



Food as a Component for Tourist Attraction: A Study of Patiala City, Punjab

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Abstract

Tourism is travel for recreational exposure, leisure, or business purposes. Tourism does not only mean travelling to a particular destination but also includes all activities and experiences undertaken during the stay. It includes day visits and excursions, transportation and accommodation, eating and drinking. From an economic point of view, food is a physiological necessity that's why we can easily argue that nearly 100% of tourists spend money for food where do they go for holiday or trip (Shenoy, 2005). According to Hjalager (2003), the new tourists seek food and beverage combinations and eating experiences that foster learning. For these tourists, food in a destination does not only satisfy hunger but, important for them, such consumption means gaining in-depth knowledge about the local cuisine and of the destination's culture. The province of Punjab has exceptional social legacy which pulls in visitors from various piece of the world. In Punjab, the advancement of nourishment as a part of its goal engaging quality is in its earliest stages at both the universal and local level. In Punjab, nourishment is an endowment of Gods and it is approached with deference. The prominence of Punjabi Food is developing a long ways on account of



the rising number of Punjabi settlers. Canada and UK are presently known as Mini-Punjab and there is developing impact of Punjabi Culture in these areas whether it's identifying with music or nourishment. Punjabi sustenance is savoured by NRI's as well as even the outsiders. The popularity of Punjabi Food is growing leaps and bounds because of the rising number of Punjabi immigrants. This paper highlights the potential of food tourism in Patiala. A mixed approach of descriptive and exploratory research in which convenient-cum-judgment quota sampling has been used to collect the data.

Key Words: Food, Tourist, Patiala

Introduction

Tourism is travel for recreational exposure, leisure, or business purposes. It is not easy to give a particular definition to Tourism phenomenon. According to World Tourism Organisation "Tourism comprises the activities of persons travelling to staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes". Tourism does not only mean travelling to a particular destination but also includes all activities and experiences undertaken during the stay. It includes day visits and excursions, transportation and accommodation, eating and drinking. According to UWTO statistics, the number of international tourists (overnight visitors) reached 1,138 million in 2014, 51 million increases more than in 2013, a 4.7% increase. For 2015, UNWTO forecasts international arrivals to grow between 3% to 4% and has forecast the number to exceed 1.6 billion by the year 2020. According to WTTC, the tourism generates more than 230 million jobs directly and indirectly and contributes to more than 10% of the world gross domestic product. Over the decades, tourism has experienced continued growth and deepening diversification to become one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world. The well-educated tourists have sophisticated tastes, high levels of disposable income, and considerable leisure time. Modern tourism



is closely linked to development and the most dynamically emerging branch in the present era. It resulted in converting tourism into a key driver for socio-economic progress of the nation. Wherever a tourist goes, food is essential for sustaining life. Every person eats food according to their feeding habits. A tourist also consumes food at destination that one visits during their trip. Food is one of the ways humans define themselves as civilized (Civitello, 2011). Food is an extremely important part of the culture of a region. Moreover, tourism results from regions' sources, such as; specific landscapes, environments, culture and heritage (Beer et al., 2002). From an economic point of view, food is a physiological necessity that's why we can easily argue that nearly 100% of tourists spend money for food where do they go for holiday or trip (Shenoy, 2005). According to Hjalager (2003), the new tourists seek food and beverage combinations and eating experiences that foster learning. For these tourists, food in a destination does not only satisfy hunger but, important for them, such consumption means gaining in-depth knowledge about the local cuisine and of the destination's culture. The intentional, exploratory participation in the food ways of another – participation including the consumption, preparation, and presentation of a food item, cuisine, meal system, or eating style considered to a culinary system not one's own (Long, 2004). Food tourism termed also as gastronomic tourism, culinary tourism, or wine and food tourism, is a niche area of tourism. (Hjalager & Richards, 2002; Hall et al., 2003; Hall & Mitchell, 2005). Actually, it is a way to of making difference in the touristic offer among plenty of other products and forms tourism that compete directly to win the race in attracting consumers. In the framework of the affirmation: "gastronomy is a strategic element in defining the brand and image of a destination"⁵, culinary tourism can become a significant contributor to the localization and to the differentiation process, as a response to an extreme increase of the competitiveness. It also increases the awareness and interest in maintaining the traditions and the authenticity, which both are part of maintaining diversity and variety directed to increase local pride and keeping cultural identity, both considered very important in this era of



globalization. Already there is the evidence suggesting that motivation to travel for gastronomic reasons is a valid argument. Most people consider the pleasure to eat, the taste, the aromas, the feature of the food, the quality, the variety and the diversity being notable as travel experience, in fact there is about seeking for unique culinary experiences and enjoyment of taste. All over the world, a variety of gastronomic activities such as: food festivals, food tours, visit food producers, visit food markets, wineries, food fairs, thematic museums (chocolate, bread, beer, pastas, mustard etc.) are being promoted. To explore a place through its cuisine is considered by many a challenging, interesting and satisfying experience. Consumption of food can be an unforgettable experience. Food and drink are means to penetrate the culture of the place in a more profound and more complex way, through the senses, what it is not a mere a physical or physiological experience. Also, the results of the data analysis reveal that gastronomy plays a major role in tourism. Quan and Wang (2004) noted that food can convey unique experience and enjoyment to travellers. Moreover, food may totally enhance tourists' experience and can be the most memorable part of the trip. Thus, the food of a destination can represent the image and uniqueness of the destination. The importance of the connection between food and tourism cannot be ignored. Each destination has different levels of attractiveness that can draw tourists from different countries (Au & Law, 2002). Authentic and interesting food can attract visitors to a destination. Using Getz and Brown's (2006) application and definition of wine tourism, we can say that food tourism can be associated with travellers' interest in the food of a destination. The local vendors use the special food of the particular place as the alluring factor and grab the tourist's attention. The marketing strategies will focus on food to enhance the sales. It is important for marketers of a culinary destination to know the image currently held by its targeted customers and how to affect their intention to visit through effective marketing strategies. Frochot (2003) recommended food images can be utilized to exhibit the cultural aspects of a country. Food travellers spend around \$1,200 per trip on an average, with over one-third of their travel budget going towards



food-related activities. Those considered to be “deliberate” food travellers (i.e. where culinary activities are the key reason for the trip) tend to spend a significantly higher amount of their overall travel budget (around 50%) on food-related activities (International Culinary Tourism Association, 2012). India is famous for its cuisine as it is acumination of different flavours and textures from different regions (Travel tips-USA Today, 2012). The market for culinary tourism to India is growing as the country’s culinary traditions continue to garner increasing international attention. According to a new worldwide food survey by Hotels.com (2013), Indian cuisine is among the top 10 list of the world’s best food preferred by global travellers while on holidays, about five per cent of international travellers preferred Indian cuisine and food when on holiday. Punjab, which is situated in the Northern part of India, is the crowned jewel of the nation boasting of delicacies that are world famous. In Punjab, food is a gift of Gods and it is treated with respect. The popularity of Punjabi Food is growing leaps and bounds because of the rising number of Punjabi immigrants. Canada & UK are now known as Mini-Punjab and there is growing influence of Punjabi Culture in these regions whether it’s relating to music or food. Punjabi food is relished not only by NRI’s but even the foreigners. Patiala is a city in south eastern Punjab, in northern India. It is the fourth largest city in the state and is the administrative capital of Punjab. Rajput rulers controlled in Malwa district for long time so lamb utilization is minimal higher than Majha and Doaba. Patiala Shahi (Meat Patiala), Meat Rara and Punjabi Mutton curry are in the hit rundown of malwa individuals. Murg Patiala, Chicken Bathinde wala, According to the Government information, Punjab delivers around 12% of the aggregate grains and over 10% the aggregate rice is grown in India. Basmati Rice of Sangrur and Mansa is overall renowned. Rajmah Chawal is again a well-known dish of Malwa locale. The general population amid Rajput kingdom used to have

this dinner alongside onion or radish plate of mixed greens. Bajre ki Khichdi is exceptionally basic in Malwa locale.

Patiala is dotted with glittering little restaurants and Dhabas which serve some of the most lip-smacking traditional food.

Literature Review

Shenoy (2010) mentioned his study about the five dimensions that revealed the composition of food tourism. These activities includes dining at restaurants known for local cuisines, purchasing local food products, consuming local beverages, dining at high quality restaurants, and dining at familiar chain restaurants and franchises. His study revealed that Food neophobia, variety-seeking, and social bondings are the conceptual variables and age, gender, education, and income are the socio-demographic variables significant in explaining participation in food tourism. Segmentation of tourists revealed the presence of three clusters: the culinary tourist, the experiential tourist, and the general tourist.

Hall and Sharples (2003) in his study proposed the segmentation of food tourism based on the “importance of a special interest in food as a travel motivation” The segmentation is based on the following criteria: 1) The main interest in travelling is to visiting a restaurant and food related activities is considered as gourmet tourism or cuisine tourism 2) The tourist participated in food related activities as a part of wider range of activities is considered as culinary tourism 3) a low interest is indicated by participation in food related activities just out of curiosity or because ‘it is something different is rural and urban tourism 4) a segment that shows no interest in food related activities but have food as basic necessity in other forms of tourism..

Cai, Hong, & Morrison's (1995) mentioned in their study that tourist's food consumption (in terms of expenditures), showed that occupation was a significant factor, and education was the most important predictor for a tourist's expenditure on food at the destination.

Cohen and Avieli (2004) examined the perception of food as a key destination attraction. In their study they highlighted the difference between attraction and impediment with two perspectives: first how food could be an attractive product for a destination. This purpose was to evaluate how to resolve these problems and the ways in which they affect the travellers' food choice. For example, some destinations faced problems in producing hygienic and nutritious food for visitors.

Upadhyay and Sharma (2014) suggested in their study that tourists' preferences converge into five factors, namely, taste and quality of food, food preparation, localization of food and dining etiquettes, tradition and nutrition of food, and food aroma and cleanliness.

Objectives

1. To identify the potential of food as a component for tourism attraction in Patiala.
2. To find out the perception of tourists, hoteliers and restaurateurs, tourism department regarding food as tourist attraction for Patiala.

Research Methodology

Data Collection: Secondary data is collected through various gastronomic journals, websites, magazines & newspapers. The information from the tourism organisation Punjab Heritage and Tourism Promotion Board has been used to analyse the tourist arrival patterns.

The primary data is collected using structured questionnaire. The questionnaire is comprised of both closed ended and open ended questions.

Sampling Plan

Sample Universe: Specialty food outlets of Patiala

Sampling Units: Sampling Units are the tourists, Local people, Hoteliers and restaurateurs, Food outlet owners of Punjab (Patiala).

Sampling Size: 75 (50 Tourists, 20 Local people, 5 Hoteliers, Restaurateurs and Food Outlet Owners)

Sampling Technique: To select the number of respondents, convenient-cum-judgment quota sampling has been used. In non-probability sampling, the sample is not based on chance. It is rather determined by some person.

Food Outlets Selected for Conducting the Survey

Name of Outlet	Sample Size
Jaggi Sweets & Restaurant	10
Gopal Sweets and Restaurant	5
Punjab Chat and Refreshment	5
Giani da Dhaba	5
Bhagwan Das Restaurant	5
Punjabi Chulha	5
Dharme da Dhaba	5
Moti Mahal Deluxe	5
The Baradari Palace	5

Findings

Patiala is famous for its rich cuisines and meat products. The Restaurants offers lavish food options for the food lovers. The city of full of small restaurants and Dhabas where tourists get delicious food.

1. 60% tourists visit Patiala to enjoy the food as food tourist.
2. The Street food is on the priority of local people and they incur more money on street food.
3. 66% tourists have hygienic issues but still want to explore food of Patiala.
4. 70% of tourists want to enjoy food with their family members.
5. Private job professionals form a major share of culinary tourists in this age group of 20-40 yrs.
6. 68% of the respondents feel that Punjabi food lacks in terms of variety, as most of the dishes use almost same combination of masalas and method of preparation.



7. 70% of the respondents feel that the staff in most of the Punjabi food outlets lack in service standards and professionalism.
8. 60% of the respondents say that the dishes are reasonably priced in Punjab

Limitations of the Study

Studies are confined to particular geographical area, in the tools and techniques applied, in sample and procedures and so on depending on researchers' resources. This is termed as the limitations of the study. Research is a never-ending process with never ending scope. The study of food tourism is particularly a complicated process, owing to complex, multi-disciplinary and non-quantifiable nature of subject.

Conclusion

The research statistics show that there is ample scope of food tourism in Patiala and if it is better marketed, it can attract more tourists. There are few issues which need to be taken care but tourists are in favour to enjoy the food of Patiala. The stay length of tourists will be increased if the government will highlight Patiala as food hub of Punjab.

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