

Book Review

Food and Drink Tourism: Principles and Practices

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ABSTRACT

This book is a comprehensive overview of the rising interest in food and drink as it relates to travel and culinary engagement. Its visual appeal includes maps and high-quality photos detailing shipping ports and marketplaces and vendors around the world who sell street food. The author presents a multidisciplinary approach to this topic and bases the content on research-informed policy; agricultural-tourism data; and the economic, cultural, and business value of food. In the book was included a “working with food and drink tourism” call-out box to promote a guide on career choices for individuals in the field of food and drink hospitality. Each chapter ends with a summary, the main points of the chapter, and suggestions for further reading.

KEYWORDS

Drink Tourism, Food Tourism, Hotel, Travel

Food and Drink Tourism: Principles and Practices

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452 pp.

\$69.00

ISBN 9781446267738

INTRODUCTION

Food is a central part of our history, culture, and daily life. Much of our social lives are centered on the dining experience, and we are constantly seeking the newest and most exotic meals. As people become more aware of the culinary choices available around the world, they are willing to travel substantial distances to seek fresh experiences

and try diverse types of cuisine. When travelers eat at a tourist destination, they not only satisfy their hunger but also interact with their hosts to immerse themselves in that country, culturally and socially.

Research has shown that 93% of travelers create long-lasting, fond memories based on their experiences with an area's food and beverage (World Food Travel Association, 2017, para. 1). Food and drink tourism comprises one third of the total amount tourists spend, which has led to an explosion of culinary enterprises, schools, and travel opportunities (Everett, 2016). Food tourism can be defined as a "...visitation to primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants, and specific locations for food tasting, seeking new food production regions... and the primary motivating factor for travel..." (Hall, Sharples, Mitchell, Macionis, & Cambourne, 2011, p. 10).

People who are interested in a unique culinary experience travel with a specific agenda in mind. Robinson and Getz (2013) posited that food tourism is an emerging niche in the travel market and that there is a myriad of literature on the topic within the past decade. Because of the rising popularity of food and drink tourism, both from the academic and economic outlook, there is a growing body of literature on the topic (Robinson & Getz, 2013). The definition of cultural tourism, in which travelers seek out historic sites, museums, or concerts, suggests that these same individuals also consider cuisine, gastronomic experiences, and cooking experiences, such as classes, an integral part of their travel planning (Yun, Hennessey, & MacDonald, 2011).

REVIEW

This book is a comprehensive overview of the rising interest in food and drink as it relates to travel and culinary engagement. Its visual appeal includes maps and high-quality photos detailing shipping ports and marketplaces and vendors around the world who sell street food. The author presents a multidisciplinary approach to this topic and bases the content on research-informed policy; agricultural-tourism data; and the economic, cultural, and business value of food (Everett, 2016). Because this is a textbook, Everett (2016) has included a "working with food and drink tourism" callout box to promote a guide on career choices for individuals in the field of food and drink hospitality. Each chapter ends with a summary, the main points of the chapter, and suggestions for further reading.

The first chapter covers the concept of food and drink tourism with models of typologies adopted by travelers and an outline of the different kinds of tourism, including gastronomic, culinary, and special interest. Some countries use food to appeal to the country's tourist base and extend the length of the tourist season as well as to attract people who have never visited the area. The author details this concept with a drawing that illustrates how the different types of categories intersect with each other (Everett, 2016, p. 19).

The researcher cites the emergence of food travel in West Cork, Ireland, as an example of how the perception of regional food has changed with the development of

artisan's food, local sustainability, and the county's unique identity. A typologies graph cites research on and compares types of food vacationers, including the existential tourist who is willing to pay more for local food and has a higher level of education, and the recreational tourist who is less engaged and has a lower level of interest in unfamiliar foods (Everett, 2016, p. 8). The book also includes a chart overview of the growth of the food tourism industry in the European Union, globally, and in the United Kingdom, with a breakdown of percentages and data according to earnings indexes, GDP, and employment (Everett, 2016, p. 9). Everett (2016) fully covered the topic of the impact of food tourism in addressing global needs such as sustainability, local farms, and debt relief, even including a sobering statistic of the number of suicides in India by farmers in debt. In Croatia, increased tourism has helped communities and the agricultural sector develop rural farms, create new jobs, provide working skills to young adults, and increase political participation among residents. The author presents a case study in Rwanda that demonstrates how poor workers and food producers benefited from recommendations to boost food supply to hotels, partner with local tour operators, and educate farmers on increasing the quality of their production (Everett, 2016, p. 12).

Chapter 2 covers the history of culinary exploration and food tourism to give readers a context for better understanding the emergence of food tourism. In this chapter, Everett (2016) presented early writings on the topic and links food exploration to current thinking and trends. The concept of traveling to find food goes back more than 20,000 years, to the dawn of agricultural development (Everett, 2016, p. 14). The social habits of people combined with religious holidays and historical milestones have always been associated with food and drink. Medieval celebrations involved feast days, much as Jewish holidays involve feasting and fasting to this day. The discovery of new spices and exotic flavors were the goals of explorers, who traveled for purposes of importing and exporting. The book includes historical timelines for explorers such as Genghis Khan, Columbus, and John Cabot and recounts how their travels included the discovery of new foods that were brought back to their native countries, boosting the economy and increasing seaport traffic. She also presents a historical connection between the slave trade and the food trade.

Everett (2016) stated that food history is “an interdisciplinary field that examines the history of food and the cultural, economic, environmental, and sociological impacts of food” (p. 3). Everett used the historical context in this chapter to introduce information about choosing a career as a food anthropologist or food historian. She also included information on which degrees are needed to pursue this career and the opportunities available for travel and research. She concluded the chapter with an overview of the connection between the history of food exploration, agricultural development, the importance of trade, and how the emergence of travel allowed ordinary people—not just explorers—to discover new foods.

Chapter 3 investigates the connections among sociology with food tourism. This includes cultural studies, anthropology, and geography as it relates to traveling for food tourism. The foods we eat help define who we are and what we believe. The foods we

eat are a personal and cultural statement in that they are central to society (Everett, 2016, p. 6). Many of us have memories of our favorite foods from childhood, which, decades later, can bring us back to a specific place and time in our lives. Food tourism can preserve not only cultural practices related to food preparation and presentation but also the memories of the people involved in these practices. Everett (2016) used the example of how Scottish and Irish foods are specific to local regions and can be found in markets around the world, including the United States, in a separate section of the store, creating a unique identity for those cultural traditions. In this regard, food is a souvenir that helps to create memories and a connection to one's heritage. Sociologists refer to this as a "symbolic system," with food and drink becoming "impregnated with meanings" (Everett, 2016, p. 10).

Chapter 5 covers the globalization and localization of food and drink, defined as how businesses can have international influence. This relates to food tourism through agro-food research and the increasing presence of fast-food chains that cater to people's desire to get quick, tasteless food at a low cost anywhere in the world. The infiltration of certain ethnic foods into mainstream culture is addressed here, with connections to resistance in the United Kingdom and the United States through local protests. "McDonaldization" is an example of how more sectors of American culture are infiltrating other countries (Everett, 2016, p. 12). This infiltration has negatively impacted food tourism in that these restaurants can deflect from locally produced foods and small business food providers by providing tourists a cheap and recognizable meal. However, those people truly vested in food tourism will seek out new experiences rather than falling back on those foods they can get at home.

Food and Drink Tourism: Principles and Practice is a comprehensive textbook that includes an academic, historical, and cultural approach to the topic. The content is neatly organized from chapter to chapter, with summaries, objectives, photographs, charts, and maps. Some of the content from chapter to chapter is repetitive, and it may have made more sense to exclude chapter introductions because they are somewhat redundant when including the points at the end of the chapter. The writing style is technical in sections, using complex terminology that requires the reader to use a dictionary to comprehend the context of the words. In addition, the author provided, and cited from other sources, repeated definitions of food and drink tourism. Although one can appreciate the dissimilar viewpoints of the meaning, it was confusing to assimilate those definitions with what the author wanted to convey. It is possible that a particular definition of food and drink tourism, reiterated from chapter to chapter, could help readers better perceive the author's point of view.

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