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# Introduction

## Learning objectives

Readers are expected to learn the following from this chapter:

- Definitions of: food, foodie, food tourist, cuisine, gastronomy
- The scope and meaning of a foodie lifestyle
- Why food tourism is growing globally, and its importance to cities and destinations
- How foodies and food tourism fits into tourism, hospitality and food studies
- Sub categories of food tourism by type of food, cooking styles, cuisines, etc.
- How food and beverages are linked.

## Purpose and overview of the book

Food tourism has attracted significant scholarly attention over the past decade, and given that the proclivity of travellers for food experiences is projected to increase, this trend is likely to continue (*Culinary Tourism*, 2011). Indeed, all travellers and tourists must eat, therefore food is an important destination attribute. It is estimated that upwards of 25% of tourism expenditure is attributable to food products (Correia et al. 2008). More than this there is recognition of the importance of food and beverages in influencing how visitors perceive a destination (Wolf, 2006) and in generating satisfactory travel experiences.

As a cultural artefact, food provides a medium for the expression of local culture. As such food (and beverages) are fundamental to destination imaging and indeed food purchase by tourists stimulates the local economy at all levels (Hjalager and Richards, 2002). Timothy and Ron (2013), in the editorial to a special issue of *Journal of Heritage Tourism*, had this to say about the importance of food:

*In short, foodways and cuisine are a more important part of the tourism system than simply food and food services; they are imbued with cultural meaning, experience and permanence. Cuisine is, without doubt, one of the most salient and defining markers of cultural heritage and tourism.*

Food is definitely an attraction, and has matured into a highly sought-after niche market in its own right (Okumus et al, 2007). Many destinations are now promoting themselves as centres of gastronomy and employing food and beverages as attractions. Examples come from all over the world, such as Cornwall, England. Dr. Liz Sharples has contributed this profile.

## The UK, Cornwall Food and Drink

*Dr. Liz Sharples, Sheffield-Hallam University*

The county of Cornwall is located at the end of a peninsula which forms the south-western point of the British land mass. The spectacular Cornish coastline extends for nearly 300 miles.

With a total population of only 532,300 (Cornwall Council, 2014) this county is one of the less inhabited regions of the UK. However, in the summer and peak holiday months, the population swells dramatically as Cornwall welcomes visitors from the UK and overseas. It is one of the UK's most popular holiday destinations, attracting approximately 5 million tourist visits each year. In 2011 the county experienced 4,245,000 trips from domestic tourists alone, generating an income of £1,122 million (Visit England, 2014).

Visitors are attracted to Cornwall for a number of reasons including its magnificent landscape, mild climate, unique history and culture, well established art scene and access to adventure sports such as surfing, hiking and rock climbing.

Recently it has also become a significant 'pull' for foodies as the county has a food scene which arguably rivals any other area in the UK. The county is now home to a wealth of award-winning food producers and a number of celebrity chefs have established gourmet restaurants here, including Rick Stein at Padstow (Rick Stein, 2014) and Jamie Oliver at Watergate Bay (Jamie Oliver, 2014). Restaurant menus in the county reflect the abundance of excellent Cornish produce including freshly caught seafood, and this region is well known for a number of traditional delicacies including Cornish pasties and clotted cream.

The key marketing organisation which has helped to put Cornwall on the gastronomic map is Cornwall Food and Drink, based in Truro, (Cornwall Food and Drink, 2014) which has a mission to harness the expertise of food businesses in the area to promote Cornish food and drink, both inside and outside the county. Businesses who wish to be involved with the organisation can join as members, for a moderate membership fee, and then benefit from a range of professionally run marketing campaigns, events and activities.

One recent marketing initiative by Cornwall Food and Drink has been the publication of *The Great Cornish Food Book*. This book, which has been commissioned, written, published and produced in the county, brings together a colourful collection of food related stories,

recipes, culinary tips and profiles of local food heroes. It is a mouth-watering celebration of all that is great about Cornish food. Available for sale in over seventy local bookshops, hotels, restaurants, cafes, food shops and key visitor attractions, the book is designed to serve as an attractive guide to visitors who may wish to seek out good gastronomic opportunities during their stay. However the book also serves as an attractive souvenir, reminding visitors of their stay and promoting the county and its culinary excellence to a wider audience.

### References

Cornwall Council (2014) at <http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/data-and-research/data-by-topic/population/?page=22137>, last visited on 1/3/2014

Cornwall Food and Drink (2014) at <http://www.cornwallfoodanddrink.co.uk/>, last visited on 16/4/2014

Jamie Oliver (2014) at <http://www.fifteencornwall.co.uk/>, last visited on 12/4/2014

Rick Stein (2014) at <http://www.rickstein/Rick-Stein.html>, last visited 16/4/2014

Visit England (2014) Local Authority and County Analysis 2006 - 2011 at [http://www.visitengland.org/insight-statistics/major-tourism-surveys/overnightvisitors/Index/Regional\\_Results\\_2011.aspx](http://www.visitengland.org/insight-statistics/major-tourism-surveys/overnightvisitors/Index/Regional_Results_2011.aspx), last visited 1/3/2014

The UNWTO *Global Report on Food Tourism* (2012) is a good indicator of how food tourism has proliferated and gained in importance. They said:

*For many of the world's billions of tourists, returning to familiar destinations to enjoy tried and tested recipes or travelling further afield in search of new and special cuisine, gastronomy has become a central part of the tourism experience. Against this background, food tourism has gained increasing attention over the past years. Tourists are attracted to local produce and many destinations are centring their product development and marketing accordingly. With food so deeply connected to its origin, this focus allows destinations to market themselves as truly unique and appealing to those travellers who look to feel part of their destination through its flavours.*

Here are short excerpts from its sections on Korea and Spain (UNWTO *Global Report on Food Tourism*, 2012, p. 36):

*The linkages between food and local, regional and national development and its impact in the tourism and travel industry are growing, and nations are now becoming more aware of its importance. Since 1999, the task of turning traditional food into a tourism product for domestic and foreign tourists in Korea has been pursued with vigor. The Korea Tourism Organization has developed gastronomic tours in Korea in collaboration with celebrities such as top chefs or gastronomists, as well as famous Korean entertainers.*

*Among the reasons for visiting Spain, oenogastronomy is one of the fastest-growing motivations over the past years. Out of these 56.7 million international tourists, more than 5 million said that the enjoyment of Spanish food and wine constituted one of their main reasons for choosing Spain as a tourism destination. These visits generated receipts of over 5 billion euros and the visitors rated their satisfaction at 8.3 out of 10. For its part, the food and agriculture sector in Spain represents 7.6% of GDP and employs more than 400,000 people.*

A study by Deloitte and the Tourism Industry Association of Canada (2012, p. 9) made the following observations about food tourism in North America:

*Approximately 35% of Canadian travellers surveyed indicated that they would travel primarily for a culinary purpose (e.g. to attend a food and wine festival), and over 50% consider food and beverage offerings in narrowing down their destination choice. South of the border, the Travel Industry Association of America recently reported that 60% of American leisure travellers indicate that they are interested in taking a trip to engage in culinary activities within the next 12 months.*

The academic study of food tourism is also global in scope, including Asia. Kivela and Crofts (2005, 2006, 2009) have focussed on Hong Kong and concluded that its gastronomy is a major contributor to creating high-quality visitor experiences and that in turn directly influences return behaviour. Regarding Singapore, where promoting cuisine is a theme of growing importance, Henderson (2004) identified the critical connection between food and tourism. In that country, policies were shaped by a number of distinctive features. And Tussyadiah (2005) observed that in Japan culinary tourism had been a major factor in the development of more than one region.

An organization of note is the World Food Travel Association (formerly the International Culinary Tourism Association) which has grown in response to the upsurge in interest and the increasing economic importance of food tourism. This description is from its website ([www.worldfoodtravel.org](http://www.worldfoodtravel.org)):

*The World Food Travel Association changed its name from International Culinary Tourism Association in 2012 to meet the needs of our changing industry. Over the years, the Association identified strong industry needs in food tourism education and research; food tourism product development; and food tourism promotion. The Association has been a leader in developing products and services to meet the needs of our industry, media and consumers. The Association has also been instrumental in forging strategic partnerships with related organizations, and by driving through leadership at regional and international food tourism industry events.*

#### *Our Mission*

*The World Food Travel Association (WFTA) promotes food, drink & culinary cultures through travel. We serve as the central hub connecting key industry*