

70. Culinary tourism – a growing trend in travel

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Introduction. In the last decade, there is emerging an exciting reason to travel. Often referred to as “culinary tourism”, this emerging interest in visiting destinations primarily to taste and experience different foods are rapidly growing in popularity.

Materials and methods. Common methods of culinary tourism coincide with the scientific research methods. Such methods as theoretical and empirical research.

Results. Ten years ago “culinary tourism” was viewed as a form of special interest tourism — a niche market that combined the best of travel with the enjoyment of discovering new foods and beverages. Within the last decade the definition of culinary or food tourism has evolved to include those people who travel almost exclusively to search for and enjoy prepared foods and drink.

This may include all unique and memorable gastronomic experiences, not just those promoted as a “must try this food” in destination marketing materials. The culinary tourist is happy sampling foods prepared by the vast variety of specialty food trucks that are multiplying across the world, the out of the way roadside stops, or tasting regional appetizers made at a local bar.

The World Food Travel Association is currently updating their research that was conducted five years ago to learn more about the culinary tourist. The 2016 research showed that Deliberate Culinary Tourists account for about 10% of community visitors (travel focused primarily on food and wine), while another 10% travel because food is important but not the only factor to the traveler.

Whatever their passion or wherever they travel in search of a culinary experience, the culinary tourist is returning benefits to the local community — from helping the local farmers, to creating new restaurants or dining experiences, overnight stays in local hotels, and at the same time educating visitors about the local cultures and the way of life. One of the biggest benefits is the development or expansion of local businesses, restaurants, guided driving or walking tours, and authentic experiences that are a result of their quest for an outstanding culinary experience. Travel is about collecting experiences and taking home memories of the destination they visited, so specific food experiences are very important for forming of tourism brand of country. A lot of successful tourism destinations, like France, Italy, Georgia, Thailand make their tourism brands “tasteful”, and it enhanced their tourism attractiveness and rise tourist flows.

Conclusions. Tourism has experienced widely growing to become one of the fastest increasing economic sectors in the world. With tourism individual carry over various cultural concepts of other cities or countries where they visit. Tourism can provide indirect employment to the community. It has also a social benefit that it can bring a real sense of pride and identity to communities and encourage the preservation of traditions.

References

1. Sharr Prohaska. ‘Food Tourism: Is This Travel?’ – 2017.