- Given, L. M. (2008). *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research*. London: SAGE.
- Hall, C. M., & Gossling, S. (Eds.) (2016). *Food Tourism and Regional Development. Networks, Products and Trajectories*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Hall, C. M., & Sharples, L. (2003). The consumption of experiences or the experience of

- consumption? An introduction to the tourism of taste. In C. M. Hall, L. Sharples, R. Mitchell, N. Macionis, & B. Cambourne (Eds.), *Food Tourism Around the World* (pp. 1-24). Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Healy, J. J., & Mac Con Iomaire, M. (2019). Calculating restaurant failure rates using longitudinal census data. *Journal of Culinary Science & Technology*, 17(4), 350-372.
- Heidegger, M. (1962). *Being and Time*. London: SCM Press.
- Henderson, J. C. (2009). Food tourism reviewed. *British Food Journal*, 111(4), 317-326.
- Hillman, W., & Radel, K. (Eds.). (2018). *Qualitative Methods in Tourism Research. Theory and Practice*. Bristol: Channel View Publications.
- Hjalager, A. M., & Richards, G. (Eds.). (2003). *Tourism and gastronomy*. London: Routledge.
- Jackson, C., Vaughan, D.R., & Brown, L. (2018). Discovering lived experiences through descriptive phenomenology. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 30(11), 3309-3325.
- Kachniewska, M. (2013). Towards the definition of a tourism cluster. *Journal of entrepreneurship, management and innovation*, 9(1), 33-56.
- Kivela, J., & Crofts, J. C. (2006). Tourism and gastronomy: Gastronomy's influence on how tourists experience a destination. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 30(3), 354-377.
- Long, L. (Ed.). (2004). *Culinary Tourism*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky.
- Mac Con Iomaire, M. (2011). Ireland. In K. Albala (Ed.), *Food Cultures of the World Encyclopedia* (pp. 197-205). Westport: ABC-CLIO.
- Mac Con Iomaire, M. (2013). Public dining in Dublin: The history and evolution of gastronomy and commercial dining 1700-1900. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 25(2), 227-246.
- Mac Con Iomaire, M. (2015). Haute cuisine restaurants in nineteenth and twentieth century Ireland. *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 115C, 371-403. DOI: 10.3318/PRIAC.2015.115.06
- Mac Con Iomaire, M. (2016). Food on the Edge: The future of food is a sustainable future. *Research in Hospitality Management*, 6, 107-111.
- Mac Con Iomaire, M. (2018a). Recognizing food as part of Ireland's intangible cultural heritage. *Folk Life: Journal of Ethnological Studies*, 61(2), 93-115.
- Mac Con Iomaire, M. (2018b). Contextualizing the Irish food renaissance. *The Canadian Journal of Irish Studies*, 41, 58-73.
- May, T. (1999). Reflexivity and sociological practice. *Sociological Research Online*, 4(3), 1-9. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5153/sro.327>
- Mottiar, Z. (2016). Exploring the motivations of tourism social entrepreneurs: The role of a national tourism policy as a motivator for social entrepreneurial activity in Ireland. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 28(6), 1137-1154.
- Mulcahy, J. D. (2009). *Making the Case for a Viable, Sustainable Gastronomic Tourism Industry in Ireland*. Masters' dissertation, University of Adelaide, School of History and Politics.
- Mulcahy, J. D. (2014). Transforming Ireland through Gastronomic Nationalism. In M. Mac Con Iomaire & E. Maher (Eds.), *Tickling the Palate: Gastronomy in Irish Literature and Culture* (pp. 159-174). Bern: Peter Lang.
- Mulcahy, J. D. (2015). Future consumption: Gastronomy and public policy. In I. Yeoman, U. McMahan-Beatie, K. Fields, J. N. Albrecht, & K. Meethan (Eds.), *The future of*

- food tourism: Foodies, experiences, exclusivity, visions and political capital* (pp. 75-86). Bristol: Channel View Publications.
- Mulcahy, J. D. (2017). Food (in) tourism is important, or is it? In F. Healy & B. Bastiat (Eds.), *Voyages between France and Ireland: Culture, Tourism, and Sport* (pp. 179-195). Bern: Peter Lang.
- Mulcahy, J. D. (2019a). Building a Tourism Destination Using Gastronomy through Creative Collaboration. In S. K. Dixit (Ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Gastronomic Tourism* (pp. 47-54). London: Routledge.
- Mulcahy, J. D. (2019b). Historical Evaluation of Gastronomic Tourism. In S. K. Dixit (Ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Gastronomic Tourism* (pp. 24-31). London: Routledge.
- O'Brien, A. (2012). Wasting a good crisis: Developmental Failure in Irish Tourism Since 2008. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(2), 1138-1155.
- Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance (2015). The Rise of Food Tourism: Special SKIFT Report. *Startup Turismo*. Retrieved April 15, 2019, from <https://www.startup-turismo.it/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/The-Rise-of-Culinary-Tourism-2.pdf>
- Pernecky, T., & Jamal, T. (2010). (Hermeneutic) Phenomenology in tourism studies. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 37(4), 1055-1075.
- Pine, B. J., & Gilmore, J. H. (1998). Welcome to the experience economy. *Harvard business review*, 76, 97-105.
- Quan, S., & Wang, N. (2004). Towards a structural model of the tourist experience: An illustration from food experiences in tourism. *Tourism management*, 25(3), 297-305.
- Robinson, R. N. S., Solnet, D. J., & Breakey, N. (2014). A phenomenological approach to hospitality management research: Chefs' occupational commitment. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 43, 65-75.
- Smith, J. A. (1996). Beyond the divide between cognition and discourse: Using interpretative phenomenological analysis in health psychology. *Psychology & Health*, 11(2), 261-271.
- Tannahill, R. (1991). *Food in History (2nd Edition)*. London: Penguin.
- UNWTO (2012). *Global Report on Food Tourism*. Madrid: UNWTO.
- Whitebarn Consulting (2019). *The social value of CLG Na Fianna: A demonstration study, undertaken by Whitebarn Consulting on behalf of the Dublin GAA County Board*. Retrieved May 27, 2019, from <https://static.rasset.ie/documents/news/2019/05/na-fianna-social-value-report.pdf>
- Wilson, C. (2000). Policy regimes and policy change. *Journal of Public Policy*, 20(3), 247-274.
- Yeoman, I., McMahon-Beattie, U., Fields, K., & Meethan, K. (Eds.). (2015). *The future of food tourism: Foodies, experiences, exclusivity, visions and political capital*. Bristol: Channel View Publications.



Appendix 1. *Interview Schedule*

Questions for Policy Makers	Questions for Industry Professionals
<p>Could you describe the role of the food tourism department at Fáilte Ireland?            What has been the Irish government's approach to food tourism over the last 10 years?            Has this approach changed over time?            How? Why?            What do you think have been the major developments in Irish food tourism in the last ten years?            What have been the drivers of the development of food tourism in Ireland?            What have been the main food tourism strategies and initiatives in Ireland?            How would you evaluate the success of these food tourism strategies and initiatives?            Could you tell me about successful food tourism initiatives?            Do you consider Ireland to be a food tourism destination?            Do you think the food tourism strategies and initiatives have had an impact on the perception of Irish food?            What do you think are the main challenges in food tourism in Ireland?            How do you think tourists perceive Irish food?</p>	<p>What do you think is the perception of Irish food for tourists prior to travelling to Ireland?            How do tourists react to your food experience?            Have you identified common characteristics amongst your customers?            Why do you think tourists partake in food tours?            Do people who partake in your food experience have common characteristics?            What do you think is the approach of the Irish government towards food tourism?            Has this approach changed over time?            How? Why?            Do you feel as a food tourism provider you receive support from policymakers?            Do you consider Ireland to be a food destination?            What are the challenges of running a food tourism business?            How do you describe the food experience you provide?            Do you think Ireland has a national cuisine?</p>

## ENOGASTRONOMY IN NORTHERN PORTUGAL: DESTINATION COOPERATION AND REGIONAL IDENTITY

Susana RACHÃO<sup>1</sup>

*Department of Economics, Management, Industrial Engineering and Tourism, University of Aveiro, Portugal*

ORCID: 0000-0002-9009-0251

Zélia BREDA

*Department of Economics, Management, Industrial Engineering and Tourism, and Research Unit 'Governance, Competitiveness and Public Policies', University of Aveiro, Portugal*

ORCID: 0000-0002-5882-063X

Carlos FERNANDES

*School of Technology and Management, Polytechnic of Viana do Castelo, Portugal*

ORCID: 0000-0002-7656-8765

Veronika JOUKES

*Department of Economics, Sociology and Management, School of Human and Social Sciences, University of Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro, Portugal*

ORCID: 0000-0002-0518-8511

### ABSTRACT

This study aims to understand how conflicting stakeholders' interests and agendas of the public, private and non-profit sectors may affect the management of the tourism destination identity. It focuses on Northern Portugal, a geographical area with contrasting characteristics, ranging from coastal urban areas to rural hinterland, each dealing with different development issues. The study is qualitative in nature, being carried out using in-depth interviews conducted with various stakeholders (public, private and non-profit sectors) at three wine regions located in Northern Portugal. Data was examined through content analysis. The findings suggest that there is an evident lack of cooperation between the food-and-wine and the tourism sectors in the three

### Article History

Received 31 May 2019

Revised 3 December 2019

Accepted 4 December 2019

### Keywords

food-and-wine  
tourism  
regional identity  
cooperation  
local products

---

<sup>1</sup> Address correspondence to Susana Rachão, PhD Candidate, Department of Economics, Management, Industrial Engineering and Tourism, University of Aveiro, PORTUGAL. Email: [susanarachao@ua.pt](mailto:susanarachao@ua.pt)

wine regions, which tends to hinder the construction of a territorial identity for development purposes. This study identifies the role of public organisations in promoting a shared vision for endogenous products alongside local stakeholders, thus contributing to the construct of a territorial identity. Although regional identity is studied in the relatively limited context of cooperation among stakeholders' practices, the paper exemplifies how local food and wine products can enhance the identity of tourism destinations.

## INTRODUCTION

Previous studies have acknowledged the importance of local food as an element of cultural identity of place (Mkono, 2011), and that the preservation of traditional food production sustains the regional and national identities of a tourism destination (Kim & Iwashita, 2016). Akin, the uniqueness and authenticity of local food are important markers in constructing the identity of a destination (Chatzopoulou et al., 2019; Ellis et al., 2018; Everett & Aitchison, 2008; Stone et al., 2019; Ting et al., 2019). Furthermore, a recent study found that the tourists' emotional bond (place attachment) may impact their return intention to a food destination (Yeap et al., 2019).

As tourists are increasingly engaging in personalised food-and-wine experiences at destinations visited (OECD, 2018), more entrepreneurial businesses related to food-and-wine are emerging, for example food vendors attending festivals, street food and other micro food providers (Kline et al., 2014). However, an overweight of micro stakeholders in the food-and-wine sectors may not be in tune with the needs of local economies (Thomas et al., 2011), and by dominating the industry, particularly in peripheral areas, they may function as an obstacle to the improvement of the tourism product (Getz & Carlsen, 2005).

Tourism has become an important industry in Portugal, both in urban and rural areas, contributing to the economic development of local communities (Turismo de Portugal, 2016), in which the value of food-and-wine landscapes are recognised as important dimensions of the country's economy (Silva et al., 2018). Yet, the evolution of food-and-wine tourism was slower compared to other tourism products. In fact, food and wine tourism is a rather recent activity in Portugal. Until 2013, the country had 339 wine tourism units, of which 78% had initiated their activity after 2000 (Turismo de Portugal, 2014). Portugal's National Tourism Authority

(Turismo de Portugal, IP) has placed increased emphasis on destination competitiveness based on its food-and-wine heritage, inherent in the Portuguese Tourism Strategy 2027 (Araújo, 2017).

But the Portuguese tourism industry, similar to other European countries, is fragmented and the majority of businesses are micro-sized (Banco de Portugal, 2014; Mykletun & Gyimo, 2010). This is quite evident when it comes to wine tourism businesses where the average number of full-time workers is five (Turismo de Portugal, 2014), and in the accommodation and restaurant sectors the number drops to an average of three employees (PORDATA, 2019).

According to Lee et al. (2017), the fragmentation of the food-and-wine sectors may have negative impacts on the tourism destination identity, a phenomenon that requires more research to be fully understood and managed. Yet, despite the importance of food-and-wine tourism for local economies, little research has been undertaken on the cooperation of various stakeholders in food tourism to sustain a destination identity (Correia et al., 2014; Everett & Slocum, 2013; McGregor & Robinson, 2019). As acknowledged by Staggs and Brenner (2019), a coherent collective identity requires a shared perspective amongst stakeholders. Similarly, due to the increasing importance of micro food-and-wine entrepreneurship, it is important to understand how conflicting stakeholders' interests and agendas (of the public, private and non-profit sectors) may affect the management of the tourism destination identity.

Based on this rationale and to achieve the research purpose, two (2) objectives have been defined:

Objective (1) – To analyse the influence of cooperation between the food-and-wine and the tourism sectors on a structured destination identity;

Objective (2) – To understand how local stakeholders perceive the enogastronomic identity of Northern Portugal.

This case study offers theoretical insight into the relationships between food-and-wine and tourism stakeholders and how their cooperation may affect the destination/territorial identity.

The paper begins by outlining concepts on cooperation among tourism industry stakeholders, particularly focusing on food-and-wine tourism contexts. It then briefly discusses relevant existing theories on territorial/regional identity and shifts to the analysis of empirical data obtained from interviews with key stakeholders within the research

setting. The paper ends with the main conclusions, as well as the limitations of the study and some suggestions for future research.

## THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### Cooperation among tourism industry stakeholders

There is a significant number of theoretical and empirical research related to cooperation in tourism destinations, particularly about the different levels of cooperation between tourism industry stakeholders (Beritelli, 2011; Boesen et al., 2017; Czernek, 2013; Damayanti et al., 2017; Wang & Xiang, 2007). However, it is not the purpose of this research to develop a new theory on cooperative matters, but rather to understand how cooperation can be decisive for the success of a strong identity of food-and-wine tourism destinations.

One of the growing tourism trends is the pairing of wine with quality food products, prepared by local chefs and/or the organisation of events and exhibitions which are linked to culinary demonstrations (Telfer, 2001). To provide this type of food-and-wine experiences, the involvement of multiple stakeholders from different sectors is necessary (Getz, 2000). These multiple stakeholders (food providers, wineries, farms, accommodation facilities, tour operators) must share a common vision in order to develop composite tourism products; yet, competing individual interests and conflicts may interfere in its development (Alonso & Northcote, 2008; Gammack, 2006).

Given the fragmentation of the tourism industry, one fundamental key issue for a successful territorial identity promotion is the cooperation among stakeholders (Damayanti et al., 2017; Ottenbacher & Harrington, 2013). As mentioned above, food-and-wine-related tourism businesses are characterised by their micro and small scale. Therefore, they tend to trigger entrepreneurial activities (Lee et al., 2017), as small-scale boutique wineries (Dawson et al., 2011), innovative food-related facilities (Hjalager & Johansen, 2013) and third-wave coffee shops (Lee et al., 2017), just to name a few examples. For that reason, cooperation among small food-and-wine businesses might benefit the structural development of a territorial identity.

Zhang et al. (2009) point out that cooperation is a form of an inter-firm relationship in a tourism supply chain. For Correia et al. (2014, p. 45), cooperation describes “the intentional and voluntary

relationships/initiatives in which two or more independent businesses and/or individuals interact". Cooperation among stakeholders can take a form of micro-clusters, allowing innovation through interaction and facilitating knowledge sharing (Braun & Hollick, 2006). At the same time, tourists benefit from these micro-clusters as they reduce search and travel costs, and raise the associated tourism experience (Taylor et al., 2007).

Cooperation might be shaped by specific social contexts of countries/regions as business life cycles, demographic features and spatial determinants (Czernek, 2013). Based on research in Australia, it was suggested that wine tourism industry members are more keen to participate in cooperative activities (Taylor et al., 2007). Correia et al. (2014), studying cooperation among wine and tourism businesses in the Douro Valley, confirmed this finding for the Portuguese context.

If destination stakeholders fail in defining the regions' attributes or landmarks (Silva et al., 2018), the regional identity may become confusing in the eyes of the visitors. For that reason, branding a food-and-wine destination requires a considerable negotiation among key stakeholders to define the place's identity which should emphasise the uniqueness of local food (Lai et al., 2019).

### **Territorial and regional identities**

The development of territorial valorisation strategies is seen as a consequence of a postmodern society strongly marked by the standardisation of products and services (Rachão et al., 2019). The Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) and the Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) labels, for example, illustrate how the European Agrarian Policies operationalises the preservation and strengthening of endogenous food-and-wines (Silva et al., 2018).

As a form of differentiation, in a globalised crowded marketplace, many destinations have been using food as a form of attraction (Frochot, 2003; Lin et al., 2011). This is because the uniqueness of local food and wine products (Haven-Tang & Jones, 2008), deeply rooted into a place (Frochot, 2003; Lin et al., 2011), can reinforce cultural differences among regions and countries (Fox, 2007). By using such endogenous products, destinations have the opportunity to increase the uniqueness of their identity, and, additionally, to formulate a unique selling proposition (Haven-Tang & Jones, 2008). The increasing interest in cooking, dining

locally, and travelling for and socialising through food experiences (Kline et al, 2014) has led to the growth of tourists seeking novelty in experiences focused on local food heritage (Presenza & Chiappa, 2013).

Additionally, food-and-wine production methods are connected to gastronomic traditions which have a great role in marking the regional identity of places (Corigliano, 2015; Hashimoto & Telfer, 2006). These production methods (wine, dairy products, olive oil, among others) can also support the development of unique food-and-wine experiences that policymakers may link with local communities as they are a part of a destination's identity (Lin et al., 2011), and thereby of the territory (Corigliano, 2015). The natural landscape of territories is also considered as a unique characteristic (attribute) of a food and wine destination (Scorrano et al., 2018), and the quality of the experience of the viticultural (wine-growing) landscapes or grape-wine environments has a critical impact on the attitude of tourists towards the destination (Quintal et al., 2015). Moreover, shared local identities and visions may facilitate the involvement and commitment of local stakeholders in decision-making processes (Sto & Vanneste, 2018). As acknowledged by Hallak et al. (2012), entrepreneurial success drifts from the tourism entrepreneur's sense of identity with the place where the business is operating.

This overview of the literature emphasises the need for a better understanding of the issues involved in the development of a territorial identity based on its endogenous resources, such as food-and-wine, as well as the local stakeholders.

### **Research setting: The Douro, Vinho Verde and Trás-os-Montes wine regions**

Like other food-and-wine destinations, such as France, Italy and Spain, Portugal is now promoting its enogastronomic offer of local cuisine and terroir to attract tourists. The positive influence of gastronomy on international visitors' satisfaction has been confirmed in different regions of Portugal, namely in Porto (Ramires et al., 2018), but also the Algarve (Serra et al., 2015) and the Alentejo (Amaral et al., 2016). To satisfy the ever demanding tourist market, Portugal offers several certified regional/traditional products ranging from dairy products, such as cheese, dry fruits (e.g. almonds and chestnuts), honey, olive oil, to different types of animal meat (beef, pork and lamb) (DGADR, 2019). Portugal has 14 demarcated wine regions (Wines of Portugal, 2016), 14 wine routes, 31

Denominations of Origin (DO) and 10 Geographical Indications (GIs) (IDTOUR, 2016), and has world primacy regarding the number of indigenous wine grape varieties (Silva et al., 2018). These Portuguese endogenous products associated to food and wine heritage could become even stronger identity markers, as reviewed in the literature. Additionally, Portugal is the 11th world wine producer (IVDP, 2017), with the Douro Valley (in the mainland) – Alto Douro Wine Region – and the Pico Island (Azores Archipelago) – Landscape of the Pico Island Vineyard Culture – are recognised as world heritage by the United Nations’ Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (Silva et al., 2018). Also, Portugal has created a brand associated to the traditional and authentic image found in its privately-owned wine tourism estates (Quintas) (Ramos et al., 2018), mostly located in the countryside. To further explore the potential of food and wine tourism, an informal group of producers was established to promote traditional Portuguese gastronomy and stimulate short food supply chains (no more than one intermediary) branded as ‘Prove Portugal’ (<https://tasteportugal.com/>). This initiative has encountered mixed results, some positive and some negative. Considerable work needs to be carried out including the increased integration of local producers, whom tend to be declining in number due to rural exodus (Silva et al., 2018).

For this study, the North of Portugal was chosen. With around 3.6 million inhabitants, composed of 86 municipalities and 1,426 parishes, this region accounts for almost 35% of Portugal’s resident population, and about 29% of the national economy’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (CCDRN, 2019).

Northern Portugal is a relevant food-and-wine destination because, for example, 21 of the 65 traditional Portuguese products certified as PDO, are from this region (DGADR, 2019). Moreover, the majority of its territory is covered by demarcated wine regions: two major regions, namely Douro and Vinho Verde, and two smaller regions, Trás-os-Montes and Távora-Varosa (Marques & Marques, 2017). This study will only focus on the first three wine regions (Figure 1).

The Douro Valley is renowned as the place of origin of the Port wine and as the first demarcated and regulated wine region in the world, since 1756 (IVDP, 2017). In 2001, part of this region, the Alto Douro Vinhateiro (Upper Douro Valley) was classified by the UNESCO as a World Heritage Site because of “its cultural, evolutionary and living landscape” (IVV, 2015, p. 118). Concerning the Vinho Verde, it is



Portugal’s largest demarcated region in geographical terms, as well as one of the largest in Europe, extending over 34,000 hectares throughout the northwest of Portugal (CVRVV, 2019). It also hosts the sub-region Vinho Verde Alvarinho. The wine demarcated region of Trás-os-Montes has a “secular origin, being intrinsically marked by winepress basins dug in the rock of Roman and Pre-Roman origin” (ENOTUR, 2016).

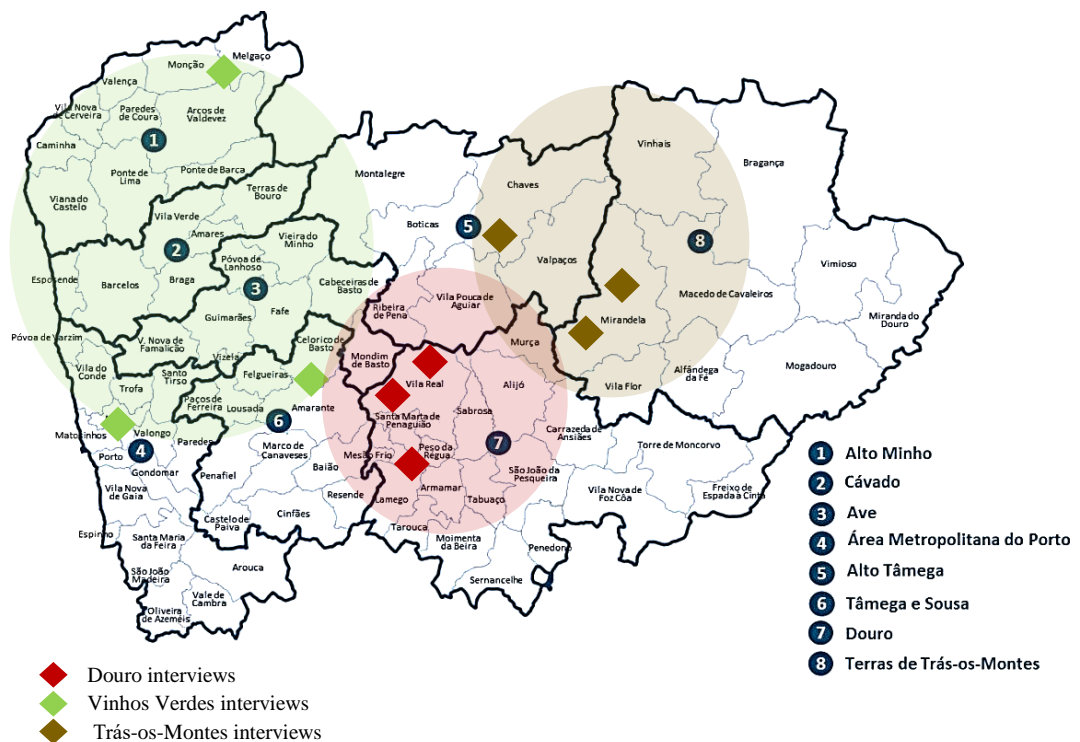


Figure 1. Northern Portugal and the regions in which the interviews took place  
 Source: Northern Portugal Regional Coordination and Development Commission (CCDR-N), 2019

This section described the overall resources for food-and-wine and tourism present in Northern Portugal, relating them as core factors of differentiation and attractiveness of this region. The following section presents the main objectives and research questions and explains the methodological processes to collect and analyse the research data.

### METHODOLOGY

To gain insights into a specific phenomenon, this study follows a phenomenological research philosophy (Altinay & Paraskevas, 2008) to understand the people’s meanings, their own explanations of their behaviour (Clark et al., 2007; Veal, 2006). This exploratory study employed

in-depth interviews to obtain the opinion of individuals (Creswell, 2009) within their real-life context (Ritchie et al., 2005; Veal, 2006).

Qualitative in-depth interviews were conducted with nine public, private and non-profit key stakeholders, between January and April 2017, in the regions illustrated in Figure 1. The face-to-face interviews took place at the participants' place of business, and each interview took about 60 to 90 minutes. The interviewees were selected based on their significant involvement in food-and-wine and tourism networks in Northern Portugal. Within each wine region, they represent different activity sectors, namely: accommodation, societies, governance, restaurant and wine production (Table 1). Therefore, purposive sampling was employed as it restricts to more experienced individuals (Altinay & Paraskevas, 2008; Veal, 2006) and provides quality data about a relatively short period of time (Bertella et al., 2018).

Table 1. *Interviewees' profile*

Interviewee	Wine Region	Business operation	Overlap with tourism	Sector
TOM1	Trás-os-Montes (TOM)	Policy maker	Coordinates events within food and wine tourism	Public
TOM2		Head of food and wine brotherhood	No overlapping	Non-profit
TOM3		Wine producer	Wine tastings and winery visits	Private
D4	Douro (D)	Restaurant owner	Restaurant serves both tourists/visitors and residents	Private
D5		Country house owner	Accommodation and wine tourism activities	Private
D6		Wine policy maker	No overlapping	Public
VV7	Vinhos Verdes (VV)	Wine policy maker	No overlapping	Public
VV8		Policy maker	Coordinates events within food and wine tourism	Public
VV9		Accommodation manager	Hotel accommodation related to wine	Private

*Public sector = 4, Private sector = 4, Non-profit = 1, Total = 9*

A four-section framework to guide the in-depth interviews with local stakeholders was employed addressing the following research issues: (1) the closeness/proximity of cooperation among stakeholders of the food-and-wine and tourism sectors; (2) perceptions of competition or conflict between food-and-wine and tourism businesses within the same wine

region; (3) aspects considered the most relevant for the region's identity; and (4) the role of gastronomy in regional territorial dynamics.

A total of four academics participated in the pre-test to avoid possible ambiguous words and shortcomings. Minor adjustments were made to the wording of questions. Despite the defined interview protocol, supplementary issues emerging from the interview were added. As suggested by Clark et al. (2007), face-to-face interviews can benefit from supplementary questions, direct invitations to go deeper, and from open-ended questions that allow longer answers.

Participants were informed of the objectives of the study, and the in-depth interviews were audio-recorded, with prior approval. Transcripts of the interviews were then coded and categorized into emerging themes and sub-themes with the assistance of NVivo 11 Pro, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS).

The interview data were submitted to a qualitative thematic analysis (Fox et al., 2010; Neuman, 2014), in which data reduction, proceeded by data display, was applied to draw conclusions. The emerging themes and sub-themes were developed gradually and collaboratively based on the coding process. Additionally, a deductive content analysis was employed as the themes were grounded on the theory developed in the literature review section. Some procedures were implemented during the research data analysis to ensure the validity of the findings. Firstly, a high degree of consensus of the codes (emerging themes) was reached by applying a triangulation of the researchers (Decrop, 1999; Dwyer et al., 2012; Verma & Chandra, 2018). At least three coders were appointed to secure reliability and provide the most objective insight for each theme assessment. Secondly, emerging themes were subjected to a process of continuous comparison through inter-coder agreement (Creswell, 2009). The first author of this paper coded transcriptions individually and the second author verified the coding in order to have a systematic coding reliability.

The next section presents the results of the qualitative thematic analysis of the interview data and discusses the main research findings.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The findings revealed four major themes (1) scarce and informal cooperation, (2) competition and conflict between stakeholders, (3) wine

region attributes and (4) the role of gastronomy in territorial dynamics. Within the latter key theme, the complementary of gastronomy and wine, the creativity in enogastronomy, the potential of gastronomy in promoting wine, the lack of gastronomic quality and the creation of micro-thematic routes emerged and are discussed to demonstrate how these dimensions may affect the management of the tourism destination identity.

### **Informal cooperation**

As illustrated in Table 2, the first theme arising from the in-depth interview data, and labelled as “scarce and informal cooperation”, demonstrates that the few existing types of cooperation among stakeholders are based on inter-personal relationships and trust. This study thus supports Beritelli’s (2011), Damayanti et al.’s (2017), and Wang and Xiang’s (2007) notion that friendship ties and trust are a common cooperative inter-firm strategy, in which decisions are made at a personal level.

Stakeholders in the Vinho Verde region recognise that, despite the lack of a structured wine tourism supply, the wineries should collaborate, as they have a wide range of different wines and tourism services. Overall, there is no strong cooperation among wineries, wine museums, and other tourism support services (e.g. accommodation units, entertainment businesses, tour operators). This supports the work conducted by Correia et al. (2014), in which they conclude that food-and-wine and tourism stakeholders in the Northern Portuguese wine regions usually do not cooperate.

Cooperative strategies (particularly, informal partnerships) were developed mainly by medium to large sized businesses. These include partnerships with businesses specialised in outdoor sports activities that provide tourists with things to do in the region. This approach to cooperation supports Telfer’s (2001) findings which show that the commitment of the wine industry to tourism is partly related to the age of the winery and the availability of financial resources.

Nonetheless, in a small wine sub-region within the Vinho Verde region (producing the *alvarinho* variety), the local stakeholders are managed by the two municipal councils, respectively, the level of local cooperation is higher. The key role of public governance lays within managing/supporting stakeholders’ involvement in and commitment to a

successful food-and-wine tourism destination. This governance structure, discussed by Wang and Xiang (2007), who suggested that stakeholders may overcome problems of collaboration and coordination in the market place through a hierarchical/public mode of governance, was reinforced by the participants' responses.

Table 2. *Stakeholders' cooperation*

Themes	Quotations extracted from interviews
<b>Scarce and informal cooperation</b> (**VV7, VV9, D5, TOM1, D4, VV8, TOM3)	*[1] There is natural cooperation, for example, [...] we recommend guests a place in the neighbourhood for lunch or dinner.
	[2] There are two or three producers that cooperate [...]; one of the largest producers in the region links wine production with the offer of accommodation.
	[3] [...] we do not have a ready-made and structured offer for a group.
	[4] The contact among the stakeholders is continuous, however, I have to manage it.
	[5] Individually.
	[6] Scarce, with the exception of Monção and Melgaço.
	[7] There has to be a sense of closeness, of affection; it is almost a family, we are a small territory which gives us this connection.
	[8] We work with other local hotel units, restaurants, shops [...] the golf course [...], a riding ring.
	[9] Some hotel units send their guests to dine at my restaurant because the owners are my friends.
<b>Competition and conflict</b> (VV9, TOM2, TOM1, TOM3, VV8)	[1] I don't think so at this stage. Obviously, there are always exceptions. Overall, there is no conflict.
	[2] Conflict is inevitable, and discussion is necessary.
	[3] There is always conflict. Conflicts have to be managed. It is crucial that we manage conflicts. Obviously, there are conflicts between producers.
	[4] I think there have been more conflicts. At this point, people have realized that the market is much larger than they might have imagined.
	[5] There is still no connection among the local establishments, [...] the presence of the wines is not so strong.

\* Number of quotations; \*\* Interviewees

Nevertheless, there was no consensus amongst the interviewees regarding this public governance mode. This was evident in statements like "Where the government regulates and supports people, it can be a good system, but it must be recognised that [...] people and private businesses have to fight for their own interests" (Interviewee VV7).

## Competition and conflict

When questioned about potential competition and conflicts, respondents, particularly those in the wine industry, showed different positions on the topic, illustrating different realities between wine regions. The Vinho Verde stakeholders concur that there is still insufficient competition as they are in an initial stage of food-and-wine tourism development: “The wine producers are all very young, as well as are the members of the wineries, but there is a dynamic tendency on the part of the young” (Interviewee VV7). On the other hand, in the Trás-os-Montes region conflicts between stakeholders are very common and they are usually resolved and/or managed by local non-profit organisations and associations, acting as mediators. This was revealed in statements such as “Producers who do not talk to each other sometimes have to share the same spaces in festivals and events; obviously, we cannot place them close to each other” (Interviewee TOM1). Yet, some local businesses are starting to cooperate as they recognise the need to offer a more integrated food-and-wine tourism supply. “They also realised that with an isolated, selfish strategy, they will not succeed” (Interviewee TOM3).

## Wine region attributes

Interviewees acknowledged that the gastronomic heritage is an important attribute of the territorial identity, as illustrated in Table 3. The agricultural products such as almonds, olives, mushrooms, the animal production (lamb), and their use in traditional food recipes were emphasised. This supports the work of Haven-Tang and Jones (2008), who recognise local food and wines as identity marks of a destination, and a source of identity formation in post-modern societies (Richards, 2002). In this context, food tourism can be an important means of strengthening a region’s identity (Everett & Aitchison, 2008; Hashimoto & Telfer, 2006).

The three food-and-wine destinations also have natural landscapes as attraction points. In fact, the distinctiveness of the Douro Valley landscape led to the classification of world heritage by UNESCO. An interviewee showed how this recognition is valued locally with the following reference: “It was the interaction between nature and man that was worth the UNESCO classification, [...] the greatness of the territory” (Interviewee D6). The natural landscape features were also emphasised by the interviewees of the Vinho Verde region, as it is the region which integrates the only National Park of the country, as shown in Table 3.

‘Local inhabitants’ was the third attribute most mentioned. This was evident in statements such as “The identity of the region lies in the local people because they made the territory” (Interviewee D6). One possible explanation for the awareness of the importance of local residents on their surrounding environment is that local people are constantly remembered of the fact that the UNESCO classification was obtained due to the human interaction with nature (landscape).

Table 3. *Wine region attributes according to respondents after thematic codification*

Attributes	TOM (1,2,3)	D (4,5,6)	VV (7,8,9)
<b>Gastronomy</b>	Olive grove		
	Chestnut trees (2)*	Wine (2)*	
	Vines	Port wine	Regional sweets (traditional flavours)
	Wine (2)*	Vines	
	Olive oil	Lamb	
	Almonds		
Mushrooms			
<b>Natural landscape</b>		Landscape	
	Diversity of soils (2)*	Greatness of walled terraces	River valleys
	Natural environment	Changing landscape (every 50 km)	Seacoast
	Granite	Remarkable presence of vines	Mountain area
<b>Local inhabitants</b>	Shale (sedimentary rock)		National Park of Peneda-Gerês
		Friendly people Local inhabitants Farmers who work the walled terraces Humanized territory	
<b>Historical heritage</b>	Castles		
	Roman olive oil mills		Romanesque Route
	Olive oil mills arts		
<b>Religious heritage</b>	Built heritage		
			Religious tourism

\* Mentioned more than once

### The role of gastronomy in regional territorial dynamics

According to the respondents there is also a growing need to apply creativity within their enogastronomic context in order to attract consumers. This relates to the work of Fox (2007), referring to the

reinvention and ‘spectacularisation’ of local food products for trade, and, also, to other trends, like fostering creative enogastronomic clusters (Lee et al., 2015; Richards, 2012), the use of creative techniques in local products (Tresidder, 2015) and overall creativity in gastronomy (Pearson & Pearson, 2017). These mixed ‘creative’ efforts will enable residents to build a successful regional identity.

Table 4. *The role of gastronomy in regional territorial dynamics*

Themes	Quotations extracted from the interviews
<b>Complementarity of gastronomy and wine</b> (** VV9, TOM2, TOM1, D6, TOM3)	*[1] Wine and gastronomy are intrinsic. [2] It is necessary to associate gastronomy and wines. [3] We cannot dissociate them. The wines are based on food and both complement each other. [4] There is no gastronomy without wines. [5] The style of wine I produce is associated with the gastronomy of the region.
<b>Creativity in enogastronomy</b> (VV8, D6, D5)	[1] Reinventing traditional dishes [...]. [2] Making wine according to the changing consumer taste is a new thing. [3] The dining experience is on the same level as other experiences. [4] In addition to the obvious products, such as wine, jams, olive oil, some handicrafts, we added apples and oranges to fairs/events [...], we offered them to the festival attendees, and they ended up having contact with them.
<b>Gastronomy can promote wine</b> (TOM1, TOM3)	[1] Gastronomy is an excellent way to communicate wine. [2] People involved in the restaurant sector present dishes and do not present wines.
<b>Lack of gastronomic quality</b> (D5, TOM1)	[1] Unfortunately, the region suffers from a lack of gastronomic quality. If you go out for having dinner, it is hard to find restaurants that are opened. [2] Restaurants with local gastronomy are scarce. A region producing chestnuts only has a chestnut dish during the chestnut season.
<b>Micro-thematic routes</b> (TOM2)	[1] The development of an almond-themed route in Torre de Moncorvo.

\* Number of quotations; \*\* Interviewees

Gastronomy was also described as a means of communicating Portuguese wine heritage. Yet, most of the restaurants are still not pairing food and local wines. Thus, combining the varietal heritage (Silva et al., 2018) with traditional and new architectural forms of landscape (e.g.



restaurants, gourmet shops, wine cellars, wine museums) might strengthen the cultural economy (Ramos et al., 2018).

Respondents from the Douro and Trás-os-Montes regions associated the lack of gastronomic quality with the short opening hours of the restaurants, particularly during periods of high demand: “If you go out to have dinner, it is hard to find restaurants open” (Interviewees D5; TOM1). Furthermore, there is evidence that endogenous agricultural products are not always integrated in popular dishes: “A region producing chestnuts does not have a typical chestnut dish all year round, only in the chestnut season” (Interviewees D5; TOM1). But menus based on seasonal products are practically non-existent. Food providers tend to use year round menus.

In Northern Portugal it is also observed what several authors (Brunori & Rossi, 2000; Bruwer, 2003; Corigliano, 2015) attested in other regions: micro-thematic food-and-wine routes serve not only to express the regional attributes of a place (cultural, natural and social characteristics), but also to promote local economic development.

## CONCLUSION

Gastronomy and wines have become significant factors of regional distinctiveness. Portugal has followed other successful international cases by improving its wine tourism services and gastronomic products (Correia & Ascensão, 2006). In the regions where this study was conducted, the lack of cooperation between small scale stakeholders appeared evident and putting at risk the quality of the tourism services provided. Despite the existence of some informal partnerships among medium to large-sized businesses, the food-and-wine tourism supply in Northern Portugal is fragmented. In regions where the governance mode is predominantly managed by the public sector, food, wine and tourism stakeholders demonstrated higher levels of collaboration, as well as commitment and trust (McGregor & Robinson, 2019). This study has identified the role of the public organisations in pushing local stakeholders to establish and defend a shared vision on the endogenous products, and, thus, helping them to construct a joint territorial identity. For this reason, local initiatives, particularly those that are funded, should not only support individual stakeholders, but also foster the launch of joint activities leading to the creation of more composite tourism products.

In this sense, different forms of collaborative activities, such as micro-thematic food routes and street food markets (harnessing local farmers' market structures), could improve community pride and lead to a unique selling proposition of the destination. Also, various sub-brands linked to the regional identity of a place could be developed (Hashimoto & Telfer, 2006). Concerning the most relevant aspects for the regions' identity, respondents agreed that the gastronomic heritage, natural landscape and local inhabitants were the main attributes of the Northern Portuguese wine regions and that they should represent in a far more conscious way a 'coherent collective identity' (Staggs & Brenner, 2019).

The role of gastronomy in regional territorial dynamics is seen from the innovation and creative perspectives. Traditional recipes may be reformulated to attract new consumers/tourists, and to promote local food and wine pairing. As tourists are increasingly looking for personalised and memorable enogastronomic experiences, local food providers need to retro-innovate traditional recipes by adapting to current trends without losing their cultural value.

### **Limitations and future research**

Certain limitations of the research process were identified. Given the qualitative nature of the research, time constraints and small sample size, the results cannot be generalised. Future research should be based on a broader sample of stakeholders to better understand the process of regional leadership and cooperation in building a coherent destination identity, particularly in hinterland rural areas.

This case study identified a dichotomous view of the governance structure in the collaborative dynamics of food-and-wine tourism: from a public governance intervention in a small wine sub-region to a private management perspective in larger wine regions. Further and deeper research into these two management perspectives is required.

Future research can analyse more complex international cooperative strategies. They can embody different types of network initiatives, such as the slow food movement or alternative food networks. Gaining membership of international creative food networks such as the UNESCO network of Creative Cities of Gastronomy, Portuguese food-and-wine regions may acquire new knowledge on how to exploit the unique food-and-wine attributes of a destination and, thereby reinforce

their identity through creative strategies and, in the end, strengthen the cultural economy.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This research was supported by the project NORTE-01-0145-FEDER-000038 (INNOVINE & WINE – Vineyard and Wine Innovation Platform) and by European and Structural and Investment Funds in the FEDER component, through the Operational Competitiveness and Internationalization Programme (COMPETE 2020) [Project No 006971 (UIC/SOC/04011)]; and national funds, through the FCT – Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology under the UID/SOC/04011/2013.

### REFERENCES

- Alonso, A. D., & Northcote, J. (2008). Small winegrowers' views on their relationship with local communities. *Journal of Wine Research*, 19(3), 143–158.
- Altinay, L., & Paraskevas, A. (2008). *Planning research in hospitality and tourism*. London: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.
- Amaral, R., Saraiva, M., Rocha, S., & Serra, J. (2016). Gastronomy and wines in the Alentejo Portuguese Region: Motivation and satisfaction of tourists from Évora. In M. Peris-Ortiz (Ed.), *Wine and tourism: A strategic segment for sustainable economic development* (pp. 179–192). Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.
- Araújo, L. (2017). Portuguese tourism strategy 2027: Leading the tourism of the future. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes*, 9(6), 646–652.
- Banco de Portugal. (2014). *Caracterização das empresas do setor do turismo em Portugal*. Lisboa, Portugal.
- Beritelli, P. (2011). Cooperation among prominent actors in a tourist destination. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 38(2), 607–629.
- Bertella, G., Cavicchi, A., & Bentini, T. (2018). The reciprocal aspect of the experience value: Tourists and residents celebrating weddings in the rural village of Petritoli (Italy). *Anatolia*, 29(1), 52–62.
- Boesen, M., Sundbo, D., & Sundbo, J. (2017). Local food and tourism: An entrepreneurial network approach. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 17(1), 76–91.
- Braun, P. & Hollick, M. (2006). Tourism skills delivery: Sharing tourism knowledge online. *Education & Training*, 48(8/9), 693–703.
- Brunori, G., & Rossi, A. (2000). Synergy and coherence through collective action: Some insights from wine routes in Tuscany. *Sociologia Ruralis*, 40(4), 409–423.
- Bruwer, J. (2003). South African wine routes: Some perspectives on the wine tourism industry's structural dimensions and wine tourism product. *Tourism Management*, 24, 423–435.
- CCDRN (2019). Região Norte. Retrieved May 6, 2019, from <http://www.ccdr-n.pt/regiao-norte/apresentacao>.
- Chatzopoulou, E., Gorton, M., & Kuznesof, S. (2019). Understanding authentication processes and the role of conventions: A consideration of Greek ethnic restaurants.

- Annals of Tourism Research*, 77, 128–140.
- Clark, M., Riley, M., Wilkie, E., & Wood, R. C. (2007). *Researching and writing dissertations in hospitality and tourism* (8th ed.). London: Thomson Learning.
- Corigliano, M. A. (2015). Wine routes and territorial events as enhancers of tourism experiences. In M. Peris-Ortiz, M. de la C. D. R. Rama, & C. Rueda-Armengot (Eds.), *Wine and tourism: A strategic segment for sustainable economic development* (pp. 41–56). Cham: Springer.
- Correia, A., Vaughan, R., Edwards, J., & Silva, G. (2014). The potential for cooperation between wine and tourism business in the provision of tourism experiences: The case of the Douro Valley of Portugal. *Revista Portuguesa de Estudos Regionais*, 36(2), 43–55.
- Correia, L., & Ascensão, M. (2006). Wine tourism in Portugal: The Bairrada wine route. In J. Carlsen & S. Charters (Eds.), *Global wine tourism: Research, management and marketing* (pp. 242–254). UK: CABI Publishing.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). USA: SAGE Publications.
- CVRVV (2019). Região Demarcada dos Vinhos Verdes. Retrieved April 24, 2019, from <http://www.vinhoverde.pt/pt/regiao-demarcada>.
- Czernek, K. (2013). Determinants of cooperation in a tourist destination. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 40, 83–104.
- Dawson, D., Fountain, J., & Cohen, D. A. (2011). Seasonality and the lifestyle “Conundrum”: An analysis of lifestyle entrepreneurship in wine tourism regions. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 16(5), 551–572.
- Decrop, A. (1999). Triangulation in qualitative tourism research. *Tourism Management*, 20, 157–161.
- DGADR (2019). Produtos tradicionais portugueses. Retrieved May 6, 2019, from <https://tradicional.dgadr.gov.pt/pt/produtos-por-regime-de-qualidade/dop-denominacao-de-origem-protegida?start=60>.
- Damayanti, M., Scott, N., & Ruhanen, L. (2017). Coopetitive behaviours in an informal tourism economy. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 65, 25–35.
- Dwyer, L., Gill, A., & Seetaram, N. (2012). *Handbook of research methods in tourism quantitative and qualitative approaches*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.
- ENOTUR (2016). Região Vitivinícola de Trás-os-Montes. Retrieved from April 26, 2019, from <http://www.enotur.pt/pt/regions/tras-os-montes>.
- Ellis, A., Park, E., Kim, S., & Yeoman, I. (2018). What is food tourism? *Tourism Management*, 68, 250–263.
- Everett, S., & Aitchison, C. (2008). The role of food tourism in sustaining regional identity: A case study of Cornwall, South West England. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 16(2), 150–167.
- Everett, S., & Slocum, S. L. (2013). Food and tourism: An effective partnership? A UK-based review. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 21(6), 789–809.
- Fox, D., Edwards, J., & Wilkes, K. (2010). Employing the Grand Tour approach to aid understanding of garden visiting. In G. Richards & W. Munsters (Eds.), *Cultural tourism research methods* (pp. 75–86). UK: CABI Publishing.
- Fox, R. (2007). Reinventing the gastronomic identity of Croatian tourist destinations. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 26(3), 546–559.
- Frochot, I. (2003). An analysis of regional positioning and its associated food images in French tourism regional brochures. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 14(3–4), 77–96.

- Gammack, J. (2006). Wine tourism and sustainable development in regional Australia. In J. Carlsen & S. Charters (Eds.), *Global wine tourism: Research, management and marketing* (pp. 59–66). UK: CABI Publishing.
- Getz, D. (2000). *Explore wine tourism: Management, development and destinations*. New York: Cognizant Communication Corporation.
- Getz, D., & Carlsen, J. (2005). Family business in tourism: State of the art. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 32(1), 237–258.
- Hallak, R., Brown, G., & Lindsay, N. J. (2012). The place identity – Performance relationship among tourism entrepreneurs: A structural equation modelling analysis. *Tourism Management*, 33(1), 143–154.
- Hashimoto, A., & Telfer, D. J. (2006). Selling Canadian culinary tourism: Branding the global and the regional product. *Tourism Geographies*, 8(1), 31–55.
- Haven-Tang, C., & Jones, E. (2008). Using local food and drink to differentiate tourism destinations through a sense of place. *Journal of Culinary Science & Technology*, 4(4), 69–86.
- Hjalager, A. M., & Johansen, P. H. (2013). Food tourism in protected areas: Sustainability for producers, the environment and tourism? *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 21(3), 417–433.
- IDTOUR (2016). *ARVP Plano Estratégico*. Aveiro, Portugal.
- IVDP (2017). *Rumo estratégico para o setor dos vinhos do Porto e Douro: Síntese*. Vila Real, Portugal.
- IVV (2015). *Vinhos e aguardentes de Portugal*. Lisboa.
- Kim, S., & Iwashita, C. (2016). Cooking identity and food tourism: The case of Japanese udon noodles. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 41(1), 89–100.
- Kline, C., Shah, N., & Rubright, H. (2014). Applying the positive theory of social entrepreneurship to understand food entrepreneurs and their operations. *Tourism Planning & Development*, 11(3), 330–342.
- Lai, M. Y., Khoo-lattimore, C., & Wang, Y. (2019). Food and cuisine image in destination branding: Toward a conceptual model. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 19(2), 238–251.
- Lee, A. H. J., Wall, G., & Kovacs, J. F. (2015). Creative food clusters and rural development through place branding: Culinary tourism initiatives in Stratford and Muskoka, Ontario, Canada. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 39, 133–144.
- Lee, S., Lee, K., Chua, B., & Han, H. (2017). Independent café entrepreneurships in Klang Valley, Malaysia – Challenges and critical factors for success: Does family matter? *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 6(4), 363–374.
- Lin, Y., Pearson, T. E., & Cai, L. A. (2011). Food as a form of destination identity: A tourism destination brand perspective. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 11(1), 30–48.
- Marques, G. N. R. M., & Marques, J. M. (2017). Historical and cultural wine heritage on northwest Portugal as touristic resource. *Rosa dos Ventos: Turismo e Hospitalidade*, 9(I), 107–119.
- McGregor, A., & Robinson, R. N. S. (2019). Wine industry and wine tourism industry collaboration: A typology and analysis. In M. Sigala & R. Robinson (Eds.), *Wine tourism destination management and marketing* (pp. 381–397). Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Mkono, M. (2011). The othering of food in touristic eatertainment: A netnography. *Tourist Studies*, 11(3), 253–270.
- Mykletun, R. J., & Gyimo, S. (2010). Beyond the renaissance of the traditional Voss sheep's-head meal: Tradition, culinary art, scariness and entrepreneurship. *Tourism*

- Management*, 31(3), 434–446.
- Neuman, W. L. (2014). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (7th ed.). Essex, England: Pearson.
- OECD (2018). *Analysing megatrends to better shape the future of tourism. OECD Tourism Papers* (Vol. 2). Paris: Publishing, OECD.
- Ottenbacher, M. C., & Harrington, R. J. (2013). A case study of a culinary tourism campaign in Germany: Implications for strategy making and successful implementation. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 37(3), 1–28.
- Pearson, D., & Pearson, T. (2017). Branding food culture: UNESCO Creative Cities of Gastronomy. *Journal of Food Products Marketing*, 23(3), 342–355.
- PORDATA (2019). *Pessoal ao serviço nas empresas: total e por sector de actividade económica*. Retrieved May 7, 2019, from <https://www.pordata.pt/Portugal/Pessoal>.
- Presenza, A., & Chiappa, G. Del. (2013). Entrepreneurial strategies in leveraging food as a tourist resource: A cross-regional analysis in Italy. *Journal of Heritage Tourism*, 8(2–3), 182–192.
- Quintal, V. A., Thomas, B., & Phau, I. (2015). Incorporating the winescape into the theory of planned behaviour: Examining “new world” wineries. *Tourism Management*, 46, 596–609.
- Rachão, S., Breda, Z., Fernandes, C., & Joukes, V. (2019). Food tourism and regional development: A systematic literature review. *European Journal of Tourism Research*, 21, 33–49.
- Ramires, A., Brandão, F., & Cristina, A. (2018). Motivation-based cluster analysis of international tourists visiting a World Heritage City: The case of Porto, Portugal. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 8, 49–60.
- Ramos, P., Santos, V. R., & Almeida, N. (2018). Main challenges, trends and opportunities for wine tourism in Portugal. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes*, 10(6), 680–687.
- Richards, G. (2002). Gastronomy: an essential ingredient in tourism production and consumption? In A. M. Hjalager & G. Richards (Eds.), *Tourism and Gastronomy* (pp. 3–20). London: Routledge.
- Richards, G. (2012). An overview of food and tourism trends and policies. In D. Dodd (Ed.), *Food and the tourism experience* (pp. 13–46). Paris: OECD.
- Ritchie, B. W., Burns, P., & Palmer, C. (2005). *Tourism research methods*. Oxfordshire, UK: CABI Publishing.
- Scorrano, P., Fait, M., Iaia, L., & Rosato, P. (2018). The image attributes of a destination: An analysis of the wine tourists’ perception a destination. *EuroMed Journal of Business*, 13(3), 335–350.
- Serra, J., Correia, A., & Rodrigues, P. (2015). Tourist spending dynamics in the Algarve: A cross-sectional analysis. *Tourism Economics*, 21(3), 475–500.
- Silva, A. L. da, Fernão-Pires, M. J., & Bianchi-de-Aguiar, F. (2018). Portuguese vines and wines: Heritage, quality symbol, tourism asset. *Ciência Técnica Vitivinícola*, 33(1), 31–46.
- Staggs, J., & Brenner, M. (2019). Pouring new wines into old wineskins? Sub-regional identity and the case of the Basket Range Festival. In M. Sigala & R. Robinson (Eds.), *Wine tourism destination management and marketing* (pp. 165–183). Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Sto, A., & Vanneste, D. (2018). The role of history and identity discourses in cross-border tourism destination development: A Vogtland case study. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 8, 204–213.

- Stone, M. J., Migacz, S., & Wolf, E. (2019). Beyond the journey: the lasting impact of culinary tourism activities. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 22(2), 147–152.
- Taylor, P., McRae-Williams, P., & Lowe, J. (2007). The determinants of cluster activities in the Australian wine and tourism industries. *Tourism Economics*, 13(4), 639–656.
- Telfer, D. J. (2001). Strategic alliances along the Niagara Wine Route. *Tourism Management*, 22, 21–30.
- Thomas, R., Shaw, G., & Page, S. J. (2011). Understanding small firms in tourism: A perspective on research trends and challenges. *Tourism Management*, 32(5), 963–976.
- Ting, H., Fam, K., Hwa, J., Richard, J. E., & Xing, N. (2019). Ethnic food consumption intention at the touring destination: The national and regional perspectives using multi-group analysis. *Tourism Management*, 71, 518–529.
- Tresidder, R. (2015). Eating ants: Understanding the terroir restaurant as a form of destination tourism. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, 13(4), 344–360.
- Turismo de Portugal. (2014). *O enoturismo em Portugal: Caraterização da oferta e da procura*. Lisboa, Portugal.
- Turismo de Portugal. (2016). *Estratégia Turismo 2027*. Lisboa, Portugal.
- Veal, A. J. (2006). *Research methods for leisure and tourism. A practical guide*. Pearson Education Limited (3rd ed.). Essex, England: Prentice Hall.
- Verma, V., & Chandra, B. (2018). Sustainability and customers' hotel choice behaviour: a choice-based conjoint analysis approach. *Environment, Development and Sustainability*, 20(3), 1347–1363.
- Wang, Y., & Xiang, Z. (2007). Toward a theoretical framework of collaborative destination marketing. *Journal of Travel Research*, 46, 75–85.
- Wines of Portugal. (2016). Regiões Vitivinícolas. Portugal. Retrieved May 4, 2019, from <http://www.winesofportugal.info/pagina.php?codNode=18012>
- Yeap, J., Ong, K., Yapp, E., & Ooi, S. (2019). Hungry for more: Understanding young domestic travellers' return for Penang street food. *British Food Journal*, ahead-of-print (ahead-of-print). <https://doi.org/10.1108/BFJ-09-2018-0632>
- Zhang, X., Song, H., & Huang, G. Q. (2009). Tourism supply chain management: A new research agenda. *Tourism Management*, 30(3), 345–358.

## THE EFFECTS OF FOOD-RELATED MOTIVATION, LOCAL FOOD INVOLVEMENT, AND FOOD SATISFACTION ON DESTINATION LOYALTY: THE CASE OF ANGELES CITY, PHILIPPINES

Jean Paolo G. LACAP<sup>1</sup>  
*City College of Angeles, Philippines*  
ORCID: 0000-0002-4152-9061

### ABSTRACT

The paper examines the effect of local food on loyalty of tourists on a destination. The participants were identified using purposive method of sampling and these respondents comprised of local and foreign tourists who have visited Angeles City. The research design used was predictive-correlational method and partial least squares path modelling was utilized to gauge the parameter estimates. The results showed that food-related motivation positively affects local food involvement, destination loyalty, and food satisfaction. It was also found out that local food involvement is significantly and positively related to food satisfaction and destination loyalty. Moreover, relationship between food satisfaction and destination loyalty was found to be significant and positive. The mediation analysis revealed that food satisfaction is a mediator on the link between food-related motivation and destination loyalty and between local food involvement and destination loyalty.

### Article History

Received 8 April 2019

Revised 2 December 2019

Accepted 4 December 2019

### Keywords

local food  
food-related motivation  
local food involvement  
food satisfaction  
food tourism  
destination loyalty

### INTRODUCTION

Local food is an integral component in the field of tourism since it is considered a resource which can be utilized by destinations, locations, and countries in their marketing campaigns and events. Furthermore, it significantly creates an impact when it comes to destination branding and

---

<sup>1</sup> Address correspondence to Jean Paolo G. Lacap, Vice President for Administration and Quality Assurance, City College of Angeles, Angeles City, PHILIPPINES. Email: [jgglacap@gmail.com](mailto:jgglacap@gmail.com)



even development of localities, cities, or regions. Since local food is part of culture, each destination of nation is represented by unique or exemplary dishes (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2016). With the increasing importance given to food as part of cultural tourism (Hall & Mitchell, 2007; Hjalager & Richards, 2003), local food has the capacity to attain tourism sustainability and at the same time, augment destination authenticity, foster stronger domestic economy, and contribute in establishing sustainable tourism infrastructure (Handsuh, 2000).

Food tourism or gastronomic tourism is gaining momentum and popularity. More and more tourists are motivated to travel because of activities and events related to food. Tourists seek these activities to experience iconic local delicacies or products and, at the same time, experience unique events (Kivela & Crofts, 2006). The desire of tourists to experience authentic and unique food experience is now a budding occurrence in tourism industry (Smith & Costello, 2009). When tourists enjoy local food, they acquire memorable travel experiences because local food is highly associated with local cultures and histories, which may evoke lasting memories (Tsai, 2016).

Pampanga is known to be the culinary capital of the Philippines. Angeles City, being one of the cities in Pampanga, is a haven for several cultural and historic landmarks. Aside from heritage treasures, Angeles City boasts itself as a culinary destination. The city is known for the world renowned "sisig," a local dish which is a pork hash made with pork face, ears, cheeks, and snout. And according to the late renowned chef, Anthony Bourdain, "sisig" could be the next big trend (Thomson, 2017). Because of the popularity of "sisig," Angeles City stages Sisig Fiesta annually to celebrate this local dish. The *Sisig* Fiesta is celebrated to preserve and commemorate the significance of "sisig" not only in Pampanga but in the entire Philippines. With the fame of "sisig," Angeles City is now bidding in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Creative Cities Network, Gastronomy category (Magalog-De Veyra, 2018).

Several studies have identified the key role of local food or food in general in enhancing the value of a destination, may it be in local economy, culture, destination identity, and growth and sustainability. Hence, food as a tourism resource, is fundamentally getting more attention because of its contribution to tourism sustainability (Chen & Huang, 2019; Everett & Aitchison, 2008; Everett & Slocum, 2013; Sims, 2009). Local food directly and indirectly influences sustainability in a

destination (Du Rand & Heath, 2006; Everett & Slocum, 2013; Sims, 2009). It can expand tourism sustainability, may it be in the aspect of economic, social or environmental, through revenue generation, support for local establishments, and can provide tourists' needs for local tourism experience (Berno et al., 2014; Sims, 2009). Being a culinary destination, the main goal of the present study is to explore the food-related factors including food-related motivation, local food involvement, and food satisfaction that influence destination loyalty of tourists in Angeles City.

## **RESEARCH FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT**

### **Destination Loyalty**

In marketing, loyalty from the customers is an important measure of a firm's success. Loyalty to a specific product or service extends in various studies in the field of hospitality and tourism, in particular, destination loyalty (Suhartanto et al., 2018). Examining destination loyalty can be done through analysis of one's behavior or attitude (Hapsari et al., 2017). The behavioral approach to destination loyalty entails purchase of a tourism product or service or a repeated manner. On the other hand, the attitudinal approach entails the relative strength of tourist's affection towards a tourism product or service (Mechinda et al., 2009; Prayag & Ryan, 2012). The present study utilized the attitudinal dimension of destination loyalty as it is used in many research studies (e.g. Di-Clemente et al., 2019; Kim et al., 2015; Lin, 2014; Loureiro, 2014; Mechinda et al., 2009).

### **Food-related Motivation**

There are many reasons why a tourist visits a place or a destination. Fundamentally, tourists travel or visit a destination because of a motivation (Ngwira & Kankhuni, 2018). It is the beginning of any travel-related activities (Nikjoo & Ketabi, 2015). It is the individual's drive to address a need and to obtain value in their lives (Oliver, 2014). So, when a tourist travels or visits a destination, he or she is confronted with numerous travel motives and these factors include food-related motivations (Kim et al., 2013; Kim & Eves, 2012; Kivela & Crofts, 2009). Consumption of food has been one of the many activities of tourists and food as a travel motive may affect the choices of tourists when it comes to food (Ji et al., 2016). Hence, food is an important travel motive for tourists

and can also be treated as a secondary motivator for some travelers (Hall et al., 2004). From these related studies, food-related motivations are tourists' travel motives related to destination's local food.

Local food is an integral component of a lasting tourism experience and a tool for tourists to understand a tourist destination. With the proliferation of travel shows, magazines, and the like, tourists are much exposed to various motivators including local food of a destination which may heighten their interest for local dishes and stimulate their motivation to experience local cuisines (Tsai, 2016). Levitt et al. (2017) found out that tourists with high motivation and involvement in food in a destination have the greatest intentions to consume local food and they exhibit highest favorable attitudes towards local dishes. Furthermore, the factors that tourists consider in attaining food satisfaction are their desires and expectations based on their previous food experiences (Andersen & Hyldig, 2015). On the other hand, Chen and Huang (2019) observed that food-related motivation of Chinese tourists was found to be an insignificant factor to destination loyalty. In the study of Agyeiwaah et al. (2019), the authors revealed that the motivation of tourists is directly related to culinary satisfaction and experience. They further indicated that higher motivation of tourists leads to participation and involvement in the culinary experience, thus increasing their level of satisfaction, and in the long run, their loyalty. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

H1a. *Food-related motivation positively affects local food involvement.*

H1b. *Food-related motivation positively affects destination loyalty.*

H1c. *Food-related motivation positively affects food satisfaction.*

### **Local Food Involvement**

The concept of involvement in the field of tourism has been used to evaluate the level of satisfaction of tourists (Green & Chalip, 1998; Laverie & Arnett, 2000). According to Sherif and Sherif (1967), involvement is a form of attitude and it happens when one interacts with the social environment. Moreover, Laurent and Kapferer (1985) argued that involvement is influenced by satisfaction and loyalty, in varying degrees. Based on these related studies and literature, local food involvement refers to the degree in which a tourist involve himself or herself in food-related activities of a destination. In the study of Chen and Huang (2019), the authors found out that local food involvement among tourists in China is nothing to do with destination loyalty. Contrary, in the research study of Prayag and Ryan (2012), involvement of tourists is a predictor of loyalty

where satisfaction is a mediator. Moreover, Lee and Chang (2012) found out that tourist involvement positively affects loyalty, mediated by satisfaction. Hence, it is postulated that:

H2a. *Local food involvement positively affects food satisfaction.*

H2b. *Local food involvement positively affects destination loyalty.*

### **Food Satisfaction**

Satisfaction of tourists is both cognitive and affective and it is based on tourism experience in a destination (Rodriguez & San Martin, 2008). In the present study, food satisfaction is basically the favorable response of a tourist to his or her tourism experience in a food destination. It has a behavioral component which can lead to loyalty to a destination (San Martín et al., 2018). In the study of Chen and Chen (2010), tourist satisfaction is positively correlated with destination loyalty. On the other hand, destination loyalty, based on the present study, refers to the degree to which forms an intention to revisit a particular destination (Meleddu et al., 2015). In the study of Chen and Huang (2019), the authors observed that food satisfaction among tourists in China was directly related to destination loyalty. Thus, it is predicted that:

H3. *Food satisfaction positively affects destination loyalty.*

Examination of previous studies show that there are limited research undertakings on the mediating effects of food satisfaction on different tourism constructs. Namkung and Jang (2007) examined how food quality affects customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions. The findings showed that customer satisfaction acts as mediator between food quality and behavioral intentions. Moreover, Chen and Huang (2019) found that food satisfaction partially mediates local-food involvement and destination loyalty. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

H4. *Food satisfaction mediates the direct link of food-related motivation and destination loyalty.*

H5. *Food satisfaction mediates the direct link of local food involvement and destination loyalty.*

Based on the research hypotheses formulated, a model of destination loyalty was conceptualized (see Figure 1). The proposed model assesses the influence of food-related motivation, local food involvement, and food satisfaction on loyalty to a destination. Aside from the investigation of the direct effects, the current study also examines the

mediating role of food satisfaction on the relationship between food-related motivation and destination loyalty, and on the link between local food involvement and destination loyalty.

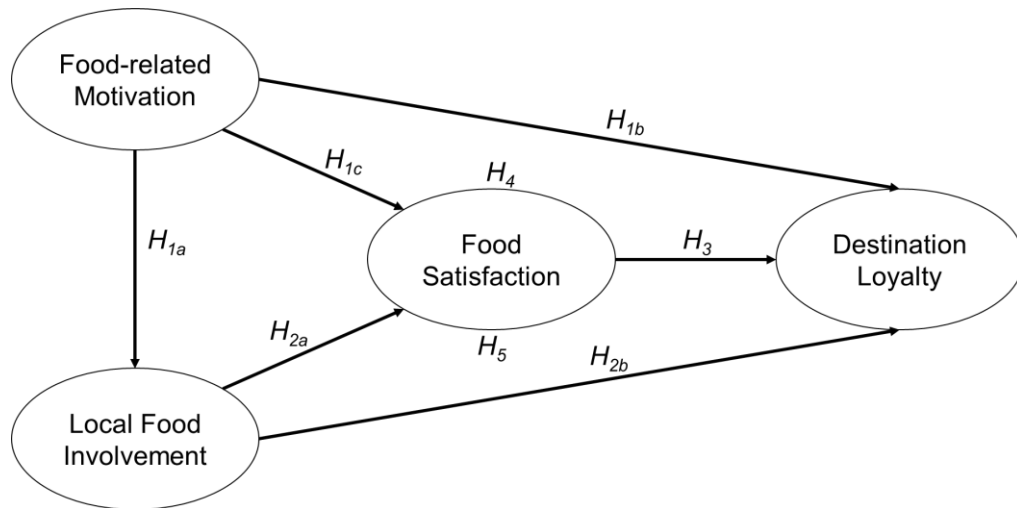


Figure 1. *Proposed model of destination loyalty*

## METHOD

### Participants of the Study

The respondents of the study were local and foreign tourists who have travelled or visited Angeles City. The sampling method used was purposive. Out of 500 survey questionnaires distributed, 352 were completed accurately by the respondents, resulting in a response rate of 70.4%. The survey questionnaires were floated in August 2018 and ended in October 2018.

The gathering of data through survey was conducted face-to-face. The enumerators were stationed in various landmarks and tourist spots of Angeles City. Each respondent of legal age (18 years old and above) was asked whether he or she has stayed overnight in the city for him or her to be qualified as a respondent. Those who have stayed overnight were considered as the participants of the study.

The socio-demographic profile of the participants is reflected in Table 1. Eighty-five percent of the total respondents were local tourists. Out of 352, 86% were Filipino nationals. There was an almost equal distribution in terms of sex, and out of the total participants, 40% were

employed while 39% were college students. In terms of purpose of visit, 36% travelled to Angeles City to visit a friend / family while 36% responded for leisure.

Table 1. *Sample's Socio-Demographic Profile*

<b>Respondents' Characteristics</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<i>Type of Tourist</i>		
Local	299	84.9
Foreign	53	15.1
<i>Nationality</i>		
Filipino	303	86.1
Non-Filipino	49	13.9
<i>Sex</i>		
Male	169	48.0
Female	183	52.0
<i>Occupation</i>		
College Student	136	38.6
Employed	142	40.3
Self-Employed	34	9.7
Unemployed	40	11.4
<i>Purpose of Visit</i>		
Leisure	125	35.5
Meeting or event	24	6.8
Visiting friends/family	127	36.1
Business trip	29	8.2
Others	47	13.4

### **Sufficiency of the Sample**

The present study has a total of 352 respondents. In order to measure whether the sample size is robust enough to support the results of the proposed structural model, inverse-square root and Gamma-exponential methods (Kock & Hadaya, 2018) were applied. Looking at the PLS path model in Figure 3, the minimum significant path coefficient is 0.16. Moreover, with the level of significant of 0.05 and power level of 0.80, using the statistical software WarpPLS version 6.0 (Kock, 2017), the computed sample sizes were the following 242 (using inverse-square root) and 228 (using Gamma-exponential) as reflected in Figure 2. Therefore, 352 as the sample size signifies that the robustness of the proposed model.

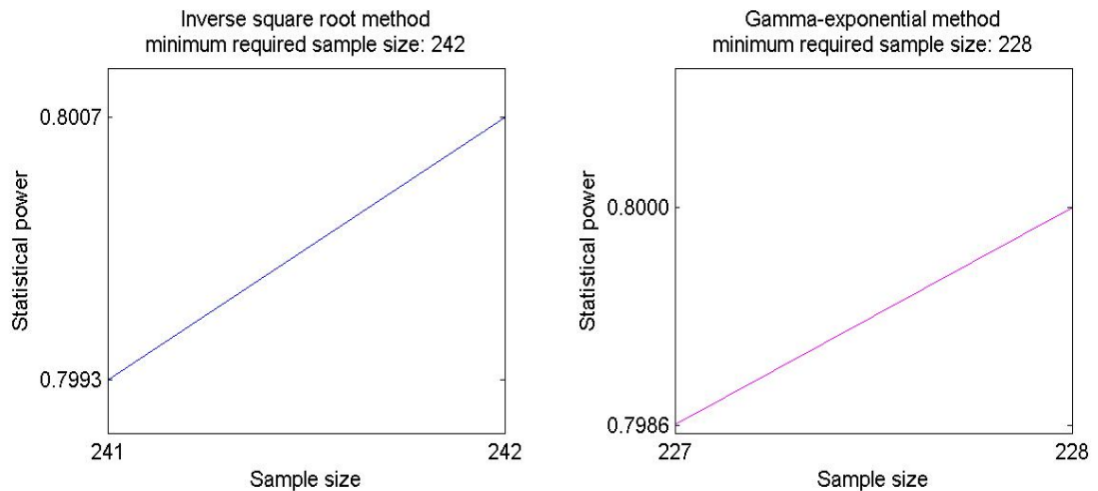


Figure 2. *Sample size estimates*

### Research Instrument

The current undertaking utilized a questionnaire as the research instrument. The instrument contained the demographics of the respondents – type of tourist, nationality, sex, occupation, and purpose of visit – and the items (measured using 5-point Likert scale) for the four (4) latent variables – food-related motivation, local food involvement, food satisfaction, and destination loyalty.

The six (6) items for food-related motivation were based on the studies of Beer et al. (2012), McKercher et al. (2008), and Kim et al. (2010) which were summarized, validated, and tested for reliability in the study of Chen and Huang (2019). The present study adapted these items and were quantified employing a 5-point Likert scale (level of agreement/disagreement).

On the other hand, the 8 items for local food involvement were adopted from the study of Sparks (2007) which are modified version of the Personal Involvement Inventory scale (Zaichkowsky, 1985). The items were also measured using 5-point Likert scale (level of agreement/disagreement).

As for the 5 items for food satisfaction, these items were based on several studies including Bosque and Martin (2008), Mason and Paggiaro (2012), Zabkar et al. (2010) which were summarized, validated, and tested for reliability also in the study of Chen and Huang (2019). The present

study adapted these items and were measured using a 5-point Likert scale (level of agreement/disagreement).

Finally, the 3 items for destination loyalty came from the study of Zabkar et al. (2010). All the items for the 4 latent variables were refined in the research undertaking of Chen and Huang (2019).

## **Data Analysis**

To test the applicability of the proposed structural model on the role of food on destination loyalty, a predictive-correlational design was utilized. A partial least squares – structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) was used to measure the parameter estimates of the proposed model. The PLS-SEM is a statistical test that follows three (3) stages: specification of the model, evaluation of the outer model, and assessment of the inner model. The present study also employed mediation analysis to gauge how mediators absorb the effect of the exogenous (independent) variable on an endogenous (dependent) construct in a structural model (Hair et al., 2014).

## **RESULTS**

### **Model Fit and Quality Indices**

Table 2 presents the 10 global model fit quality indices. The model fit and quality indices evaluates model quality of the proposed framework (Kock, 2017).

According to Kock (2011), the evaluation of the fit of the structural model, p-values of APC, ARS, and AARS must be significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). Moreover, the coefficients of AVIF and AFVIF must be equal to or less than 3.3 (Kock & Lynn, 2012). As seen in Table 2, the mentioned indices are within the accepted ranges.

With regard to Tenenhaus GoF, a measure of explanatory power of the structural model (Tenenhaus et al., 2005), the coefficient corresponds to the following thresholds: small if GoF is greater than or equal to 0.1, medium if GoF is greater than or equal to 0.25, and large if GoF is greater than or equal to 0.36 (Wetzels et al., 2009). With Tenenhaus GoF = 0.510, this indicates that the goodness of fit of the model is large, therefore, the model is highly acceptable.



Table 2. *Model fit and quality indices*

<b>Model Fit and Quality Indices</b>	<b>Coefficients</b>
Average path coefficient (APC)	0.336, $p < 0.001$
Average R-squared (ARS)	0.378, $p < 0.001$
Average adjusted R-squared (AARS)	0.375, $p < 0.001$
Average block variance inflation (AVIF)	1.622
Average full collinearity VIF (AFVIF)	1.767
Tenenhaus GoF	0.510
Simpson's paradox ratio (SSR)	1.000
R-squared contribution ratio (RSCR)	1.000
Statistical suppression ratio (SSR)	1.000
Non-linear bivariate causality direction ratio (NLBCDR)	1.000

In terms of SPR, a measure of the possible causality problem in a structural model (Kock, 2017), and RSCR, an index that gauges the degree to which the structural model has no negative R-squared contributions (Kock, 2015; Kock & Gaskins, 2016; Pearl, 2009; Wagner, 1982), the thresholds are as follows: SPR and RSCR must be equal to 1 or a more relaxed criterion, they must be equal to or higher than 0.7 (Kock, 2017). With SPR and RSCR having values equal to 1, the results suggest Simpson's paradox is not present and there are no negative R-squared contributions in the structural model.

And, as for the coefficients of SSR and NLBCDR, the acceptable values must be equal to or greater than 0.7. The SSR is an index that gauges whether the structural model does not have or does not encounter suppression instances. On the other hand, NLBCR measures how bivariate non-linear values support the hypothesized directions of causal relationships of a structural model (Kock, 2017). With SSR and NLBCDR having values equal to 1, the results indicate that the structural paths are free from statistical suppression and the causality of the hypothesized path direction of the model is supported.

### **Collinearity, Reliability, and Validity Measurements**

The block variance inflation factors (VIFs) measure whether multicollinearity exists or not (Lacap et al., 2018). According to Kock & Lynn (2012), the threshold for block VIFs must be equal to or lower than 3.3. As seen in Table 3, all VIFs are below 3.3 suggesting that there is no vertical multicollinearity in all latent constructs in the structural model.

To gauge the reliability of each construct, composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha (CA) were measured. The values of CR and CA must be at least 0.70 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Nunnally, 1978; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994; Kock, 2017; Kock & Lynn, 2012). With the coefficients of CR and CA for each variable, as shown in Table 3, all constructs are highly reliable.

Table 3. *Collinearity, convergent validity, and reliability measures*

Construct & Item	Factor Loading	Variance Inflation Factor	Average Variance Extracted	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
<i>Food-related motivation</i>					
FRM1	0.753	1.675			
FRM2	0.751	1.748			
FRM3	0.782	1.807	0.558	0.883	0.841
FRM4	0.782	1.845			
FRM5	0.745	1.736			
FRM6	0.661	1.396			
<i>Local food involvement</i>					
LFI1	0.790	2.543			
LFI2	0.796	2.611			
LFI3	0.794	2.169			
LFI4	0.810	2.326	0.661	0.940	0.926
LFI5	0.859	3.021			
LFI6	0.869	3.265			
LFI7	0.806	2.539			
LFI8	0.775	2.161			
<i>Food satisfaction</i>					
FS1	0.833	2.218			
FS2	0.806	1.985			
FS3	0.871	2.676	0.715	0.926	0.900
FS4	0.872	2.868			
FS5	0.844	2.444			
<i>Destination loyalty</i>					
DL1	0.904	2.653			
DL2	0.921	2.994	0.814	0.929	0.886
DL3	0.881	2.232			

*All factor loadings are significant at 0.001 ( $p < 0.001$ ).*

Convergent and discriminant validity tests were also measured. A construct is said to have a convergent validity when the factor loading of each item at least 0.5 or higher at the corresponding p-value must be significant,  $p < 0.05$ . (Hair et al., 2009; Kock, 2014). Furthermore, discriminant validity involves the evaluation of average variance extracted

(AVEs). The values of AVEs must be at least 0.5 or higher (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Kock & Lynn, 2012). At the same time, discriminant validity also involves the scrutiny of the correlations among constructs with square roots of AVEs (Kock, 2017; Lacap, 2019). The diagonal values (see Table 4), must be larger than the values to their left in the same row (Kock, 2017). As shown in Tables 3 and 4, all constructs exhibit convergent and discriminant validity.

Table 4. *Discriminant validity using Fornell and Larcker criterion*

	FRM	LFI	FS	DL
FRM	<b>0.747</b>			
LFI	0.596	<b>0.813</b>		
FS	0.463	0.524	<b>0.845</b>	
DL	0.461	0.496	0.615	<b>0.902</b>

FRM = food-related motivation; LFI = local food involvement; FS = food satisfaction; DL = destination loyalty. The diagonal values are the square root of AVE of constructs while the off-diagonal elements are the correlation between constructs.

### PLS-Path Model

Figure 3 and Table 5 display the PLS path model and the direct effects of each structural path. Analysis of data revealed that food-related motivation positively affects local food involvement ( $\beta = 0.614$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), destination loyalty ( $\beta = 0.158$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ), and food satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.238$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). The effect sizes for FRM  $\rightarrow$  LFI is medium ( $f^2 = 0.337$ ), FRM  $\rightarrow$  DL is small ( $f^2 = 0.074$ ), and for FRM  $\rightarrow$  FS is small ( $f^2 = 0.113$ ). Therefore, H1a, H1b, and H1c are supported.

Moreover, local food involvement showed positive influence on food satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.386$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and on destination loyalty ( $\beta = 0.160$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ). The relationship between LFI and FS has a medium effect size ( $f^2 = 0.205$ ) while the relationship between LFI and DL has a small effect size ( $f^2 = 0.079$ ). Hence, H2a and H2b are supported. Additionally, results also revealed that food satisfaction positively affects destination loyalty ( $\beta = 0.463$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) with an effect size of medium ( $f^2 = 0.287$ ). Thus, H3 is supported.

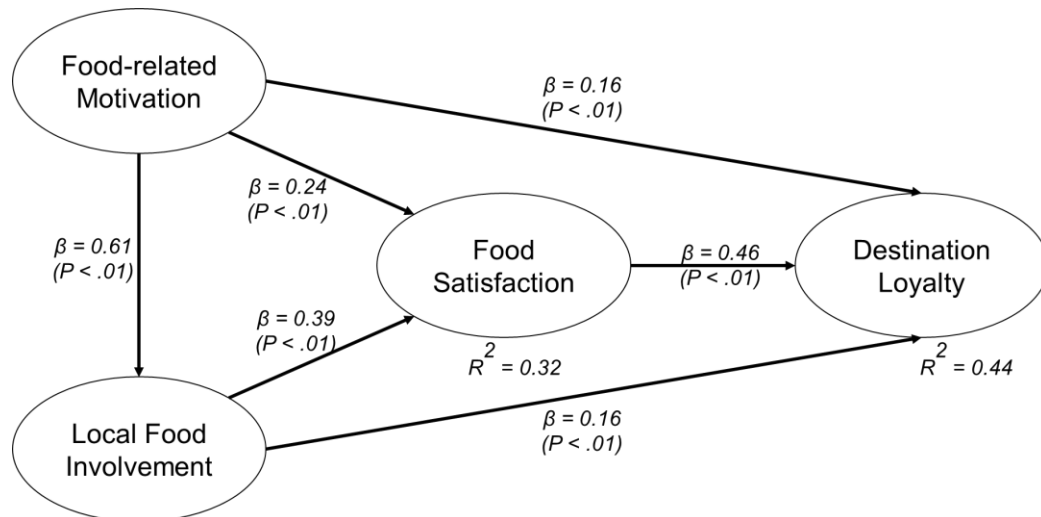


Figure 3. The PLS path model with parameter estimates

Table 5 also manifests the mediation effects results for H4 and H5. The findings showed that food satisfaction partially mediates the direct link between food-related motivation and destination loyalty ( $\beta = 0.110$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ) with a small effect size ( $f^2 = 0.052$ ) and between local food involvement and destination loyalty ( $\beta = 0.179$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), with a small effect size ( $f^2 = 0.089$ ). Hence, H4 and H5 are supported.

Table 5. Direct and indirect effects

	Path Coefficient	Standard Error	p-value	Effect Size
<i>Direct Effects</i>				
H1a. FRM → LFI	0.614	0.049	<0.001	0.337
H1b. FRM → DL	0.158	0.052	0.001	0.074
H1c. FRM → FS	0.238	0.051	<0.001	0.113
H2a. LFI → FS	0.386	0.050	<0.001	0.205
H2b. LFI → DL	0.160	0.052	0.001	0.079
H3. FS → DL	0.463	0.050	<0.001	0.287
<i>Indirect Effects</i>				
H4. FRM → FS → DL	0.110	0.037	0.002	0.052
H5. LFI → FS → DL	0.179	0.037	<0.001	0.089

FRM = food-related motivation; LFI = local food involvement; FS = food satisfaction; DL = destination loyalty.  $f^2$  is the effect sizes (Cohen, 1988) where 0.02 = small, 0.15 = medium, 0.35 = large. SE = standard error;  $\beta$  = standardized path coefficient.

The coefficient of determination or the R-squared ( $R^2$ ) values were also shown in Figure 3. Based on the structural model, the  $R^2$  coefficients of 0.32 and 0.44 or an ARS of 0.378 indicate that about 38% of the variability of dependent construct/s can be explained by the independent construct/s ( $p < 0.001$ ).

## DISCUSSION

The current research revealed that food-related motivation positively affects local food involvement, destination loyalty, and food satisfaction. The findings suggest that, when the travel motives of tourists are related to local food and these motives can be found in a destination, they will involve themselves in food-related activities of that destination and at the same time, they will have positive attitudes towards the destination and may result in revisit intention. These results are in consonance with the study of Levitt et al. (2017) who argued that when motivation and degree of involvement of tourists is high, their propensity to consume local food rises, and at the same time, they exhibit favorable attitudes towards local cuisine. Same also is true with the study of Andersen and Hyldig (2015) who identified that previous food experiences contribute to food satisfaction of tourists. Moreover, Agyeiwaah et al. (2019) highlighted that when tourists are motivated by food, their culinary experience becomes favorable and their culinary satisfaction increases which leads them to become involved in their food experiences. Contrary, Chen and Huang (2019) found that food-related motivation does not contribute to destination loyalty of tourists.

Furthermore, analysis of the data also revealed that local food involvement positively affects food satisfaction and destination loyalty. This indicates that, when tourists visit a destination and they immerse themselves in activities related to local food, the propensity of a satisfactory experience and revisit the same destination is high. This is true with the studies of Laurent and Kapferer (1985), Prayag and Ryan (2012) and Lee and Chang (2012) who identified that when tourists are very much involved in a destination, it positively affects their degree of satisfaction and loyalty. On the other hand, Chen and Huang (2019) observed that local food involvement does not affect loyalty to a destination. Additionally, the study also revealed that food satisfaction directly affects destination loyalty. The favorable response of tourists to their food experiences forms revisit intentions to a destination. This is

supported by the research studies of Chen and Chen (2010), Meleddu et al. (2015), and Chen and Huang (2019).

The mediation analysis showed that food satisfaction acts as a mediator on the relationship between food-related motivation and destination loyalty and local food involvement and destination loyalty. This suggests that food-related motivation and local food involvement positively affect food satisfaction which in turn affects destination loyalty. With a small effect size, food satisfaction augments the relationship between food-related motivation and destination loyalty and between local food involvement and destination loyalty. In the study of Chen and Huang (2019), the authors observed the partial mediation effects of food satisfaction on local food involvement and destination loyalty relationship and of local food involvement on food-related motivation and destination loyalty.

### **Implications of the Study, Future Research Directions, and Limitations of the Study**

With the growing interests in food tourism or gastronomic tourism and the important role of local food in destination's value (Chen & Huang, 2019; Everett & Aitchison, 2008; Everett & Slocum, 2013; Sims, 2009), the study provides a deeper understanding on the effects of food-related motivation, local food involvement, and food satisfaction on destination loyalty. Angeles City, being a food destination, offers local dishes and cuisines which can be an integral component of the strategic tourism marketing campaign for the city. Based on the results, all identified factors - of food-related motivation, local food involvement, and food satisfaction contribute to loyalty of tourists in a destination. These results prove that tourists, local and foreign, may form revisit intentions in Angeles City when they experience local food, involve themselves in food-related activities of the destination, and they have favorable experiences.

Local tourism officers and private food establishments must work together and create a holistic approach to emphasize local food as the banner tourism program of Angeles City. With food-related motivation positively affecting food satisfaction and, in turn, destination loyalty, sustainability of the destination is a possibility. Marketing efforts should be geared towards establishing Angeles City as a local food destination. Moreover, tourists should also experience being involved in food-related activities of a destination. Their level of involvement leads to food

satisfaction. This factor also reinforces the food-motivation of the tourists which positively affects their level of food satisfaction. Presenting the local food and its vital relevance to the destination's culture and history and creating food-related activities regarding local dishes will generate positive experience among tourists of Angeles City.

Every destination desires to achieve sustainability and the present study emphasize the role of local food on destination loyalty. In order to attain sustainability in a food destination, food-related motivation, local food involvement, and food satisfaction should always be considered. With this, the research undertaking has also limitations. First, most of the respondents were local tourists and college students, hence future researchers may want to examine the present research model by including more foreign tourists and employed respondents in order to increase the generalizability of the conclusions. And second, it considers only the role of food in destination loyalty. Other researchers may look into other factors that may contribute to loyalty of tourists in destinations. Moreover, others may find interest in exploring further other food-related factors that may influence destination loyalty.

## REFERENCES

- Agyeiwaah, E., Otoo, F. E., Sontikul, W., & Huang, W. J. (2019). Understanding culinary tourist motivation, experience, satisfaction, and loyalty using a structural approach. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 36(3), 295-313. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10548408.2018.1541775>
- Andersen, B. V., & Hyldig, G. (2015). Consumers' view on determinants to food satisfaction. A qualitative approach. *Appetite*, 95, 9-16. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appet.2015.06.011>
- Beer, C. L., Ottenbacher, M. C., & Harrington, R. J. (2012). Food tourism implementation in the Black Forest destination. *Journal of Culinary Science and Technology*, 10(2), 106-128. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15428052.2012.677601>
- Berno, T., Kline, C., & Wolf, E. (2014). Food tourism in academia. In E. Wolf, J. Bussell, C. Campbell, W. Lange-Faria, & K. McAree (Eds.), *Have fork will travel: A practical handbook for food and drink tourism professionals* (pp. 309-321). Portland: World Food Travel Association.
- Björk, P., & Kauppinen-Räsänen, H. (2016). Local food: A source for destination attraction. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 28(1), 177-194. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-05-2014-0214>
- Bosque, I. R. D., & Martin, H. S. (2008). Tourist satisfaction a cognitive-affective model. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 35(2), 551-573. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2008.02.006>
- Chen, C. F., & Chen, F. S. (2010). Experience quality, perceived value, satisfaction and behavioral intentions for heritage tourists. *Tourism Management*, 31(1), 29-35. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2009.02.008>

- Chen, Q., & Huang, R. (2019). Understanding the role of local food in sustaining Chinese destinations. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 22(5), 544-560. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2018.1444020>
- Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences*. Hillsdale NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Di-Clemente, E., Hernández-Mogollón, J. M., & Campón-Cerro, A. M. (2019). Food-based experiences as antecedents of destination loyalty. *British Food Journal*, 121(7), 1495-1507. <https://doi.org/10.1108/BFJ-07-2018-0419>
- Du Rand, G. E., & Heath, E. (2006). Towards a framework for food tourism as element of destination marketing. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 9(3), 206-234. <https://doi.org/10.2164/cit/226.0>
- Everett, S., & Aitchison, C. (2008). The role of food tourism in sustaining regional identity: A case study of Cornwall, South West England. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 16(2), 150-167. <https://doi.org/10.2167/jost696.0>
- Everett, S., & Slocum, S. L. (2013). Food and tourism: An effective partnership? A UK-based review. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 21(6), 789-809. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2012.741601>
- Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobserved variables and measurement error. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18(1), 39-50. <http://doi.org/10.2307/3151312>
- Green, B. C., & Chalip, L. (1998). Antecedents and consequences of parental purchase decision involvement in youth sport. *Leisure Sciences*, 20(2), 95-109. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01490409809512268>
- Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2009). *Multivariate Data Analysis*. Upper Saddle, NJ: Pearson.
- Hair, J.F., Sarstedt, M., Hopkins, L., & Kuppelwieser, V. G. (2014). Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) An emerging tool in business research. *European Business Review*, 26(2), 106-121. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EBR-10-2013-0128>
- Hall, C. M., & Mitchell, R. (2007). Gastronomic tourism: Comparing food and wine tourism experiences. In M. Novelli (Ed.), *Niche tourism* (pp. 87-102). Routledge.
- Hall, C. M., Sharples, L., & Smith, A. (2004). The experience of consumption or the consumption of experiences? Challenges and issues in food tourism. In C. M. Hall, L. Sharples, R. Mitchell, N. Macionis, & B. Cambourne (Eds.), *Food tourism around the world* (pp. 314-335). Routledge.
- Handszuh, H. F. (2000). Local food in tourism policies. In *WTO-CTO local food & tourism international conference, Larnaka, Cyprus, 9-11 November 2000* (pp. 173-179). World Tourism Organization (WTO).
- Hapsari, R., Clemes, M. D., & Dean, D. (2017). The impact of service quality, customer engagement and selected marketing constructs on airline passenger loyalty. *International Journal of Quality and Service Sciences*, 9(1), 21-40. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJQSS-07-2016-0048>
- Hjalager, A. M., & Richards, G. (Eds.). (2003). *Tourism and gastronomy*. Routledge.
- Ji, M., Wong, I. A., Eves, A., & Scarles, C. (2016). Food-related personality traits and the moderating role of novelty-seeking in food satisfaction and travel outcomes. *Tourism Management*, 57, 387-396. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2016.06.003>
- Kim, H., Woo, E., & Uysal, M. (2015). Tourism experience and quality of life among elderly tourists. *Tourism management*, 46, 465-476. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2014.08.002>



- Kim, Y. G., & Eves, A. (2012). Construction and validation of a scale to measure tourist motivation to consume local food. *Tourism management*, 33(6), 1458-1467. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2016.06.003>
- Kim, Y. G., Eves, A., & Scarles, C. (2013). Empirical verification of a conceptual model of local food consumption at a tourist destination. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 33, 484-489. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2012.06.005>
- Kim, Y. G., Suh, B. W., & Eves, A. (2010). The relationships between food-related personality traits, satisfaction, and loyalty among visitors attending food events and festivals. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 29(2), 216-226. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2009.10.015>
- Kivela, J., & Crotts, J. C. (2006). Tourism and gastronomy: Gastronomy's influence on how tourists experience a destination. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 30(3), 354-377. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1096348006286797>
- Kivela, J. J., & Crotts, J. C. (2009). Understanding travelers' experiences of gastronomy through etymology and narration. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 33(2), 161-192. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1096348008329868>
- Kock, N. (2011). Using WarpPLS in e-collaboration studies: Descriptive statistics, settings, and key analysis results. *International Journal of e-Collaboration (IJeC)*, 7(2), 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.4018/jec.2011040101>
- Kock, N. (2014). Advanced mediating effects tests, multi-group analyses, and measurement model assessments in PLS-based SEM. *International Journal of e-Collaboration (IJeC)*, 10(1), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.4018/ijec.2014010101>
- Kock, N. (2015). How Likely is Simpson's Paradox in Path Models? *International Journal of e-Collaboration (IJeC)*, 11(1), 1-7. <https://doi.org/10.4018/ijec.2015010101>
- Kock, N. (2017). *WarpPLS 6.0 user manual*. Laredo, TX: ScriptWarp Systems.
- Kock, N., & Gaskins, L. (2016). Simpson's paradox, moderation, and the emergence of quadratic relationships in path models: An information systems illustration. *International Journal of Applied Nonlinear Science*, 2(3), 200-234. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJANS.2016.077025>
- Kock, N., & Hadaya, P. (2018). Minimum sample size estimation in PLS-SEM: The inverse square root and gamma-exponential methods. *Information Systems Journal*, 28(1), 227-261. <http://doi.org/10.1111/isj.12131>
- Kock, N., & Lynn, G. (2012). Lateral collinearity and misleading results in variance-based SEM: An illustration and recommendations. *Journal of the Association for Information Systems*, 13(7), 546-580.
- Lacap, J. P. G. (2019). The mediating effect of employee engagement on the relationship of transformational leadership and intention to quit: Evidence from local colleges in Pampanga, Philippines. *Asia-Pacific Social Science Review*, 19(1) 2019, 33-48.
- Lacap, J. P. G., Mulyaningsih, H. D., & Ramadani, V. (2018). The mediating effects of social entrepreneurial antecedents on the relationship between prior experience and social entrepreneurial intent: The case of Filipino and Indonesian university students. *Journal of Science and Technology Policy Management*, 9(3), 329-346. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSTPM-03-2018-0028>
- Laurent, G., & Kapferer, J. N. (1985). Measuring consumer involvement profiles. *Journal of marketing research*, 22(1), 41-53. <https://doi.org/10.1177/002224378502200104>
- Laverie, D. A., & Arnett, D. B. (2000). Factors affecting fan attendance: The influence of identity salience and satisfaction. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 32(2), 225-246. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.2000.11949915>

- Lee, T. H., & Chang, Y. S. (2012). The influence of experiential marketing and activity involvement on the loyalty intentions of wine tourists in Taiwan. *Leisure Studies*, 31(1), 103-121. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02614367.2011.568067>
- Levitt, J. A., Zhang, P., DiPietro, R. B., & Meng, F. (2017). Food tourist segmentation: Attitude, behavioral intentions and travel planning behavior based on food involvement and motivation. *International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Administration*, 1-27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15256480.2017.1359731>
- Lin, C. H. (2014). Effects of cuisine experience, psychological well-being, and self-health perception on the revisit intention of hot springs tourists. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 38(2), 243-265. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1096348012451460>
- Loureiro, S. M. C. (2014). The role of the rural tourism experience economy in place attachment and behavioral intentions. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 40, 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2014.02.010>
- Magalog-De Veyra, J. (2018, April 28). Going to Sisig Fiesta? 7 restaurants for your Pampanga food trip. Retrieved June 23, 2019, from <https://news.abs-cbn.com/life/04/28/18/going-to-sisig-fiesta-7-restaurants-for-your-pampanga-food-trip>
- Mason, M. C., & Paggiaro, A. (2012). Investigating the role of festivalscape in culinary tourism: The case of food and wine events. *Tourism Management*, 33(6), 1329-1336. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2011.12.016>
- McKercher, B. F., Okumus, F., & Okumus, B. (2008). Food tourism as a viable market segment: It's all how you cook the numbers! *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, 25(2), 137-148. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10548400802402404>
- Mechinda, P., Serirat, S., & Gulid, N. (2009). An examination of tourists' attitudinal and behavioral loyalty: Comparison between domestic and international tourists. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 15(2), 129-148. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1356766708100820>
- Meleddu, M., Paci, R., & Pulina, M. (2015). Repeated behaviour and destination loyalty. *Tourism Management*, 50, 159-171. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2015.01.032>
- Namkung, Y., & Jang, S. (2007). Does food quality really matter in restaurants? Its impact on customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 31(3), 387-409. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1096348007299924>
- Ngwira, C., & Kankhuni, Z. (2018). What attracts tourists to a destination? Is it attractions? *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, 7(1), 1-19.
- Nikjoo, A. H., & Ketabi, M. (2015). The role of push and pull factors in the way tourists choose their destination. *Anatolia*, 26(4), 588-597. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13032917.2015.1041145>
- Nunnally, J. C. (1978). *Psychometric theory*. New York, NY: McGraw Hill.
- Nunnally, J. C., & Bernstein, I. H. (1994). *Psychometric theory*. New York, NY: McGraw Hill.
- Oliver, R. L. (2014). *Satisfaction: A behavioral perspective on the consumer: A behavioral perspective on the consumer*. Routledge.
- Pearl, J. (2009). *Causality: Models, reasoning, and inference*. Cambridge England: Cambridge University Press.
- Prayag, G., & Ryan, C. (2012). Antecedents of tourists' loyalty to Mauritius: The role and influence of destination image, place attachment, personal involvement, and satisfaction. *Journal of Travel Research*, 51(3), 342-356. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287511410321>

- Rodríguez, I., & San Martín, H. (2008). Tourist satisfaction a cognitive-affective model. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 35(2), 551–573. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2008.02.006>
- San Martín, H., Herrero, A., & García de los Salmones, M. D. M. (2018). An integrative model of destination brand equity and tourist satisfaction. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 1-22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2018.1428286>
- Sherif, C., & Sherif, M. (1967). *Attitude, Ego-Involvement and Change*. New York: John Wiley.
- Sims, R. (2009). Food, place and authenticity: Local food and the sustainable tourism experience. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 17(3), 321–336. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669580802359293>
- Smith, S., & Costello, C. (2009). Culinary tourism: Satisfaction with a culinary event utilizing importance-performance grid analysis. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 15(2), 99-110. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1356766708100818>
- Sparks, B. (2007). Planning a wine tourism vacation? Factors that help to predict tourist behavioural intentions. *Tourism management*, 28(5), 1180-1192. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2006.11.003>
- Suhartanto, D., Clemes, M. D., & Wibisono, N. (2018). How experiences with cultural attractions affect destination image and destination loyalty. *Tourism Culture & Communication*, 18(3), 176-188. <https://doi.org/10.3727/109830418X15319363084463>
- Tenenhaus, M., Vinzi, V. E., Chatelin, Y. M., & Lauro, C. (2005). PLS path modeling. *Computational Statistics & Data Analysis*, 48(1), 159-205. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.csda.2004.03.005>
- Thomson, J. (2017, September 6). This is Sisig, the food Anthony Bourdain says will be the next big trend. Retrieved June 23, 2019, from [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/what-is-sisig-anthony-bourdain\\_n\\_59396d17e4b0b13f2c68002e](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/what-is-sisig-anthony-bourdain_n_59396d17e4b0b13f2c68002e)
- Tsai, C. T. (2016). Memorable tourist experiences and place attachment when consuming local food. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 18(6), 536-548. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.2070>
- Wagner, C. H. (1982). Simpson's paradox in real life. *The American Statistician*, 36(1), 46-48. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00031305.1982.10482778>
- Wetzels, M., Odekerken-Schröder, G., & Van Oppen, C. (2009). Using PLS path modeling for assessing hierarchical construct models: Guidelines and empirical illustration. *MIS quarterly*, 33(1), 177-195. <https://doi.org/10.2307/20650284>
- Žabkar, V., Brenčič, M. M., & Dmitrović, T. (2010). Modelling perceived quality, visitor satisfaction and behavioural intentions at the destination level. *Tourism Management*, 31(4), 537–546. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2009.06.005>
- Zaichkowsky, J. L. (1985). Measuring the involvement construct. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 12, 341–352. <https://doi.org/10.1086/208520>

## THE PARADOX OF CRACKER BARREL: A CASE STUDY ON PLACE AND PLACELESSNESS

Meredith GREGORY

*University of Mary Washington, Virginia, USA*  
ORCID: 0000-0002-0223-8448

Caitlin FINLAYSON<sup>1</sup>

*University of Mary Washington, Virginia, USA*  
ORCID: 0000-0003-3611-9970

### ABSTRACT

Cracker Barrel restaurants are a fixture across the interstate landscape of the United States. These sites cultivate a strong sense of place through careful theming, generating a distinct sense of rural America and nostalgia for home. At the same time, the uniformity of Cracker Barrel speaks to the notion of placelessness, the eradication of unique local features and homogenization of experience. Cracker Barrel is thus simultaneously placeless and *placefull*. This research explores this paradoxical notion by utilizing semiotic analyses in an analysis of user-generated Yelp! photos of Cracker Barrels across the country. It is clear from this analysis that the number and wide variety of artifacts vary surprisingly little from store to store. Together, this uniformity and intentional theming help successfully create a sense of place for Cracker Barrel stores as a rural American, 19th century “home-away-from-home.”

### Article History

Received 8 March 2019  
Revised 29 October 2019  
Accepted 1 November 2019

### Keywords

theming  
restaurants  
place making

### INTRODUCTION

Cracker Barrel restaurants are beacons of home-cooking along interstates across the United States and welcome 230 million guests yearly to their reproduction of a small, rural town’s general store from early America in the 1900s. In hopes of providing a consistent, home-away-from-home,

---

<sup>1</sup> Address correspondence to Caitlin Finlayson, University of Mary Washington, 1301 College Avenue Fredericksburg, Virginia, USA. E-mail: cfinlay@umw.edu

Cracker Barrel carefully designs the decor, the food, and the atmosphere to align with the rural general store theme at each of their 658 locations.

Cracker Barrel works diligently to create a strong sense of place in their restaurants yet simultaneously exists as a placeless place. This sense of place, however, is contrasted with the inescapable placelessness, or lack of unique, distinguishing features (Relph, 1976), that is a result of all 650 Cracker Barrels looking virtually the same. The focus of this research is on how Cracker Barrel intentionally works to create a sense of place, while at the same time, how its uniformity simultaneously positions it as a placeless place. Cracker Barrels are designed and decorated the same no matter where they are geographically located leading them to be considered placeless. Even with minimal ties to the local area, there are few places, restaurant chains especially, that foster a greater sense of place for so many people. Through placemaking and theming – “the process by which an environment is given a distinct character” (Muñoz & Wood, 2009, p. 270) - Cracker Barrel effectively reproduces the feeling of a small, rural town’s general store from the early 1900s for all the patrons to enjoy. Thus exploring how this sense of place is created, and recreated on a vast scale, is important to explore. For Cracker Barrel in particular, there is an appeal to both tourists and locals alike and thus a paradox between maintaining uniqueness amidst a wide geographic area and differentiation among a busy restaurant landscape.

This paper uses a visual, semiologic methodology to explore the paradox of placelessness and placefulness at Cracker Barrel restaurants. By using user generated Yelp! photos from a stratified random sample of stores across the country, this study analyzes how Cracker Barrel’s design choices create a unique sense of place while also proving the hypothesis that the stores do not change with the changing geographies. Ultimately, the results of this research provide an understanding of how Cracker Barrel uses symbols to create place, which elements vary across the country and which do not, as well as a discussion on Cracker Barrel’s motivations.

## **PLACE, PLACELESSNESS, AND THEMING IN CRACKER BARREL RESTAURANTS**

Cracker Barrel’s defining feature is its distinctive place-making, creating a palpable sense of home through its nostalgic decor and menu items. The notion of place more broadly is a defining feature of geographic study

(Nelson, 2017) and is highly emotional. As Tuan (1977, p. 6) notes “what begins as undifferentiated space becomes place as we get to know it better and endow it with value”. Placemakers, such as those designing Cracker Barrels, rely on the ability to create place by changing the physical characteristics but can only hope their designs create an atmosphere where patrons become attached and create their own personal sense of place in the restaurants.

Place attachment refers to the ability of a place to make someone feel a certain way. Shao and Lui (2017, p. 152) define place attachment as “an effective bond that people establish with specific areas where they prefer to remain and where they feel comfortable and safe”. The key, therefore, to place attachment is that people become attached to familiar places whether that be from length of residency, bonds with neighbors, or other factors (Phillips et al., 2011, p. 78). Place attachment is a continual and never ceasing process (Cuba & Hummon, 1993, p. 547), yet the time it takes to truly become attached to one place in particular is rarely immediate and takes a long time to fully develop (Phillips et al., 2011, p. 77). Tuan (1977, p. 184) furthers this idea stating, “attachment, whether to a person or to a locality, is seldom acquired in passing”. Just as people form relationships with other people, so too can they connect with places.

Various symbols anchor a person’s sense of place, and collectively, these objects serve as place-makers for the community (Phillips et al., 2011, p. 87). Csurgó and Megyesi (2016, p. 430) highlight the importance of this stating, “symbolization of place is one of the main dimensions of place making”. Not only do objects create a sense of place, but they also “anchor time,” as Tuan (1977) writes. Place designers connect with these ideas in designing themed restaurants, historic sites, and some personal homes. These locations may therefore establish themselves as historic deliberately through the use of artifacts (Tuan, 1977, p. 198). Two broad categories used by place designers are domestication, or the production of familiar landscape, and exoticisation, or the formation of unfamiliar landscapes (Korusiewicz, 2015, p. 401). Typically, people get attached to familiar areas as they “find comfort in familiarity” (Phillips et al., 2011, p. 78). Korusiewicz (2015, p. 401), however, comments on the “fascinating mystery” experienced in exotic places that draws people to the place allowing them to form attachments.

While certainly placefull, Cracker Barrel is also placeless as a Cracker Barrel in North Carolina looks and feels the same as a Cracker Barrel in Arizona or anywhere else in the country. Relph (1976) defines

placelessness as “the casual eradication of distinctive places and the making of standardized landscapes” (Relph, 1976, Preface). Harner and Kinder (2011, p. 751) argue that the physically distinct attributes of a place allow for place attachments by individuals and communities, and thus the elimination of those attributes results in a placeless place. Korusiewicz (2015, p. 402) similarly defines placelessness as “the lack of a recognizable focal point (or points) of mental and material space that one could connect to”. It is this lack of unique features that leads to landscapes “looking more and more like everywhere else” (Harner & Kinder, 2011, p. 752).

Phillips et al. (2011, p. 81), however, challenge this definition due to the lack of concern for the temporal, social, or individual meaning that create places. They define placelessness as “a lack of ‘insideness’ and meaning, anomie or simply not knowing a place” (Phillips et al., 2011, p. 81). They continue by attributing this to potential social exclusions or fleeting experiences with a place in which there is not enough time to gain a sense of place. When reflecting back on the previous discussion of place attachment, a short amount of time in a place severely limits the likelihood of feelings of social insideness or autobiographical attachment leaving only the physical characteristics of a place to become attached to.

No matter what the leading cause of placelessness, the result is always the same: a “sterile” (Korusiewicz, 2015, p. 402), “cookie-cutter” (Hough, 1990, p. 183), “standardized” (Relph, 1976, Preface), “anchorless” (Goss, 1992, p. 172), “homogenized blandscape” (Relph, 1981, p. 13; Phillips et al., 2011, p. 83; Zelinsky, 2011, Preface). Zelinsky (2011) opens his book commenting on the current state of the American population and landscape. He writes, “we are a population, after all, that spends much of its time outside the home (all too often a cookie-cutter structure devoid of regional resonance, where television mesmerizes us several hours of the day) shopping or eating in look-a-like chain or franchise operations, driving along featureless highways built into governmental specifications, sitting in anonymous airports, and sleeping in forgettable motels” (Zelinsky, 2011, p. 1). Zelinsky (2011) stresses the lack of connection between these features and the place where they are located (Zelinsky, 2011, p. 1). Not only are the elements listed above divorced from place, but they are also stripped of the uniqueness that defines places (Zimmerbauer, 2011, p. 247). Phillips et al. (2011, p. 83) further highlights the shift from distinctive shops and landmarks to “homogenized” features that dominate much of the United States.

Themes are socially constructed elements of the built environment that represent a specific time, place, or culture (Wood & Muñoz, 2007, p. 243). Wood and Muñoz (2007, p. 243) centralize theming to the study of place when they state, “we live in a themed world” be it malls, museums, retailers, amusement parks, events, or restaurants. Muñoz and Wood (2009) argue the most commonly experienced of these is restaurants. The time periods, places, and cultures mimicked are themselves socially constructed as people over time decided how these were each defined (DeLyser, 1999, p. 606; Wood & Muñoz, 2007, p. 244). Themed worlds further act as surrogates for the actual environment they represent (Wood & Muñoz, 2007, p. 243). Wood and Muñoz (2007, p. 243) list ethnic art, decor, music, external façades, the name, among other stereotypical features as elements that create these themes. These function as the symbols that both create and reproduce a sense of place, a sense of culture, and/or a sense of time (Zimmerbauer, 2011, p. 246). In the case of restaurants, the food is also a symbol of the host culture, place, or time (Wood & Muñoz, 2007, p. 243).

Themed restaurants use stereotypical and expected symbols that have been learned and practiced over time to create an experience that is standardized (Wood & Muñoz, 2007, p. 243). It is from these standardized experiences that the public visiting these sites gets a sense of culture potentially within a very different culture meaning the patron may not get the true, authentic experience of that place (Wood & Muñoz, 2007, p. 243). While many patrons visit Outback Steakhouse, to borrow Muñoz and Wood’s (2009) example, and understand it as an “idealized and orchestrated portrayal” of Australia, there are others that see Outback as a truly authentic and real representation of Australia (Wood & Muñoz, 2007, p. 243). The theming of restaurants is “significantly visual” as the businesses’ “reality engineers” strategically construct environments that evoke certain feelings from the patrons (Wood & Muñoz, 2007, p. 243; Muñoz & Wood, 2009, p. 270). Muñoz and Wood (2009) continue stating, “when selecting design atmospheric and aesthetic cues, reality engineers rely heavily on socially constructed, yet often inaccurate themes offered by destination image formation agents” (Muñoz & Wood, 2009, p. 270).

Accurate or not, these places rely on objects to create the themes and thus the place. As placelessness is generally defined as a place lacking distinguishing features, the use of such standardized symbols to create themed areas, such as koalas and kangaroos in Australian themed restaurants, leads to themed establishments that, when looked at broadly, can be considered placeless. Assuming these areas are located outside the



culture they represent, these places stand out from the surrounding restaurants and stores, which would allow them to be considered distinctively placefull, yet their homogenous presentation makes them also essentially placeless, a critical paradox.

## METHODS

This research aims to increase understanding of how Cracker Barrel creates a sense of place while simultaneously existing as a placeless place through a visual, semiotic analysis of user-generated Yelp images, following the framework established by DeBres and Sowers (2009). Cracker Barrel Old Country Store is a unique, company-owned and operated restaurant chain with locations on interstates across the country that aim to be the patron's "home-away-from-home" ("Frequently Asked Questions," n.d). Each location features a large front porch with rocking chairs and checkers, a general store with hosts of old-fashioned candy and soda, homeware, and other products designed to take the visitor back in time, and a restaurant serving traditional Southern home-style meals and decorated floor to ceiling with antique artifacts (See Figure 1). The original Cracker Barrel still exists in Lebanon, TN and was established in 1969. As popularity grew the company expanded, primarily in the Southeast, but as of 2019 has 658 stores in 45 states.



Yuma, Arizona

Figure 1. *Yuma, Arizona Cracker Barrel*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The image on the left highlights the dining area of the Yuma, Arizona Cracker Barrel and the image of the right show the outside of the same store. Almost all Cracker Barrels look nearly identical to this location. Sources (left to right): L, C. *Restaurant Overview*. Yelp!, 29 Jan. 2016, s3-media4.fl.yelpcdn.com/bphoto/iC3hiD-yV3Spf9VuDUPQMQ/o.jpg; C., Chris. *Exterior*. Yelp! 15 March 2010, s3-media2.fl.yelpcdn.com/bphoto/UwTgrP4Xr-iwY9UCAK7iyw/o.jpg

As a restaurant and store chain with a national presence, Cracker Barrel markets itself as a nostalgic experience of days gone by and as a home-away-from-home for weary, interstate travelers. In this way, Cracker Barrel stores present an intersection between placefulness, placelessness, and theming that provides a robust landscape for researchers to explore. Their goal of domestic placemaking, as defined above by Korusiewicz (2015), is however only realized by those visitors for whom this old timey country store culture is familiar whether that be because the store is located in an area where this culture presides or that these visitors stop in at a store elsewhere in the country.

This research utilizes a visual methodology examining user-generated Yelp! photos and captions from Cracker Barrels across the country. The study's intent was to identify those elements that do not vary with geography as well as those that do. This research will also examine how these specific elements work together to create the placefulness found at the stores. The authors used a stratified random sample of locations, selecting one store at random from the 43 states where Cracker Barrel had a location at the time this research was carried out. After selecting the stores, we downloaded all of the Yelp! user-generated images for each store, excluding those images which depicted food since the menu is uniform from store to store. Yelp! provided one common place from which to view each store in the study as well as a customer perspective rather than company generated images. These images allowed the authors to view the Cracker Barrel experience from the customer perspective. Once all of the 746 images were downloaded and stored, they were coded and analyzed using Google Sheets.

Semiotic analysis, following the model of Rose (2016), was used to explore how Cracker Barrel attempts to create a sense of place while simultaneously existing as a placeless place by identifying and analyzing the signs in the restaurants that create both the placefulness and placelessness of Cracker Barrel. Semiotic analysis, put simply, is the "study of signs" (Crang, 2005; Rose, 2016) based upon the work by Ferdinand de Saussure. In semiotic studies such as this, "there is no concern... to find images that are statistically representative of a wider set of images... as there is in content analysis" (Rose 2016, p. 110). Rather, semiological investigations are often "detailed case studies of relatively few images" (Rose 2016, p. 110). Saussure (1998) explored how language is more than simply combinations of sounds and letters but represents deeper ideas of shared meaning. This conceptualization provides a

foundation for visual studies of semiology, similarly examining how images can convey deeper “signified meanings” (Rose 2016, p. 114).

Semiotic analysis is an approach utilized in a number of disciplines, particularly tourism studies (see Echtner, 1999; Mehmetoglu & Dann, 2002; Pennington & Thomsen, 2010; Lau, 2011; Knudsen & Rickly-Boyd, 2012; Lau, 2014; Song & Jeon, 2018 and cultural studies (see Williamson, 1978). For geographers examining tourism and hospitality, a semiotic approach to visual analysis can provide exceptional insight into the impact of visual cues both in print media and in the environment around us. DeBres and Sowers (2009, p. 220), for example, used a combination of content and semiotic analysis to investigate “how denotative signs were manipulated to present a connotative sign to the viewer” in a study of 140 main street post cards. Applying their approach to this study, at Cracker Barrel, denotative signs are the artifacts on the walls and the old oil lamps on the tables while the connotative signs are the homeiness and time period that these artifacts work together to create. A key here is the interplay between the signs as “signs derive their meaning from other signs and from the wider system of signs” present (Cragg, 2005, p. 277). A shovel, for example, means something different when in a tool shed than it does on the wall of a Cracker Barrel aside many other artifacts of rural 19th century America. DeBres and Sowers (2009) make the point as well that the meaning of connotative signs varies geographically as mentioned above but also by culture; they continue stating that “within a particular culture, [connotative signs] can be used repeatedly to sell and reaffirm a society’s core myths and ideals” (DeBres & Sowers, 2009, p. 220) which is just how Cracker Barrel uses them. The use of semiotic analysis, which provides a more in-depth look at the interaction of the specific signs, provides a useful approach to investigating the paradox of placefulness/placelessness in Cracker Barrel restaurants.

## RESULTS

The deliberate use of artifacts creates a sense of place that make Cracker Barrel both placeless and placefull, and this is readily apparent through an analysis of customer images of these sites. The stores all varied in the number of images posted on Yelp! with some stores having over 80 pictures of the store, not including any pictures of food, and others having less than 10. Most images (50%) depict the inside of Cracker Barrel’s restaurant area, with others showing the outside areas (26%) or the general store (24%). Overall, the analysis of the images reveals both

explicit and implicit details regarding how consumers experience, and document their experience, of Cracker Barrel locations.

When analyzing consumer images, it is clear that very little changes from one Cracker Barrel to the next (See Figure 2). Many of the stores and much of the design remains virtually unchanged, despite a few minor differences. Placelessness, as explained in the literature review, is the result of the “eradication of distinct landscapes” (Relph, 1976, Preface), the lack of connectedness to a place whether personally or physically (Harner & Kinder, 2011, p. 751), and results in everywhere looking like everywhere else (Harner & Kinder, 2011, p. 752). Cracker Barrels, while distinctly different than most of their surroundings, exist virtually unchanged place to place regardless of their geographic location.



Figure 2. *Similarities in Cracker Barrel's Interior Design*<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Cracker Barrel restaurants are remarkably similar across the country. The upper left image shows the Milford, Connecticut store, the upper right shows the Okemos, Michigan store, the bottom left show the Stevensville, Maryland store, and the bottom right shows the Madison, Wisconsin store. Each shows the very similar wall decor, same furniture, and oil lamps. *Sources* (clockwise starting with Milford, CT): C., Jose. *Interior*. Yelp! 30 June 2015, s3-media4.fl.yelpcdn.com/bphoto/Ui32EndXjS8BeNQMLqu9vA/o.jpg; H., Richard. *Interior*. Yelp!, 31 Aug. 2014, s3-media3.fl.yelpcdn.com/bphoto/zHcMHZc\_kYLC\_bYiIWuBMw/o.jpg; L., Jessica. *Interior*. Yelp!, 29 July 2014, s3-media3.fl.yelpcdn.com/bphoto/EGNFrjUZOL64gggGt6qt8A/o.jpg; M., Bill. *Interior*. Yelp!, 28 Sept. 2012, s3-media2.fl.yelpcdn.com/bphoto/I0wntwBNTtBzCV2VClIEQ/o.jpg

It is clear from the image analysis, and from Cracker Barrel's own website ("Bringing the Cracker Barrel," n.d), that every Cracker Barrel adheres to the same basic building design with only limited changes in seasonal decor, such as flags for the Fourth of July or fall pumpkins. Every Cracker Barrel also has a prominent, stone fireplace at the front of the restaurant with a deer head and rifle above it ("Bringing the Cracker Barrel," n.d). There are always old portraits, clocks, household items, china, or other homely artifacts on the mantle and walls devoid of any reference to a specific geographic location. Snow shoes, for instance, while not surprisingly an item featured in New Hampshire locations, were also present in South Carolina. The dining areas, too, vary very little; Figure 2 highlights this. The tables, chairs, flooring, walls, paint colors, and lamps are uniform. Patron's comments reflect this as well with one Yelp! user from New Mexico captioning their image of a table setting, "Typical Interior" (6/14/14). Another user from Arizona commented, "wouldn't be Cracker Barrel without this on the table" (9/20/16) in reference to the infamous peg game and old oil lamps on the table. It is this uniformity that contributes to a sense of placelessness within Cracker Barrel restaurants that is clearly apparent in guest images.

While the uniform nature of Cracker Barrel is a defining feature, there are minor differences that were apparent in the image analysis, most notably, the vegetation surrounding each location, the inclusion of team apparel in the general store, and a more modern design used in new restaurants. Not surprisingly, the vegetation outside the store is unique to the store's geographic location given variations in soil type and climate. The stores in Florida and South Carolina, for example, have palm trees while the Arizona stores feature cacti and the stores on the east coast have small shrubs or crepe myrtles. Placelessness, it seems, is easier to create indoors.

A second element that changes from store to store are the sports team's gear that is sold in each general store. While other elements of the "general store" remain standard, such as old fashioned candy and soda as well as home decor products, the sports apparel sold differs based on location. However, sports apparel was rarely photographed. Three states, Minnesota, Virginia, and Tennessee, are the only stores within the study where users took and posted images focused on the sport's apparel of the Vikings, Virginia Tech, and the University of Tennessee, respectively. If by no other way, it may be possible for patrons to locate themselves geographically by determining the sport's team represented in the specific Cracker Barrel.



Figure 3. Las Vegas, Nevada Cracker Barrel<sup>4</sup>

A final anomaly was a new style of Cracker Barrel that is present at the newest stores. This new model closely resembles the standard and well known Cracker Barrel look, but it has a few modern twists (See Figure 3). The first store that utilizes the new model is located in Morganton, North Carolina and opened June 22, 2105 (“Cracker Barrel Opens”, 2015). All fourteen stores built since then follow this new model according to follow-up image analysis using Yelp! As evident from Figure 3, the changes include a new wall color, a new way to divide the restaurant, new furniture and flooring, a slight change to the exterior of the building, and changes to the fireplace, which now extrudes from the wall out into the restaurant itself more. These changes, while quite

<sup>4</sup> These images show the new design model for new Cracker Barrels as of 2015. All of these images are from the North Las Vegas, Nevada location. (A) shows the new dividers that replaced the lattice work of the old model, (B) shows a slightly different shape to the store facade, (C) shows the restaurant overview with the new furniture and floors, and (D) shows how the fireplace is now extruded into the restaurant. Sources (A-D): A., Rob. *New Model*. Yelp!, 11 May 2017, s3-media1.fl.yelpcdn.com/bphoto/3kN31NetRMZQaCibXvR51g/o.jpg; M. Michael. *New Model*. Yelp!, 26 Oct. 2016, s3-media4.fl.yelpcdn.com/bphoto/ZEljZ-mawaXuCrC3xx8OAA/o.jpg; P., Jessica. *New Model*. Yelp!, 9 Jan. 2017, s3-media3.fl.yelpcdn.com/bphoto/ZdW\_NGOKWIC986-nE7JIw/o.jpg; P., Jessica. *New Model*. Yelp!, 9 Jan. 2017, s3-media1.fl.yelpcdn.com/bphoto/0gx1aKaI7RcVzdjK4oPhRA/o.jpg.

obvious, are not so far removed from the original design that the store is unrecognizable. The “must haves” such as the deer head and rifle above the mantle are included in the new design.

### ON CREATING A SENSE OF PLACE

Cracker Barrel is simultaneously placeless and placefull, existing on the one hand as a uniform restaurant and store that changes little based on geographic location and yet connects with visitors through nostalgic reminders of home. This relative uniformity is intentional, according to the Cracker Barrel website. Cracker Barrel was originally envisioned to fulfill an unmet need for people traveling on the ever expanding highway system (“Frequently Asked Questions,” n.d). The hope was to create a place where people could “stretch their legs, refuel, eat a consistently good meal at a good price” (“Frequently Asked Questions,” n.d). The founder, Dan Evins wanted to create “a place that preserved the ingredients of country life to share with travelers on the road and families from nearby” (“Frequently Asked Questions,” n.d). The two key elements in this statement are the sense of place he hoped to create and his intended audience.

Further, the Cracker Barrel website notes: “Our brand is about being a home-away-from-home for everyone we welcome to our table. In some ways, it’s about coming home to the charm of a simpler time and place” (“Frequently Asked Questions,” n.d). It is clear that this is the sense of place Cracker Barrel works tirelessly to create. The other element in the founder’s goal is to be a place for both locals and travelers. As Figure 4 shows, 518 Cracker Barrels of 637 total locations on the map are within 1.5 miles of an interstate highway for this exact reason. This creates a challenge, however, when trying to design and decorate a store that fosters personal connections with all the patrons yet also highlights the local area. The items that create a feeling of “home” vary at least to some extent across the country (Fowler & Lipscomb, 2010, p. 107), and thus Cracker Barrel stores contain a myriad of “homey” items to appeal to both locals and travelers, including snowshoes on the wall of the North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina store.

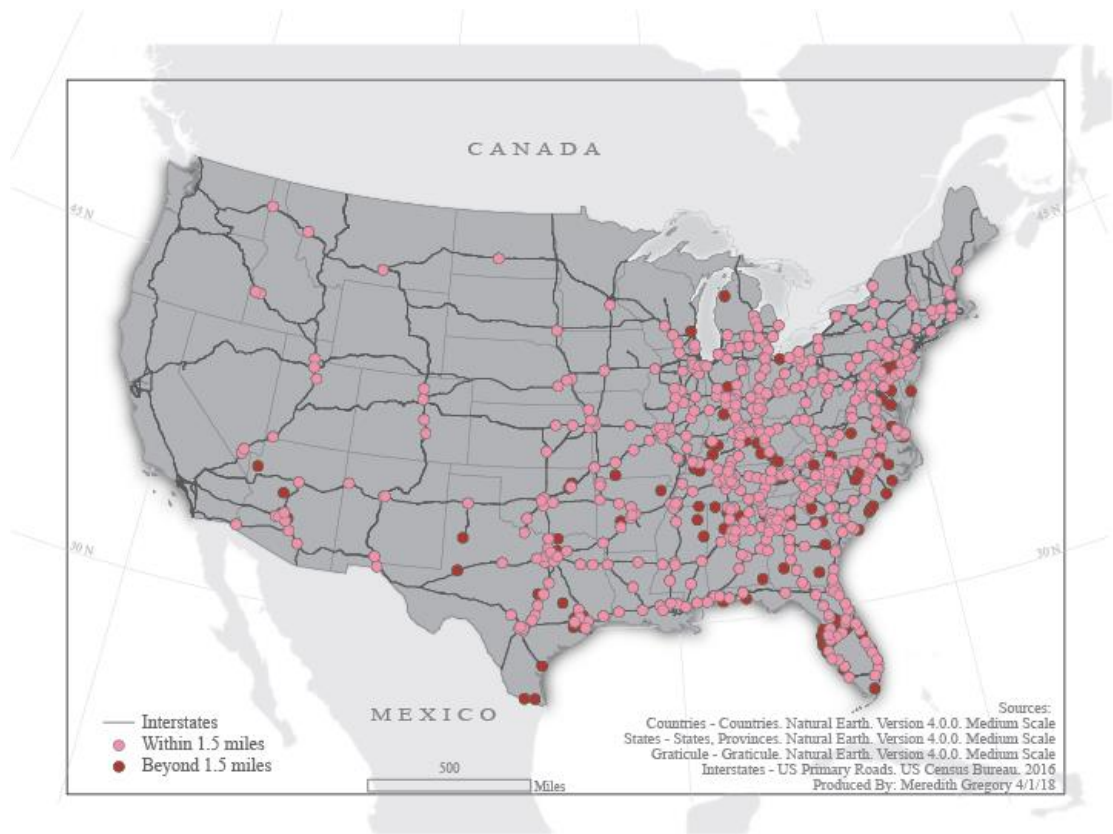


Figure 4. *Map of Cracker Barrel Locations and Interstates, United States*<sup>5</sup>

It is here that the tension lies between placefulness and placelessness. The Cracker Barrel website states in relation to the visitor experience, “maintaining that experience throughout our over 600 locations requires a commitment to consistency and relentless repetition” (“Frequently Asked Questions,” n.d). Like any brand, Cracker Barrel wants their stores to be nationally recognizable, yet Cracker Barrel claims to also add a local twist to each store. In a news release, they state, “Each Cracker Barrel location is uniquely decorated with real American artifacts, memorabilia and signage curated by a team of experts. The walls of Cracker Barrel stores reflect the nation’s rich history and by tailoring elements to the local community, offer a homespun appeal for local residents.” (“Cracker Barrel Old Country,” 2016). Regarding the Las Vegas, Nevada store, for example, Cracker Barrel states that “guests will see localized pieces that pay homage to the Old West, the Hoover Dam,

<sup>5</sup> This map highlights those Cracker Barrels that are directly off the primary interstates in the United States. 518 of the 637 Cracker Barrels on this map are located directly off (within 1.5 miles) interstate exits. The others are on other major secondary roads. *Source:* Authors’ own elaboration.



the circus, and recreation on Lake Mead" ("Cracker Barrel Old Country," 2016). Even after reviewing the images again, specifically looking for these items, the items that Cracker Barrel claimed to include in their attempt to "localize" the location are not identifiable. With the exception of sports gear and vegetation, the notion of local distinctiveness was not apparent in the analyzed photographs. This is not to say that local geography is completely absent from Cracker Barrel stores, but simply that visitors to Cracker Barrel did not notice, or were not prompted to post photographs, of distinctive local elements.

Although Cracker Barrel is an essentially placeless establishment in that very little changes store to store, this does not stop it from being incredibly placefull. Rather, it speaks to a tension between maintaining a national brand that is easily recognized from the side of the road and providing a consistent experience for visitors, while at the same time cultivating a distinctive sense of home and comfort that keeps these same visitors coming back. Theming plays a key role in creating this sense of both place and placelessness. Wood and Muñoz (2007, p. 243) write, "themed environments seem to flourish by giving a very expected, standardised, and controlled environment" effectively connecting theming and placelessness and providing a basis from which to work out this paradox. Theming creates both standardized experiences and placefullness thus proving that it is not a one or the other - placelessness or placefullness - situation, but that it is the interaction between them that has provided Cracker Barrel with so much success.

For Cracker Barrel's customers, the themed experience begins immediately when stepping onto the large front porch. The porch shape is an iconic design often seen in "Old West" towns and the rocking chairs are a quintessential element of a rural America. While these elements, along with many other features included in the Cracker Barrel design, may not be historically accurate of country stores, Muñoz and Wood (2009, p. 270) highlight that, "when selecting design atmospheric and aesthetic cues, reality engineers rely heavily on socially constructed, yet often inaccurate themes". Along with rocking chairs, the front porches are adorned with old product signs, farm equipment, and barrels. Each Cracker Barrel has a checkers set and a wooden church pew bench as well. All of these elements work together to create the sense of place that is Cracker Barrel.

Within the general store and restaurant, again theming is used throughout to generate a distinct sense of time and place. Every Cracker Barrel, for instance, has various artifacts hanging from the ceiling

including old Radio Flyer red wagons, wagon wheels, old buckets, shovels and sledge hammers, and parts of a horse harness, just to name a few. The four major elements of the restaurant that create a sense of place are the artifacts on the walls, the fireplace, the table settings, and the food. The fireplace in every store is positioned just through the entrance to the restaurant from the “general store.” It is a focal point of both the restaurant and Yelp! user comments as 21 images had comments about the fireplace. While this number seems low it is one of the top subjects within the comments. Cracker Barrel not only has them for aesthetics but they use it as a supplementary heat source in the winter. Each table has an old oil lamp and the infamous peg game, with one visitor commenting on a picture of the table setting: “Old timer oil lamp (my grandma had these around the house growing up),” revealing not only the generation who used these but also how this particular patron connected to the decor. Finally, the menu is the same at every location across the country and features items such as Country Fried Steak, Mama’s Pancake Breakfast, and Chicken n’ Dumplins. The combination of all of these signs together point back and reference this specific time and place in history. If there is any item that someone might consider representative in any way of rural 19th century America, it is highly likely to be hanging on the walls of a Cracker Barrel. In fact, 219 images of the 746 total include the wall decor to some extent. Not every Cracker Barrel has the same set of artifacts, but what variation does exist is minimal. None of these artifacts alone represent all of rural 19th century America, but together create a strong sense of place.

With such a large variety of objects, Cracker Barrel’s hope is that no matter who walks through the doors, there is at least one if not many, many artifacts that they have a deeper connection with. Cracker Barrel uses these artifacts and other design choices together to create a very overt sense of rural 19th century America. Other than “Cracker Barrel” the next most used word in the comments section of these photos was “country.” This alone is proof that Cracker Barrel is successful at creating this particular sense of place. Other comments such as, “Just like down South in my hometown, North Carolina!” on an image taken at the North Las Vegas, Nevada Cracker Barrel and “Nostalgic place, nice country down to earth place. Just like Mom makes it” both put this sense of place into words. While one key way to create a place is through the physical elements that construct it, it is the “ability [of the physical features] to translate an external phenomenon and link it to internal experience or

cultural beliefs” (DeLyser, 1999, p. 608) that forms these autobiographical connections that keep visitors coming back.

The appearance and aesthetics of Cracker Barrel are carefully cultivated. Cracker Barrel owns a warehouse where “reality engineers” curate and store artifacts from across the country so that when another Cracker Barrel opens, they can package up the desired sense of place and ship it off to wherever the new store is located (“Bringing the Cracker Barrel,” n.d). Not only are the aesthetics standardized but the experience is as well. Cracker Barrel acknowledges this on their website, “Our success ultimately depends on our store employees providing excellent food, friendly service and quality merchandise in a warm and inviting atmosphere – all on a daily basis” (“Frequently Asked Questions,” n.d). This formula of standardization to experience, convenience in location, and speed of service, has served Cracker Barrel well in its almost 50-year history.

Studies on theming are often an assessment of authenticity (Wood & Muñoz, 2007; Muñoz & Wood, 2009). This study, instead, uses theming to understand how Cracker Barrel creates the sense of place that is so present in each store. If places are the features of a location that differentiate that space from another as well as the emotional connections people have with a space, then successful theming is essentially an attempt to engineer the former - the features of a location - in the hopes that an emotional connection will follow. Cracker Barrel relies on the specifically selected artifacts and other visual elements of the stores to elicit a feeling of “homeiness.” Creating a sense of home is a continual and ever evolving process, however (Fowler & Lipscomb, 2010; Phillips et al., 2011). So how then - and why - does Cracker Barrel create a “home-away-from-home” when it seems almost impossible, as everyone’s sense of home is different and ever evolving. Cracker Barrel uses their uniformity and placelessness in their favor because once a patron has been to one Cracker Barrel they have essentially been to all of them. Consistency is not the only requirement to engineer a sense of home, however. Theming and the careful selection of artifacts reinforce a patron’s nostalgic feelings and help visitors label their feelings of consistency and nostalgia as “home.” Cracker Barrel includes memorabilia and decorative items from all areas of life, including fishing poles, irons, and portraits, hoping everyone who walks through the door will connect to at least one of these items as reminiscent of something from their parents’ or grandparents’ homes. Cracker Barrel also relies on the socially constructed theme of country living as being naturally homey so that even those who have never, for

example, left the heart of New York City might walk into a Cracker Barrel and feel at home. Thus, even without local flair, Cracker Barrel is still able to consistently create a sense of place.

## CONCLUSION

Aesthetics is the primary actor in physical place-making; the place must have something distinct about it so its identity is obvious to those interacting with it. Those involved with creating themed places arguably understand this better than anyone else. With themed locations, it is the ethnic art, decor, music, external façade, name, and various stereotyped signals' that are used to create a sense of place. Successful theming, and thus placefull places, relies on not just one of these but all of these working together. Cracker Barrel, as revealed by the image analysis, does just this, creating a place with the look and feel of a 19th century country store.

Cracker Barrel's meticulous use of artifacts to craft the placefulness that overflows from the stores, creates such a strong sense of place that even their shortcomings in incorporating local culture, which leads to the essential placelessness of the brand, do not in any way detract from the sense of place visitors feel as soon as they pull into the parking lot. Placelessness, an attribute often used to describe the unremarkable strip malls and office parks of the world, in this case is the exact feature that creates the ultimate placefulness that travelers and locals alike come in waves to experience because it is this standardization of experiences that creates reliability, familiarity, and ease - all elements of a happy home.

## REFERENCES

- Bringing the Cracker Barrel Look to Life* (n.d.). Cracker Barrel. Retrieved February 6, 2019, from <https://crackerbarrel.com/about/bringing-the-cracker-barrel-look-to-life>
- Cracker Barrel Old Country Store® Opens New Store in North Las Vegas, Nevada*. (2016). Cracker Barrel. Retrieved April 2, 2018, from <https://crackerbarrel.com/newsroom/news-releases/2016/oct/north-las-vegas-opening>
- Cracker Barrel Opens New Store in Morganton*. (2015). Cracker Barrel. Retrieved April 2, 2018, from <https://crackerbarrel.com/newsroom/news-releases/2015/jul/cracker-barrel-opens-new-store-in-morganton>
- Crang, M. (2005). Analysing qualitative materials. In R. Flowerdew & D. Martin (Eds.), *Methods in Human Geography: A Guide for Students Doing a Research Project* (pp. 218-232). New York: Pearson Education Limited.
- Csurgó, B., & Megyesi, B. (2016). The role of small towns in local place making. *European Countryside*, 8(4), 427-443. <https://doi.org/10.1515/euco-2016-0029>

- Cuba, L., & Hummon, D. M. (1993). Constructing a sense of home: place affiliation and migration across the life cycle. *Sociological Forum*, 8(4), 547-572. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF01115211>.
- DeLyser, D. (1999). Authenticity on the ground: Engaging the past in a California ghost town. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 89(4), 602-632.
- DeBres, K., & Sowers, J. (2009). The emergence of standardized, idealized, and placeless landscapes in Midwestern main street postcards. *The Professional Geographer*, 61(2), 216-230. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00330120902736062>.
- Echtner, C. M. (1999). The semiotic paradigm: Implications for tourism research. *Tourism management*, 20(1), 47-57.
- Frequently Asked Questions (n.d.). Cracker Barrel. Retrieved April 2, 2018, from <https://crackerbarrel.com/connect/faqs>.
- Fowler, A. R., & Lipscomb, C. A. (2010). Building a sense of home in rented spaces. *International Journal of Housing Markets and Analysis*, 3(2), 100-118.
- Goss, J. (1992). Modernity and postmodernity in the retail landscape. In K. Anderson & F. Gale (Eds.), *Inventing Places: Studies in Cultural Geography* (pp. 159-177). Melbourne: Longman Cheshire Pty Limited.
- Harner, J., & Kinder, F. (2011). Placelessness in a deregulated city: University Village in Colorado Springs. *Urban Geography*, 32(5), 730-755. <https://doi.org/10.2747/0272-3638.32.5.730>
- Hough, M. (1990). *Out of Place; Restoring Identity to the Regional Landscape*. West Hanover, Massachusetts: Yale University Press.
- Korusiewicz, M. (2015). Places in placelessness - notes on the aesthetic and strategies of place-making. *Argument Biannual Philosophical Journal*, 5(February), 399-413.
- Knudsen, D. C., & Rickly-Boyd, J. M. (2012). Tourism sites as semiotic signs: A critique. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(2), 1252-1254.
- Lau, R. W. (2011). Tourist sights as semiotic signs: A critical commentary. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 38(2), 711-714.
- Lau, R. W. (2014). Semiotics, objectivism and tourism: An anti-critique. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 44, 283-284.
- Mehmetoglu, M., & Dann, G. (2002). Atlas/ti and content/semiotic analysis in tourism research. *Tourism Analysis*, 8(1), 1-13.
- Muñoz, C. L., & Wood, N. T. (2009). A recipe for success: Understanding regional perceptions of authenticity in themed restaurants. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism, and Hospitality Research*, 3(3), 269-280. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17506180910980564>.
- Nelson, V. (2017). *An Introduction to the Geography of Tourism*. London: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Pennington, J. W., & Thomsen, R. C. (2010). A semiotic model of destination representations applied to cultural and heritage tourism marketing. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 10(1), 33-53.
- Phillips, J., Walford, N., & Hockey, A. (2011). How do unfamiliar environments convey meaning to older people? Urban dimensions of placelessness and attachment. *International Journal of Ageing and Later Life*, 6(2), 73-102.
- Relph, E. (1976). *Place and Placelessness*. London: Pion.
- Relph, E. (1981). *Rational Landscapes and Humanistic Geography*. Totowa: Barnes and Noble Books.
- Rose, G. (2016). *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Materials*. London: Sage Publications.

- Saussure, F. (1998). Nature of the linguistic sign. In D. H. Richter (Ed.), *The Critical Tradition: Classic Texts and Contemporary Trends* (pp. 832-835). Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's Press.
- Shao, Y., & Lui, B. (2017). Place attachment assessment system in contemporary urbanism. *Procedia Engineering*, (198), 152-168. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.proeng.2017.07.079>.
- Song, C. M., & Jeon, H. Y. (2018). A semiotic study of regional branding reflected in the slogans of Korean regions. *Social Semiotics*, 28(2), 230-256.
- Tuan, Y. (1977). *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Williamson, J. (1978). *Decoding Advertisements: Ideology and Meaning in Advertising*. London: Marion Boyers.
- Wood, N. T., & Muñoz, C. L. (2007). 'No rules, just right' or is it? The role of themed restaurants as cultural ambassadors. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 7(3/4), 242-255. <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.thr.6050047>.
- Zelinsky, W. (2011). *Not yet a Placeless Land: Tracking an Evolving American Geography*. Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts.
- Zimmerbauer, K. (2011). From image to identity: Building regions by place promotion. *European Planning Studies*, 19(2), 243-260. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09654313.2011.532667>.

## THANKS TO REVIEWERS

The editors of Advances in Hospitality and Tourism Research (AHTR) would like to thank the reviewers who have contributed to the success of the journal. We recognize the scholars who have completed reviews in 2019 and we appreciate their valuable time and effort to review the papers for AHTR.

Abdelkader Ababneh, *Yarmouk University, Jordan*  
Abdulnasser Hatemi-J, *UAE University, UAE*  
Ahmed Baiomy, *Helwan University, Egypt*  
Amy Siu Ian So, *University of Macau, China*  
Andrea Mervar, *The Institute of Economics, Croatia*  
Bahattin Özdemir, *Akdeniz University, Turkey*  
Brendan Chen, *National Chin-Yi University of Technology, Taiwan*  
Celil Çakıcı, *Mersin University, Turkey*  
Çağıl Hale Özel, *Anadolu University, Turkey*  
Edin Güçlü Sözer, *İstanbul Okan University, Turkey*  
Edina Ajanovic, *Akdeniz University, Turkey*  
Emrullah Erul, *Texas A&M University, USA*  
Erdoğan Öztürk, *Karabuk University, Turkey*  
Evinc Dogan, *Akdeniz University, Turkey*  
Fatih Kaplan, *Tarsus University, Turkey*  
Faruk Seyitoğlu, *Mardin Artuklu University, Turkey*  
Georgiana Karadaş, *Cyprus International University, Northern Cyprus*  
Giampaolo Viglia, *University of Portsmouth, UK*  
Gürkan Akdağ, *Mersin University, Turkey*  
Hakan Yılmaz, *Anadolu University, Turkey*  
Hafizur Rahaman, *Curtin University, Australia*  
Hasan Gül, *Adana Science and Technology University, Turkey*  
Hilal Erkuş Öztürk, *Akdeniz University, Turkey*  
I-yin Yen, *I-Shou University, Taiwan*  
İlhan Günbayı, *Akdeniz University, Turkey*  
Kemal Birdir, *Mersin University, Turkey*  
Mamoon Allan, *University of Jordan, Jordan*  
Maria D. Alvarez, *Bogazici University, Turkey*  
Medet Yolal, *Anadolu University, Turkey*  
Mehmet Mehmetoglu, *Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway*  
Michele F. Fontefrancesco, *The University of Gastronomic Sciences, Italy*  
Mike Tsionas, *Lancaster University, UK*  
Mohammad Reza Fathi, *University of Tehran, Iran*  
Monika Bandi-Tanner, *University of Bern, Switzerland*  
Muhittin Cavusoglu, *University of South Florida, USA*  
Murat Çuhadar, *Suleyman Demirel University, Turkey*

---

Murat Yeşiltaş, *Burdur Mehmet Akif Ersoy University, Turkey*  
Mustafa Çoban, *Akdeniz University, Turkey*  
Mustafa Tepeci, *Manisa Celal Bayar University, Turkey*  
Nuray Türker, *Karabuk University, Turkey*  
Oguz Nebioğlu, *Akdeniz University, Turkey*  
Osman Çalışkan, *Akdeniz University, Turkey*  
Osman Çulha, *Alanya Alaaddin Keykubat University, Turkey*  
Oswin Maurer, *Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Italy*  
Rick Rollins, *Vancouver Island University, Canada*  
Rob Hallak, *University of South Australia, Australia*  
Samson Omuudu Otengi, *Makerere University, Uganda*  
Satish Chandra Bagri, *HNB Garhwal University, India*  
Sarfaraz Hashemkhani Zolfani, *Amirkabir University of Technology, Iran*  
Susana Rachão, *University of Aveiro, Portugal*  
Tetsuo Shimizu, *Tokyo Metropolitan University, Japan*  
Vanchai Ariyabuddhiphongs, *Siam University, Thailand*  
Vanessa Wijngaarden, *University of Johannesburg, South Africa*  
Vedat İyitoğlu, *Akdeniz University, Turkey*  
William Cannon Hunter, *Kyung Hee University, South Korea*  
Wiston Risso, *Universidad de la República de Uruguay, Uruguay*  
Yang-Su Chen, *University of Nevada-Las Vegas, USA*  
Yang Woon Chung, *University of Suwon, South Korea*  
Yesim Helhel, *Akdeniz University, Turkey*  
Yıldırım Yılmaz, *Akdeniz University, Turkey*



## **JOURNAL AIMS AND SCOPE**

AHTR aims at initiating and stimulating advances in hospitality and tourism research. Therefore, it publishes papers that promote new ideas, models, approaches and paradigms by contributing to the advances in knowledge and theory of hospitality and tourism.

The journal covers applied research studies and review articles, both in a format of full-length article and research notes. Applied research studies are expected to examine relationships among variables relevant to hospitality and tourism by employing appropriate analytical or statistical techniques. High quality review articles that address latest advances and develop theoretical knowledge or thinking about key aspects of hospitality and tourism are accepted. Research notes are short articles that report advances in methodology, exploratory research findings or extensions/discussions of prior research. AHTR will also welcome commentary in response to published articles.

All papers are subject to double blind peer review process based on an initial screening by the editor criteria for evaluation include significant contribution to the field, conceptual quality, appropriate methodology and clarity of exposition.

As a forum for advancing the research in hospitality and tourism field, the journal encompasses many aspects within the hospitality and tourism including but not limited to;

- Hospitality and Tourism Management
- Information Systems and Technology
- Global Issues and Cultural Studies
- Innovations in Hospitality and Tourism
- Financial Management
- Marketing Management
- Developments of Conceptual Models and Constructs
- Future Trends in the Hospitality and Tourism
- Human Resources Management
- Operational Management
- Strategic Management
- National and International Legislation
- Restaurant Management
- Beverage Management
- Consumer Behavior

- The Relationship between Hospitality and Tourism
- Recreation Management
- Leisure Studies
- Hospitality and Tourism Education
- Travel and Transportation
- Tourist Guiding

## NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

### Submission

To submit a manuscript, please visit: <http://dergipark.gov.tr/ahtr>

Submissions should be uploaded with separate Microsoft Word type of files, respectively: (1) Title page, (2) Main Document and References. Manuscripts which are submitted to AHTR should not be submitted for the consideration of publication at the same time for another journal.

### Article Structure

Manuscripts should be written in English and not exceed 9,000 words. For research notes, length limit of the manuscript is 3,000 words.

Title page consists of the title of manuscript which is not more than ten words (in bold uppercase letters in Times News Roman 12 type size), author(s) name, present position, complete postal address, telephone/fax numbers and e-mail address of each author. Corresponding author and ordering of the author(s) should be indicated. Acknowledgements, if there are, can be cited here.

In the abstract, authors should in brief, but clear manner, state the main purpose of the research, the significant results obtained as well as conclusions they have derived from the study. It is essential for the abstract to be conceptualized in a manner that it provides an audience with a clear insight into the topic and main points of the manuscript. Abstract should be free of references (whenever possible) and English-spelling errors. Length of the abstract should not exceed 200 words.

After the abstract part, maximum 6 keywords should be provided. When deciding on the keywords authors should bear in mind that these would be used for indexing purposes.

Main Document starts with title of the manuscript (in bold all uppercase letters in Times News Roman 12 type size) and an abstract of maximum 150 words. The abstract should state briefly the purpose of the research,

the principal results and major conclusions. Right after the abstract a maximum of six keywords should be placed.

Major headings in the main document should be written in all uppercase letters and subheadings should be typed in bold upper and lowercase letters. Headings must be concise, with a clear indication of the distinction between the hierarchy of headings. Manuscripts should not contain any direct reference to the author or co-authors that will reveal author's identity. Information about authors should only be cited on the title page for the purpose of blind reviewing.

Tables and Figures should be embedded in the main text, and should be numbered and titled in a consistent manner. The positions of tables and figures, should be clearly stated in the main body. Footnotes to tables below the table body can be placed and indicated with superscript lowercase letters.

Acknowledgements should be included on the title page, as a footnote to the title or otherwise. Individuals who provided help during research should be listed here.

Footnotes should be kept to a minimum for the flow of the text. Thus, footnotes should not be used more than five. Footnotes should be numbered consecutively throughout the article. Many word processors build footnotes into the text, and this feature may be used. Footnotes should not be included in the Reference list.

Formatting: Writing style of the overall main document should be Times News Roman 12 type size. Manuscripts should be written double-spaced (including references). Keep the layout of the text as simple as possible. Most formatting codes will be removed and replaced on processing the article. Manuscripts should be spell checked and grammatically correct before final submission. Please include page numbers within your submission.

References should be presented in APA style. Authors should cite publications in the text: (Adams, 1965) using the first named author's name or (Chalip & Costa, 2012) citing both names of two, or (Chalip et al., 2012) when there are three or more authors. Each reference which is cited in the text should be also present in the reference list (and vice versa). For web references, as a minimum, the full URL should be given and the date

when the reference was last accessed. Any further information, if known (DOI, author names, dates, reference to a source publication, etc.), should also be given. Web references can be listed separately (e.g., after the reference list) under a different heading if desired, or can be included in the reference list. At the end of the paper a reference list in alphabetical order should be supplied:

Reference to a Journal Publication;

Higgins-Desbiolles, F. (2006). More than an 'industry': The forgotten power of tourism as a social force. *Tourism Management*, 27 (6), 1192-1208.

Shaw, G., Bailey, A., & Williams, A. M. (2011). Aspects of service-dominant logic and its implications for tourism management: Examples from the hotel industry. *Tourism Management*, 32, 207-214.

Reference to a book;

Kotler, P. (2006). *Marketing for hospitality and tourism*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Goldstone, P. (2001). *Making the world safe for tourism*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

For correct referencing through APA, below link can be advised for more information;

<http://supp.apa.org/style/PM6E-Corrected-Sample-Papers.pdf>

## Copyright

Author(s) should confirm the Copyright Contract and send it back to the e-mail address: [submission@ahtrjournal.org](mailto:submission@ahtrjournal.org). If their article is accepted for publication at AHTR, this process should be completed before its publication. By the contract, authors confirm that articles submitted to the journal have not been published before in their current or substantially similar form. All published articles are copyrighted by Akdeniz University, Faculty of Tourism.

## Publishing Ethics

Author(s) are expected to consider some ethical issues before, during and after their scientific works such as voluntariness, privacy, ethnic, racial

and cultural sensitivities of the survey participants and originality of the work. The authors should ensure that they have written entirely original works, and if the authors have used the work and/or words of others, that this has been appropriately cited or quoted. Plagiarism in all its forms constitutes unethical publishing behavior and is unacceptable.