

12 The Role and Challenges of Foodservice

After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

- Explain the role of foodservice in enhancing tourism experiences, destination identity, and cultural engagement.
- Evaluate the structural challenges facing the foodservice sector, including workforce precarity, supply chain vulnerabilities, and cultural commodification.
- Analyse how foodservice businesses have adapted to crises through innovation, localisation, and community-based strategies.
- Assess the importance of human resource management (HRM) in promoting workforce sustainability and organisational resilience within tourism foodservice.
- Apply principles of sustainable and inclusive HRM to propose strategies for improving staff recruitment, training, and retention in foodservice enterprises.

Introduction

This chapter will explore the central role of foodservice in building resilient and sustainable tourism destinations. It will begin by examining how foodservice, ranging from fine dining to street food, enhances tourist experiences, strengthens destination branding, and supports cultural preservation through authentic and immersive culinary encounters. This chapter will highlight the diversity of foodservice formats and their potential to empower communities, particularly through community-based tourism models. It will then address the sector's adaptive responses during crises, such as COVID-19, showcasing innovations in digitalisation, local sourcing, and service delivery. However, it will also examine structural challenges, including precarious employment,