Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Jack Santino, Chris Geist—have stimulated my thinking.

The editors at The University Press of Kentucky have done a superb job of encouraging, guiding, and cajoling me, as well as the individual authors in this collection, throughout this endeavor. Zig Zeigler and Allison Webster first realized the potential of the topic and encouraged me to submit a proposal for a book. Jennifer Peckinpaugh saw me through the ins and outs of pulling together a cohesive collection of essays and refining the subject matter and concepts. Her editing helped me immensely in improving my own writing and thinking. Nichole Lainhart has done a wonderful job of tying up loose ends and completing the final details of editing. All of them have been extremely patient and helpful, and I am greatly indebted to them.

The biggest adventure of all has been my own family. My children, Ian, Will, and Hannah, have been served culinary theories along with their veggie burgers and frozen pizza and have courageously tried interesting new foods and eating situations. They gamely picked through the Galician octopus boil for the potatoes; they willingly (usually) ordered unusual dishes in restaurants around the world; and they cheerfully ate cold cereal when various food experiments failed. Throughout all the trials and tribulations that go into producing a book, my husband, Jack Santino, has been there with encouragement, a willingness to listen to the latest version of an idea, and the ability to operate the microwave oven when I am too busy writing about food to prepare it or consume it. He deserves a home-cooked meal as well as my gratitude.

Foreword

Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett

Culinary tourism, an exploratory relationship with the edible world, is the subject of this beautifully conceived book. Whether you go to food or food comes to you, the nature of the encounter is what defines a food experience as culinary tourism.

Where food is the focus of travel, as in gastronomic tourism, itineraries are organized around cooking schools, wineries, restaurants, and food festivals—in the case of Sardinia, this includes festivals celebrating the sea urchin, mullet, wild boar, chestnuts, or torrone, among others. Food magazines and epicurean guidebooks, which have long celebrated the gastronomic opportunities afforded the mobile eater, orient the reader to particular foods, dishes, and cuisines, their pleasures, their histories, and their locales. Often, these publications include recipes; and, whether read like a musical score or actually performed in the kitchen, such recipes prompt the culinary tourist to relive vividly remembered but ephemeral travel experiences in rich sensory detail, while still offering vicarious travel for the armchair tourist.

Even when food is not the main focus of travel, one must eat, regardless of whether or not a memorable experience is the goal. Making experiences memorable is a way the travel industry adds value—and profit—to an essential service such as food. Indeed, the tourism and hospitality industries design experiences, including culinary ones, within the constraints of the tourist's time, space, and means. They do this by making the world an exhibit of itself. A collaboration between highly self-conscious produc-

ers and consumers, culinary tourism is a space of contact and encounter, negotiation and transaction, whether at home or abroad.

While the question of authenticity does not generally arise in the course of ordinary life, it is a hallmark of touristic experiences, culinary included. Why, if we do not debate the authenticity of the toast and coffee of our daily breakfast, do we become anxious about the authenticity of an ethnic restaurant or gastronomic travel experience? Restaurants, as several essays in this volume show, are prime sites of designed experiences, collaboratively produced. As businesses, not museums (though often similar), restaurants adapt themselves to their market, including both their customers and their competition. Our preoccupation with their authenticity goes to the heart of the concept of culinary tourism that informs this volume: namely, how self-consciousness arises from encounters with the unfamiliar and challenges what we know—or think we know—about what is before us. What provokes anxiety or delight is our ability to recognize ourselves in what is presented and our uncertainty about the rest—that is, the visibility of the seam between the familiar and the unfamiliar, our heightened sense of the distinct components in the mix, and our inability to experience the coalescence as such. While we tend to speak not only of the authenticity of a dish or a restaurant, but also of an authentic experience, without clearly distinguishing them, *authentic experience* makes the question of authenticity—and debating that question—constitutive of such experience.

Not authenticity, but the *question* of authenticity, is essential to culinary tourism, for this question organizes conversation, reflection, and comparison and arises as much from doubt as from confidence. The ensuing conversation tests and extends one's knowledge and discernment. Whether culinary tourism is inspiring, boring, or frustrating depends on the balance between challenge and mastery, a balance that is recalibrated with the accumulation of experience.[1] This way of thinking about authenticity is in keeping with the focus of *Culinary Tourism* on the culinary tourist as an active agent.

Culinary tourism creates opportunities to find, test, and push thresholds of the unfamiliar. Newness arises from unpredictability, and culinary tourism, to the degree that it constitutes a break with one's daily routine and even with the predictability of the tourism industry, affords innumerable occasions for new experiences. New experiences expand the ways we create and know ourselves because they dehabituate and estrange much that we take for granted: they unsettle habitus, those embodied dispositions and tacit understandings that require little shocks to come

into consciousness. Culinary tourism is shock treatment. It brings "life" into view through the surprises afforded by the unexpected and the unplanned—"Life is what happens to you while you're busy making other plans," as John Lennon is to have said. As the essays in this volume so vividly demonstrate, culinary tourism familiarizes the new and estranges the familiar, redrawing their relationship with each new experience.

While openness to variety makes the species adaptable, wariness of the unknown puts new and potentially dangerous foods to the test before they pass the threshold of the mouth. This is why, as several essays in this volume show, challenging foods are highly charged, whether they are beloved, detested, stigmatized, or reclaimed. As Jill Rudy's essay shows, such foods may form the centerpiece of an initiation rite among Mormon missionaries newly arrived in Guatemala, for whom the challenge is to manage disgust—or, rather, to subject oneself to the possibility of a culinary conversion experience. Such foods may be the subject of deep play, as in the Hawaiian festival discussed in Kristin McAndrews's essay, where *poke*, a stigmatized dish, is reclaimed, with humor, and subjected to playful differentiation, elaboration, and mobility within the shifting hierarchies of the cultural field. Relentless focus on a single food or dish, like the gauntlet thrown down to Iron Chefs, encourages ingenuity, while mixtures (*poke*, chili, bouillabaisse, chowder), because they combine different elements in different proportions, are subject to almost infinite, if minute, variation, before mutating into something else. Culinary competitions based on mixture dramatize what it takes to make a coalescence hold still as an identifiable dish. They mark—and contest—the point where a dish becomes something else. Synthetic and indeterminate, such mixtures calibrate distance, placement, and relations between generations, communities, locations, and times. They make the map edible. They tell you, by their variation, where you are—in whose home or in what town.

What is it about food that distinguishes culinary tourism from tourism in general? Not only do food experiences organize and integrate a particularly complex set of sensory and social experiences in distinctive ways, but also they form edible chronotopes (sensory space-time convergences). The capacity of food to hold time, place, and memory is valued all the more in an era of hypermobility, when it can seem as if everything is available everywhere, all the time. Shopping, cooking, and eating become more like accessing an edible database of infinite permutation than stepping into a culinary world that is defined by slower moving coalescences of geology, climate, history, and culture captured by the idea of *terroir* and protected by appellation. Though wine is bottled and even

air is canned (a humorous souvenir that suggests the impossibility of transporting the effable quality of being there), it is the relative immobility of a coalescence—the specificity of experiencing it on the spot, in relation to season, ripeness, freshness, perishability, and total world of which it is a part—that requires that you go there. Indeed, this is the raison d'être of tourism proper. Going there, however, is a matter also of invention, in the case of "Jewish" restaurants in what was once the Jewish quarter of Kazimierz, a suburb of Cracow, where such restaurants mark an absent presence, as Eve Jochnowitz's essay demonstrates. Not only invention, but also intensification, can be seen in celebrations of soul food or down-home cooking in the Catskills or heritage cuisines in the Midwest, as discussed in Rachelle Saltzman's essay.

Even as the edible database and its permutations expand exponentially—and perhaps as a result of this expansion—so too do allergies, food restrictions, and special diets. À la carte becomes the norm, even during the domestic family dinner, to the degree that the family dinner survives at all. Meanwhile, culinary tourism on the road adapts to the constraints of kashruth or vegetarianism, even as foods associated with such diets go mainstream, as evidenced by the burgeoning kosher food industry and growing market for soy products. Such diets, whether medically, religiously, or otherwise mandated, make many attributes of culinary tourism a regular part of everyday life—as much through saying no to what is not allowed as saying yes to what is.

As the study of tourism attends more closely to lived experiences and the study of food continues to explore its transactional character, these fields will find in *Culinary Tourism* a powerful conceptual framework and rich case studies. From kosher Oreos to the gentrification of Mexican cuisine, from the charismatic cooking of Basque communities in Spain and the United States to the mainstreaming of Southwestern foodways, *Culinary Tourism* maps a lively cultural and intellectual terrain for future research.

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Note

1. See Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, *Beyond Boredom and Anxiety* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1975).

Introduction

Lucy M. Long

One of my favorite activities when I travel is eating. I am not alone. The tourism industry thrives on providing food experiences—of new and exotic foods, of foods authentic to a particular culture, of foods familiar and safe to a traveler. Food is central to traveling, and it is a vivid entryway into another culture, but we do not have to literally leave home to "travel." Movies, books, postcards, memories all take us, emotionally if not physically, to other places. Food as well can carry us into other realms of experience, allowing us to be tourists while staying at home. Restaurants, cookbooks, televised cooking shows, food magazines, and the recipe sections of local and national newspapers enable us to experience vicariously the cuisines and foodways of others.

Culinary tourism is more than trying new and exotic foods. The basis of tourism is a perception of otherness, of something being different from the usual. Such perception can differ from individual to individual and from culture to culture, and it can include other times, belief systems, lifestyles, and ways of being, not only other places. Furthermore, food itself can be a destination for tourism, not only a vehicle. We can enjoy trying new foods simply for the experience of those foods, not for where the foods might lead us.

Much of my thinking on culinary tourism and on foodways in general comes from my own background. Because my father worked with the U.S. State Department, I grew up in Asian countries (Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam) and the Southeastern United States (North Carolina moun-

tains and Piedmont region). My childhood was filled with contrasting food experiences: Asian versus American foods, Korean versus Japanese, mountains versus flatland, wealthy versus poverty level, urban versus rural, "hillbilly" versus mainstream, Northern versus Southern. Food experiences that were commonplace to me often seemed novel, even strange, to my peers in other cultural settings. Grits or hominy for breakfast was normal in the South; rice and seaweed were normal in Korea; grilled octopus was normal in Thailand. While for me these were familiar, even nostalgic foods, individuals outside of those cultures found them to be exotic, a touristic entry into another culture. At the same time, standard American foods—steak and baked potatoes, fast-food hamburgers—were an exotic treat for me, offering me an experience of what was to most Americans the culinary mainstream. These early experiences made me very aware of the dynamic and fluid quality of tourism, of how the familiar can be exotic, and the exotic familiar. This sense of wonder at the potentially multiple and emotionally powerful meanings of food was carried into my work on culinary tourism. It also made me aware that the motivations for eating particular foods are complex and varied. The political intertwines with the personal, the individual with the communal, and the aesthetic with the functional. Critiques of cultural behaviors must allow for that complexity.

This volume explores food as both a destination and a vehicle for tourism. Consuming, or at least tasting, exotic foods can be the goal of a touristic experience, but food can also be a means by which a tourist experiences another culture, an entree, so to speak, into an unfamiliar way of life. These essays address different aspects of the intersection of food and tourism, ultimately adding to our understanding of both realms of phenomena.

The Literature

Scholarship relevant to culinary tourism comes primarily from three fields: anthropology of tourism, folklore, and food studies. The literature in these fields often overlaps, and their interdisciplinarity, particularly of the latter two fields, tends to not only cross the boundaries between the humanities, arts, and social sciences, but also bridges the academic and public or applied domains. Theories are put into action and translated into festival presentations, public displays, nutritional guidelines, and restaurant development as well as marketing and education. This makes a survey of the literature quite unwieldy, but it also highlights the potential role of food in exploring issues of authenticity and the cultural politics of representation.

Surprisingly, none of these fields have focused on food specifically as a subject and medium of tourism. Food is included with other aspects of culture on display for tourists. Eating, particularly at festivals and restaurants, is mentioned along with other tourist activities; however, no study has been published that looks at how food and the activities surrounding it might shape the touristic experience or vice versa, how tourism may be shaping the foodways of a culture, community, or individual. Works by folklorists come the closest to addressing the construction of foodways and the role of tourism as potentially one of the forces in that construction.

The anthropology of tourism emerged as a distinct field in the mid-1970s. Valene L. Smith marks its inauguration as 1974, when a conference on the subject was held. Publications soon followed.[1] Since then, anthropological tourism research has followed two primary directions, as characterized by James Lett: "[M]ost anthropologists have either described the ways in which tourism is used as a symbolic means of expressing and maintaining human identity, or they have described the social, political, economic, and environmental effects that result from using touristic modes of production to maintain human life" (1989:277).

Within the first approach, a primary endeavor has been a refining of the concepts of tourism and the tourist, which initially involved developing typologies of tourists, tourist destinations, and tourist activities. Dean MacCannell, for example, draws from semiotics and Marxism to analyze the tourist experience, stating, "touristic consciousness is motivated by its desire for authentic experience" (1989:1). He proposed a number of key concepts that have contributed significantly to tourism scholarship, among these the notion of "site sacralization"; that is, the five-stage process by which something becomes a tourist attraction. He also suggests the notion of "staged authenticity" to describe the ways in which the presentation of cultural forms can create an illusion of familiarity with that culture.[2]

Valene Smith continued in a similar vein as MacCannell, offering further thoughts on definitions and typologies. He defined a tourist as "a temporarily leisured person who voluntarily visits a place away from home for the purpose of experiencing a change" (1989:1). He posits that three key elements—leisure time, discretionary income, and positive local sanctions—make tourism possible and help determine the type of tourism selected by an individual (1989:1). He then delineated seven types of tourists based on their goals, their mode of travel, and their adaptability, and constructed a typology of five forms of tourism based on the destination and purpose of the tour.[3]

This work on typologies and classification helped to establish the anthropology of tourism as a legitimate field of study, and scholars have

continued to refine both definitions and typologies. The paradigm shift from text to context and from product to process that begin occurring in the humanities in the 1970s is evident in a number of the reworkings of definitions. For example, Nelson Graburn shifted the definitional focus from tourism to the touristic experience, describing it as a journey from the profane (everyday life) to the sacred (vacation, new experiences, new cultures) in that it is a way that people "embellish and add meaning to their lives" (1989:22). Graburn sets contemporary tourism in a historical context in which the increasing secularization of Western society has pushed individuals to seek renewal from outside their everyday sphere of life.

One of the most influential scholars to explore tourism as a way of experience is John Urry, who proposed the notion of the "tourist gaze," arguing that tourism is essentially different from "everyday looking" (1990). It attends to difference, seeking objects that contrast with familiar experience: "A crucial feature of tourism . . . [is that the] potential objects of the tourist gaze must be different in some way or other. They must be out of the ordinary. People must experience particularly distinct pleasures which involve different senses or are on a different scale from those typically encountered in everyday life" (1995:45). Urry further qualifies the tourist gaze by dividing it into two broad types: the "romantic," which is a "personal, semi-spiritual relationship with the object of gaze," and the "collective," which involves a group and communal sense of carnival; that is, a festive turning upside down of the routine and ordinary (1995:45–46).

Most contemporary scholars of tourism seem to accept it as a complex and multifaceted activity, and their definitions reflect that complexity, focusing on a quality of experience rather than types of behaviors (Baranowski and Furlough, 2001). For example, Pierre Van den Berghe, in his study of ethnic tourism in Mexico, states: "the boundaries of tourism are not as self-evident as they might first, appear" (1994:4). He continues with an attempt at definition: "It is not objective behavior by itself that defines tourist status . . . what transforms a person into a tourist is taking a leap out of ordinary life" (1994:5). The departure from the everyday is a recurring theme in other conceptions of tourism as well and is treated as a defining characteristic in determining whether or not an activity constitutes tourism.

Another theme in the contemporary research on tourism is the recognition of the institutions of tourism as social and cultural constructions. As such, they reflect specific historical circumstances and specific cultural worldviews for framing difference and the everyday. In some cases

this stance leads to a critique of tourism as peculiar to modern life and tied directly to contemporary economies and power structures. "Tourism heralds postmodernity; it is a product of the rise of consumer culture, leisure and technological innovation" (Caplan 1996, quoted in Bell and Lyall 2002:3).

Some scholars have addressed this notion of tourism as construction by deconstructing the elements making up the experience itself. One element that has been singled out is that of authenticity and its role in making a touristic experience satisfying to the viewer. The literature at this point crosses disciplines to include folklore. Significant work has been done by folklorist Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, who critiqued MacCannell's work, questioning his reliance on authenticity as a criterion for tourism since, she points out, "authenticity is not a given in the event but is a social construction" and "the preoccupation with the authentic is a culturally and historically specific phenomenon" (1998:303). Her later work on museums further challenges the notion of authenticity as a useful concept in understanding tourism and explores the ways in which it has made both scholarship and the tourist experience problematic (1998).

A further direction of scholarship in the anthropology of tourism—and one very relevant to this volume—is an attention to different types of tourism as producing qualitatively different kinds of experience. The destination and types of activities form the basis of defining these types, so that there is ecotourism, ethnic tourism, cultural tourism, adventure tourism, and others. For example, Jane Desmond, in her study of Hawaiian hula dancing and Sea World, explores how the focus on bodies shapes the tourist industry and the experience itself: "The public display of bodies and their materiality (how bodies look, what they do, where they do it, who watches, and under what conditions) are profoundly important in structuring identity categories and notions of subjectivity. And that, when commodified, these displays form the basis of hugely profitable tourism industries" (1999:xiii). Desmond's work sheds light on the peculiarities of culinary tourism, in which the materiality of food helps to ground the experience for many tourists, helping them relate it to their everyday lives.

Surprisingly, none of this theorizing involves the role of food in tourism. This volume, while indebted to the theoretical frameworks in this literature, attempts to remedy that. It continues the quest for definitions by exploring the nature of tourism as related to food and eating. Because food is a physiological necessity as well as a social and cultural construct and expressive medium, it highlights the complexity of touristic involve-

ment in eating. An individual may be a tourist in an objective sense, but at a particular time and place may eat out of hunger rather than curiosity. Similarly, an individual may sit down to a meal with trepidation because of the otherness of the food, but may continue consuming the meal after the first bite because it is aesthetically satisfying and pleasing to taste. A variety of motivations, even contradictory ones, can occur simultaneously, and ways of experiencing food sometimes occur unbidden. This nature of food contributes to exploring tourism as a stance, a process, and a way of approaching an object or activity, rather than a category of behavior. This allows us to see tourism as occurring in a multitude of activities, not necessarily traveling to "foreign" lands. It means that not only can one stay home and still experience the "exotic," but one may also stay home and view the familiar and mundane as exotic.

The second approach in the anthropological literature addresses the impact of tourism on the host culture, with the nature of that impact being given a moral evaluation based more on the scholar's ethos than on the responses of the culture being impacted. A critique of tourism as exploitation is a frequently stated theme, as represented early in the literature by Dennison Nash, who concluded that tourist/host relationships were marked by an inequality of power and represented a form of imperialism (1989). Tourism as a potentially positive force, however, has also been explored and promoted. Valene Smith claimed that tourism is not necessarily damaging to a culture and should be seen in a larger context as one of a variety of forms of modernization (1989). Furthermore, different types of tourism pose different potentials for impact, and some features of a host culture are more susceptible to impact than others. Davydd Greenwood explored the nature of the impact of tourism as having to do with meaning of activities, not merely the activities themselves (1989). He concludes that while an activity may be rendered meaningless through the commodification and adaptation that occurs with tourism, that same tourism "can engender processes of reflection that lead to cultural elaboration" (1989:185). Renewed interest in local culture, appreciation for local traditions, and an improved sense of cultural worth can result. More recent scholarship, some of which overlaps with folklore, utilizes a notion of culture as dynamic process rather than static artifact. Benetta Jules-Rosette found that African tourist arts represent the interplay of tradition with the particular social contexts posed by tourism. Similarly, folklorist Regina Bendix, in her study of an Alpine festival, concluded, "tourism is merely one component contributing to the types of actions and choices

made by locals." (1989:144) Meaning is not necessarily negated by tourism; tourism calls for the construction and negotiation of new meanings.

Tourism, according to these and other scholars, is not an inherently negative force for cultural stability and continuity. The concept of dynamic tourism, developed by Priscilla Boniface, promotes relationships between "host societies, target sites, their visitors, and the tourism industry itself" that work toward making tourism beneficial for all (2001:ix). She writes: "[T]ourism can have harmful, cultural, and environmental effects. On the other hand, as a tool for change, tourism is widely seen as a chance for social, cultural and economic benefits. Tourism can solve problems, offering new development in some places, regeneration in others" (2001:ix).

While the industries associated with tourism—travel agents and packaged tours, hotels and restaurants catering to tourists, displays and presentations specifically for tourists—have been made possible by the availability of leisure time and expendable cash, the phenomenon of individuals exploring other cultures out of curiosity is neither postmodern nor peculiarly Western. I see tourism as a universal human impulse—curiosity and an adventurous spirit are facets of personality that are shaped in their expression by the ethos and institutions of specific cultures, but the impulse itself is not dependent upon particular historical circumstances. Food is an arena in which that impulse can be exercised regardless of the institutionalized practices of tourism.

The disciplines of food studies and folklore have also addressed data and issues related to culinary tourism. Although food studies emerged as an academic field as recently as the 1980s, it has long been, and still is in many cases, embedded in other disciplines—American studies, folklore, anthropology, history, sociology, and psychology. It crosses the boundaries between the arts, humanities, and sciences, blending nutrition and health professions with the culinary arts and hospitality management. A number of scholarly and professional organizations, notably the Association for the Study of Food and Society, have helped to bring together individuals representing this array of backgrounds, providing a wealth of perspectives on food. The field is currently developing cohesive theories and models for understanding food and food-related behaviors, and culinary tourism is one area in which food scholars are theorizing about food as a cultural, social, and communicative phenomena. An indication of that interest appeared in a 1996 conference sponsored by the International Commission for Ethnological Food research.[4] These papers raised ques-

tions of identity politics, construction of nationalism, the processes of adaptation to tourist venues, and the meaning of commodification of food traditions. Such questions are recurring themes in much of the work done on food and tourism.

Folklore as an academic discipline has a long history of including food as a subject for study and theorizing. Along with providing studies of individual food items and food traditions in specific folk groups, folklore scholarship has addressed the aesthetic and sensory nature of food, the use of food in expressing and constructing cultural identities and social relationships, as well as the emergence and imposition of meaning in relation to food.

The European ethnographic method of identification and description of the details of peasant life included food and was adapted by American folklorists first to cultural groups outside the European-Protestant-based mainstream and later to include any community constituting a folk group. Publications on various "folk foods" appeared as early as 1895, and this approach has continued into the present.[5] Such scholarship is represented by the work of Don Yoder, who used the methods of ethnographic research to demonstrate the concept of foodways.[6] Foodways refers to the network of behaviors, traditions, and beliefs concerning food, and involves all the activities surrounding a food item and its consumption, including the procurement, preservation, preparation, presentation, and performance of that food (Yoder 1972). As a conceptual model, foodways systematizes the exploration of how food is woven into everyday life and personal history. It is this intertwining of everyday life that frequently gives a particular food item emotional meaning: a bagel purchased from the local neighborhood deli run by old family friends carries very different associations from one purchased from the freezer section of a supermarket chain.

Consistent with the formulation of folklore as "artistic communication in small groups,"[7] folklorists also explored food as an aesthetic and sensory domain. Michael Owen Jones emphasized the importance of recognizing eating as an artistic activity that satisfies aesthetic needs as well as nutritional, social, and cultural ones.[8] This approach has tended to distinguish folklore scholarship from anthropological and sociological studies, as has an attention to the individual and to specific communities of individuals as opposed to cultures as a whole (Georges and Jones, 1995; Toelken, 1996). Underlying this work and central to folklore studies are questions of meaning: What does food mean to people? How is that meaning constructed? How is food experienced in a meaningful way?

A base from which to begin exploring culinary tourism is offered by

folklorists, cultural geographers, culinary historians, and social scientists who have mapped distribution of food items, described consumption and production trends, and identified specific food communities and regions. Although tourism was usually not the focus of earlier work, it was often included in the analysis of the maintenance and construction of food traditions.[9] Research also demonstrated that food is a resource for enacting and constructing group identity as well as for symbolic communication, and that tourism has shaped the ways in which that resource is used.[10] The significance of tourism in identifying and defining regional foods has also been studied.[11] The lobster, for example, became iconic of Maine because of tourism on the coastal part of the state, overshadowing the inland culture that did not emphasize seafood (Lewis 1998:65–84). Similarly, pasties, a savory turnover traditional to Michigan's Upper Peninsula, became a symbol of both region and ethnicity partially through tourism and marketing (Lockwood and Lockwood 1998:21–37). In Louisiana, festivals, songs, stories, and souvenirs created for tourists have celebrated the crawfish, changing the social status of the creature and turning it into a positive and highly lucrative symbol of Cajun ethnicity (Guitierrez 1998:139–44).

Public displays and festivals are frequent venues for culinary tourism and contribute significantly to the meanings of food traditions. These events allow for food to be treated simultaneously as commodity and symbol. As such, the emotional attachment to that food item or process can be ambiguous; its value is now shaped by an audience's response to it rather than by the memories it holds. Sabina Magliocco explored this ambiguity in her analysis of an Italian-American festival designed by non-Italians specifically to attract tourists to a town. Food in this event is skillfully manipulated by the Italian-American community to both present a positive image to the tourists and retain the private symbolic meanings held within the community (1998:145–62). She concludes that this instance of tourism utilizing food has created a safe context in which meaning is suspended: "For non-Italians and tourists, the foods and activities at the festival can offer a taste of Italianness without any of the shock or inconvenience of total immersion in a foreign culture" (1998:158).

The issues of meaning that Magliocco raises are central to my conception of culinary tourism and to this volume as a whole. How has tourism shaped the accepted meanings of particular foods; but also, how has it shaped foodways as a meaningful domain of experience? As foods become a commodity within the tourist marketplace, what happens to the functions and roles they may have had for their original users?

A number of "food biographies," historical and ethnographic studies of single food items, demonstrate that tourism has often invented meanings for foods as well as intensified the meanings that are in use.[12] Oranges, cranberries, apples, peppers, and many other foods have become advertising icons for attracting tourists to particular states and regions.[13]

At the same time, according to historian Donna Gabaccia, tourism has helped Americans cross "the boundaries of taste" with which they were familiar in their various ethnic communities. In her study of American food, *We Are What We Eat: Ethnic Food and the Making of Americans*, she argues that as food items were introduced to new consumers and became "American," they sometimes lost their original meaning as markers of ethnicity. However, those foods that maintained a tourist status also maintained their ethnic symbolism (1998). Similarly, tourism can also help to maintain the continuity of a culinary tradition, particularly if that tradition historically included room for outsiders to participate. For example, clambakes, a New England festive event in which clams, fish, corn, potatoes, and other food items are cooked in a pit dug into the sand of a beach, have continued as a meaningful tradition because they represent continuity with community identity, and that identity includes hospitality (Neustadt 1992).

Kathy Neustadt's study on clambakes represents scholarship in folklore that addresses an experiential approach to understanding meaning. Echoing Jones's call for attention to foodways as a sensory domain, she emphasizes the material quality of food and the need to actually touch, taste, and swallow it in order to understand how other people experience it (1992). I discuss this kind of understanding as "meaningfulness"; that is, the "felt" meanings of a food—the ways in which it functions emotionally, psychologically, and socially for individuals within a group, and the ways those individuals experience that food. My conceptualization of culinary tourism attempts to understand the role of tourism in the meaningfulness of food experiences. How does tourism shape the ways in which food connects us to our past, our place, and to other people, not only on a cognitive and intellectual level but also on an emotional one?

Culinary Tourism as Conceptual Framework

This volume examines examples of the intersection of food and tourism, offering a conceptual framework for approaching culinary tourism.[14] It begins with an essay on culinary tourism as a theoretical and methodological concept and includes a case study of strategies used in the manipulation of culinary tourism. The remaining essays are organized into three sections according to the context in which the tourist activity occurs: public and commercial contexts, private and domestic contexts, and constructed and emergent contexts.

Following the anthropological literature on typologies, the volume offers several of its own: types of otherness, foodways, venues for tourism, and strategies of negotiating otherness in culinary tourism. Otherness in relation to food tends to be thought of as cuisines representing ethnicity or exotic cultures vastly different from one's own. Food, however, can represent many types of other: time-related, religious/ethical, regional, gendered, age-related, and socioeconomic as well as the more common cultural or ethnic. While most of the essays focus on the cultural other, Lucy Long's essay gives examples of each of them. The essay by Miryam Rotkovitz on Kosher food explores the religious other, and Liz Wilson, in her essay on Asian foods, analyzes the intersection of ethical and socioeconomic other. Eve Jochnowitz's study of Jewish restaurants in Poland touches upon the past as other. Further elaboration of tourism utilizing the varieties of others would be a contribution to the field.

A second typology as well as a key idea in the culinary tourism model is the incorporation of the concept of foodways to allow for more activities than consumption to be considered as potential tourist experiences. While eating "foreign" or "ethnic" foods is the most obvious activity of tourism, procurement and preparation are frequently used vehicles for exploration as well. Visiting an ethnic market to obtain ingredients can be a touristic act, as is thumbing through cookbooks of "foreign" cuisines. Most public venues for tourism highlight consumption, while private and domestic contexts usually allow for a broader spectrum of foodways to be explored. The essays by Jill Rudy on Mormon missionaries in Guatemala, Miryam Rotkovitz on American Jews, and Jacqueline Thursby on Basques and Basque Americans describe how preparation as tourism enables the tourist to experience more fully the cultures represented by the cuisines being prepared. Barbara Shortridge and Liz Wilson mention procurement as tourism in their studies of ethnic heritage food in the American Midwest.

A third typology identifies venues in which food is presented as tourist attraction. This includes business ventures, such as restaurants, groceries, advertising, and marketing, as well as educational and celebratory venues, such as schools, museums, and festivals. The venues can also be public or private, communal or individual. This typology challenges the perception of travel as necessary to tourism. Individuals need not leave

familiar territory in order to experience otherness. The tourist gaze can be turned inward to look at the familiar and everyday, recognizing them as potentially offering a different kind of experience. This frequently involves seeing from another's perspective, for example, viewing a standard menu as if one came from another place or time. Foods we take for granted suddenly become strange. Similarly, the tourist gaze can illuminate the meanings of a familiar food, attending to the ways in which it embodies a personal and cultural past and expresses perceptions of identity.[15]

A fourth typology outlines some of the strategies used by individuals and groups to present their foods in tourist venues. Central to these strategies is the idea of tourism as a negotiation of experiential realms of exoticness and familiarity, edibility and palatability. Tourism is a process by which meanings are assigned to activities and objects and by which activities and objects are interpreted. It is a perspective; a way of viewing and experiencing that attends to contrast with the familiar. As such, it is also a resource for expressing identity, satisfying aesthetic needs, and enacting social roles and relationships. This theme of tourism as process runs throughout the essays and is analyzed as rhetorical strategies in the first chapter. It is particularly emphasized by Amy Bentley in her discussion of Southwestern cuisine and by Jeffrey Pilcher is his analysis of Mexican culinary tourism. Rachelle Saltzman explores tourism as intensification of identity in her essay on restaurants in the Catskill Mountains of New York State, while Kristin McAndrews demonstrates that ethnic identity as represented by food can be fluid and negotiable in touristic events.

Underlying all the essays in the book is the use of ethnography as both a research tool and conceptual model. Tourists and hosts have been observed in action; tourist sites have been visited; individuals interviewed; and food eaten in order to identify the perceptions of the participants of tourism. As ethnographers, we are concerned with the meanings assigned by those individuals and institutions. Those are the meanings that are being acted upon, that are understood by the people using them. Ethnography tells us what choices were available to individuals and why they made the selections they did, giving us insights into how people experience culinary tourism.

Ethnography rests on context, on observing the immediate setting and surroundings of an event as well as the historical, social, cultural, and personal background of the event and the participants. People react to all these forces, so that context shapes their actions. Exploring tourism according to context, then, enables us to understand the particulars of individual instances of tourism as well as the broader patterns of culinary tourism in general.

The cultural context of much of the research in this volume is American. While the volume does not claim to define the American experience of culinary tourism, it does raise questions concerning culinary tourism in the United States. Is the experience of tourism by Americans within their own country distinctively different from tourism elsewhere or by non-Americans? How do our varied backgrounds and histories influence what we eat, when we eat, and how we eat? How do they influence our approach to trying new things, whether at home or abroad? Is there a peculiarly American form of culinary tourism? Such questions turn us to issues of national identity and cultural politics. Who, after all, decides what is American food and who is American? Who defines what it means to eat in the United States?

The mobility, individualism, affluence, and consumerism that characterize American culture have also shaped American foodways. Individuals commonly move away from family and neighborhood to pursue educational and professional opportunities. Foods and foodways are carried along and introduced and established in new places. Historical ties with place, then, are becoming less and less a physical reality. However, there may be a corresponding increase in nostalgia for place as well as in awareness of distinctions between the various regions and types of place in the United States. Individuals moving outside their home regions discover that their foodways, even though heavily shaped by mass-produced foods, carry distinctive aspects that seem strange or uncommon in other regions—hot dogs have different toppings in Chicago, New York, or Detroit; carbonated drinks go by different names according to region—pop, tonic, soft drinks, soda.

A characteristic of contemporary American eating—and perhaps a result of the general affluence of American society—is the treatment of food as entertainment. Dining out, preparing new recipes, attending cooking classes, and purchasing cookbooks and cooking magazines are not necessarily required for nutritional purposes but provide hobbies and entertainment for many Americans. This can also be seen as culinary tourism and as ways for Americans to explore not only "foreign" and exotic foods but foods closer to home. Foods thought to be familiar are turned into subjects for the tourist gaze when they are recognized as carrying identity.

American foodways draw from the wealth of immigrant and native

foodways available throughout the history of the country. Although a homogenization of this variety seems to occur on a national level, regional and ethnic foodways have not only retained their distinctive identity but tend to traditionalize the commercial and mass-produced foods that usually define our national cuisine. According to historian Donna Gabaccia in her study of ethnic food in America, Americans were and are no more conservative in their culinary preferences than any other culture. In fact, they have displayed a flexible and open approach to trying new foods and incorporating them into their foodways as well as adapting their own food traditions to new circumstances and resources. She interprets this treatment of food as representing an open approach to the variety of cultures making up the nation. She states: "The foods we eat commemorate a long history of peaceful cultural interaction; our multiethnic eating daily proclaims our satisfied sense of affiliation with one another" (1998:231).

Culinary tourism, then, does not challenge one's identity as an American. This perhaps explains the history of adoption of foods introduced by cultural groups holding low social status. Dishes from Chinese (particularly Cantonese), Mexican, and even African-American cuisines originally entered mainstream foodways from the ground up, so to speak, from the working classes who ate what was affordable and filling. Contemporary American food habits now include a wide array of items that started their culinary life carrying specific ethnic associations with little status.

The essays in this volume explore culinary tourism in the United States from a number of perspectives. My essay identifies strategies used in restaurants and festivals to market foods to tourists. Amy Bentley analyzes tourism within the economic structures of American culture, exploring the meanings and uses of the cuisine of the southwestern United States. She examines the appropriation of this cuisine by food industries, and the political implications of the large-scale acceptance of this hybrid cuisine by mainstream America. Rachelle Saltzman's essay describes food in the Catskills resorts, exploring the culinary other not as the unfamiliar but as the ideal. Her work demonstrates the complexity of tourism and the ways in which it can turn inward as well as lead outward. Liz Wilson writes about the adaptation of Asian foodways by the '60s generation—"again baby boomers"—tying this movement to specific historical and cultural trends. She explores not only the changing status of a set of foods from exotic to familiar, but also the incorporation of culinary tourism into an everyday norm for eating. In the final chapter, Barbara Shortridge examines a number of venues for ethnic food tourism in the midwestern

United States. Restaurants, souvenir shops, and festivals all frame particular foods as representing ethnicity and heritage and therefore available for tourism. The idea of culinary tourism, however, is not unique to American culture. It occurs in every culture and every level of society, and the observations made in these essays are relevant to culinary tourism in other contexts.

Concluding Invitation

This book offers theory and data with which to think about food and tourism, hopefully challenging and expanding our understanding of both. Food is more than simply the dishes we consume; tourism is more than traveling to a culture different from one's own. A basic question underlying any research in culinary tourism is that of why food is so often central to the touristic experience. I know from my own experiences that food seems to provide us with a sense of the "realness" of things. Because of food's commonality to all cultures, it allows us to experience the diversity within that commonality, providing us with groundedness from which we can embark on adventures into otherness. This book is meant to provide a taste of such adventures.

Notes

1. Influential publications were Dean MacCannell's *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class*, published in 1976 (reprinted in 1989), and Valene L. Smith's *Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism*, published in 1977 (with an updated edition in 1989).

2. MacCannell draws from Erving Goffman's work on social space and his divisions of social establishments into front and back regions. MacCannell delineates six settings in which different degrees of intimacy are allowed between the host culture and the tourist, creating perceptions of authentic engagement with the culture by the audience (1989:101–4).

3. Smith's typology of tourists includes: "explorer, elite, offbeat, unusual, incipient mass, mass, charter" (1989:11–14). His typology of tourism forms includes: ethnic tourism, cultural tourism, historical tourism, environmental tourism, and recreational tourism (1989:4–6).

4. The proceedings from this conference were published as *Food and the Traveller: Migration, Immigration, Tourism and Ethnic Food*, edited by Patricia Lysaght (Nicosia, Cyprus: Intercollege Press, 1998).

5. John Gregory Bourke, 1895, "The Folk-foods of the Rio Grande Valley and of Northern Mexico," *Journal of American Folklore* 8: 41–47.

6. Yoder worked primarily with the traditional culture of Pennsylvania, fo-

CHAPTER 1

Culinary Tourism

A Folkloristic Perspective on Eating and Otherness

Lucy M. Long

Culinary tourism is about food as a subject and medium, destination and vehicle, for tourism. It is about individuals exploring foods new to them as well as using food to explore new cultures and ways of being. It is about groups using food to "sell" their histories and to construct marketable and publicly attractive identities, and it is about individuals satisfying curiosity. Finally, it is about the experiencing of food in a mode that is out of the ordinary, that steps outside the normal routine to notice difference and the power of food to represent and negotiate that difference.

Definitions

Folklorists, food scholars, and food aficionados have long been fascinated by occasions of exploratory eating—instances of eating the new, the unfamiliar, the alien—and by the institutions and artifacts that enable those occasions, such as "ethnic" restaurants, international cookbooks, and folklife festivals.[1] These occasions and institutions include a wide variety of food-related behaviors and reflect complex networks of cultural, social, economic, and aesthetic systems as well as individual preferences. The definition of what constitutes adventurous eating is a contextual one that depends on the perspective and motivations of the eater. In this essay I propose the concept of "culinary tourism" as a framework for tying together the notion of perspective and the variety of instances in which a foodways is considered representative of the other.[2] I define culinary tourism as the intentional, exploratory participation in the foodways of an other—participation including the consumption, preparation, and presentation of a food item, cuisine, meal system, or eating style considered to belong to a culinary system not one's own.[3] This definition emphasizes the individual as active agent in constructing meanings within a tourist experience, and it allows for an aesthetic response to food as part of that experience.[4]

Exploration and intentionality define these instances as tourism. Participation occurs specifically because of the perceived otherness of the foodways, and that otherness elicits curiosity. Although scholarship concerning the anthropology of tourism primarily addresses exploration of new spaces, it has generated concepts applicable to the exploration of new culinary domains as well. Valene Smith defined a tourist as "a temporarily leisured person who voluntarily visits a place away from home for the purpose of experiencing a change" (1989:1). The culinary tourist anticipates a change in the foodways experience for the sake of experiencing that change, not merely to satisfy hunger. Nelson Graburn proposed that the tourist experience is a journey from the profane to the sacred as a way to embellish and add meaning to one's life (1989:22). The tourist experience offers not only new cultures and new sights, but also new ways of perceiving those sights, and these new ways of perceiving ultimately enhance the individual. John Urry developed this notion of tourism as a qualitative category of experience, defining it as a kind of viewing he refers to as "the tourist gaze" (1990). This gaze is distinctive from "everyday looking" in that it attends to difference (1990, 1995). It notices contrast and distinctiveness; it shifts objects and actions out of the common and mundane world, enabling or encouraging viewers to recognize their power as symbols, entertainment, and art. In this sense, foodways may be one of the fullest ways of perceiving otherness. Sightseeing is only a partial engagement with otherness, whereas culinary tourism, utilizing the senses of taste, smell, touch, and vision, offers a deeper, more integrated level of experience. It engages one's physical being, not simply as an observer, but as a participant as well.[5]

A key concept in these definitions is the idea of tourism being voluntary; becoming a tourist is a choice, and with that choice there is an implied openness to the new. New experiences may be tried, however, for a variety of reasons, not all of which we would consider touristic. For example, individuals may participate in an exotic foodways out of consideration for one's host, in response to a challenge, as a statement of rebellion against the status quo, to conform to social obligations or norms, and so

on. Tourism, on the other hand, involves new experiences for the sake of the experience itself. Through tourism, we satisfy our curiosity about otherness; we confront the impulse to explore the unknown, to climb the mountain because it is there. And we expect to find pleasure in seeking the unknown, perhaps not in the unknown itself, but in the conducting of that search; we may not like the food after all, but we can have fun trying it. Furthermore, the pleasure we find in food and eating can be of an aesthetic nature, satisfying our sensibilities of taste, proportion, and appearance, so that the pleasure stems from the food itself and not from what it represents.

Intentionality also assumes the perception, or categorization, of a food complex as other, and it is this perception that shapes our approach to the food. We must think of a food as being somehow different, new, or exotic in order to think of exploring it. This perception can shift with experience, and the shift can move us toward tourism or away from it. What may begin as touristic eating may change with familiarity. We may try a new food with trepidation, but once we discover the taste is pleasing, we may then eat that food for aesthetic enjoyment. An example of such a shift occurred personally during a meal at a Taiwanese restaurant in the United States in which I came across a chunk of unknown substance in a seafood stew. Because the other ingredients were sea creatures and the chunk resembled marbled fat, my dinner companions and I tried to identify what animal it may have belonged to. After a tentative taste, we realized it was plant—more specifically, taro—and we ate it with hunger rather than curiosity.

Similarly, we have probably all had the experience of unknowingly eating something that we otherwise would have considered inedible or unappealing and would have approached with curiosity, with the sense of trying something different. An example that plays upon ethnic stereotypes occurred while I was traveling in Burma and was served dog-fried rice at a small lunchroom. Not knowing the ingredients but recognizing the general category of the dish and being hungry, my Western traveling companions and I ate enthusiastically. During the meal, however, the cook responded to our questioning gestures about the meat in the dish with an "arf, arf." We immediately lost our appetites. Those of us who continued to eat did so out of curiosity rather than hunger, and with a definite sense of eating something outside our usual boundaries of what was edible. Our initial consumption of this food was not a voluntary participation in an other, but a misperception of the familiar. We moved from eating to satisfy physical hunger to eating as outsiders.

Foodways

"Participation in foodways" implies the full spectrum of activities surrounding food. The term "foodways" suggests that food is a network of activities and systems—physical, social (communicative), cultural, economic, spiritual, and aesthetic. Folklorist Don Yoder borrowed the term from anthropologist John J. Honigman to refer to "the total cookery complex, including attitudes, taboos, and meal systems—the whole range of cookery and food habits in a society."[6] As such, food touches every aspect of our lives. Participation in this multifaceted universe involves the procurement and/or the production of raw materials; the preparation of those materials into food; the preservation of foods; the planning of menus and meal systems; the presentation of dishes; the performance of eating styles or techniques; the system of food habits, food ethos, and aesthetics; as well as the actual consumption of food. It also includes a wide range of behaviors connected to thinking and talking about food—the metaculinary universe; for example, collecting recipes and cookbooks; producing and viewing televised cooking shows; participating in cooking classes or instances of teaching and learning techniques of food preparation, presentation, and consumption. Participation, then, includes the whole range of activities surrounding food.

The concept of foodways opens up the range of activities available for tourism. Since food is more than the dishes we eat, we can be tourists by exploring these other aspects of the food systems. It means that we can mix the new with the old, the exotic with the familiar. For example, we can procure familiar ingredients from a new market, try new preparation methods for an old favorite, or substitute known spices for novel ones in a new dish. It also means that we can be culinary tourists without actually eating, or without leaving home. Perusing cookbooks and cooking magazines and watching cooking shows or films with food scenes offer mental and emotional journeys to other food worlds. Similarly, foodways can help to ground tourism in the everyday. By turning normally routine activities, such as shopping, cleaning up, and storing foods, into tourist sites, we can more easily contrast and negotiate the sense of difference with the familiar.

Otherness

"Other" in this definition refers to the anthropological notion of humans defining the world according to their own socially constructed perceptions of reality, perceptions that divide the world into the known and

familiar as opposed to the unknown or other.[7] Otherness is a construction by the individual as well as by the culture within which that individual moves. Foods are not inherently strange or exotic; the experiences of an individual are what determine the status of a food. In this sense, tourism depends on a perception of otherness rather than an objective reality of an item's relationship to that individual.

The other can be distinguished from the familiar along a variety of dimensions. In the context of foodways, I suggest five major categories: culture, region, time, ethos/religion, and socioeconomic class. Gender and age can also be types of other, but do not seem to be used frequently. In reality, all of these categories frequently overlap.

Culture, which includes ethnicity and national identity, is one of the most obvious ways of distinguishing food systems as other. It is also the most frequent category in which culinary tourism is enacted, giving us international dinners, cookbooks, and restaurants specializing in the cuisine of particular cultures, and classes and televised cooking shows demonstrating cooking techniques from a variety of cultures. This category is based partly on spatial distance and physical boundaries between groups of people. A food system physically removed from the familiar can automatically, though not necessarily, represent the unknown and therefore be potentially strange. This spatial distance also refers to the juxtaposition of foodways of varying cultures that have historically had physical distance, usually with the locating of one identity within the context of another, turning the former identity ethnic.[8] Ethnicity, like otherness, is a dynamic cultural construct and is more usefully thought of as a process of contextualization rather than an actual objective state. Ethnic identity is based on perceptions of shared heritage and of living within a dominant host culture (Oring 1986:24). In a way, within tourism, all cultures are ethnic, since it is the contrast with the individual's familiar cultural identity that makes the contrasting one appropriate for the tourist gaze.

Region as other also refers to spatial distance, but it is distance occurring within national boundaries. Regions are cultural landscapes shaped by and resulting from specific natural environments and the particular cultures utilizing them. As a basic necessity of survival and therefore a central aspect of everyday life, food plays a prominent role in the manipulation of the natural environment and serves as a window into the histories, ethos, and identities of the specific cultures tied to that environment.[9]

Region exists within cultures and often offers a localization of a broadly cultural foodways as well as a foodways unique to and distinctive of that geographic area. For example, in the American Southwest, salsa frequently

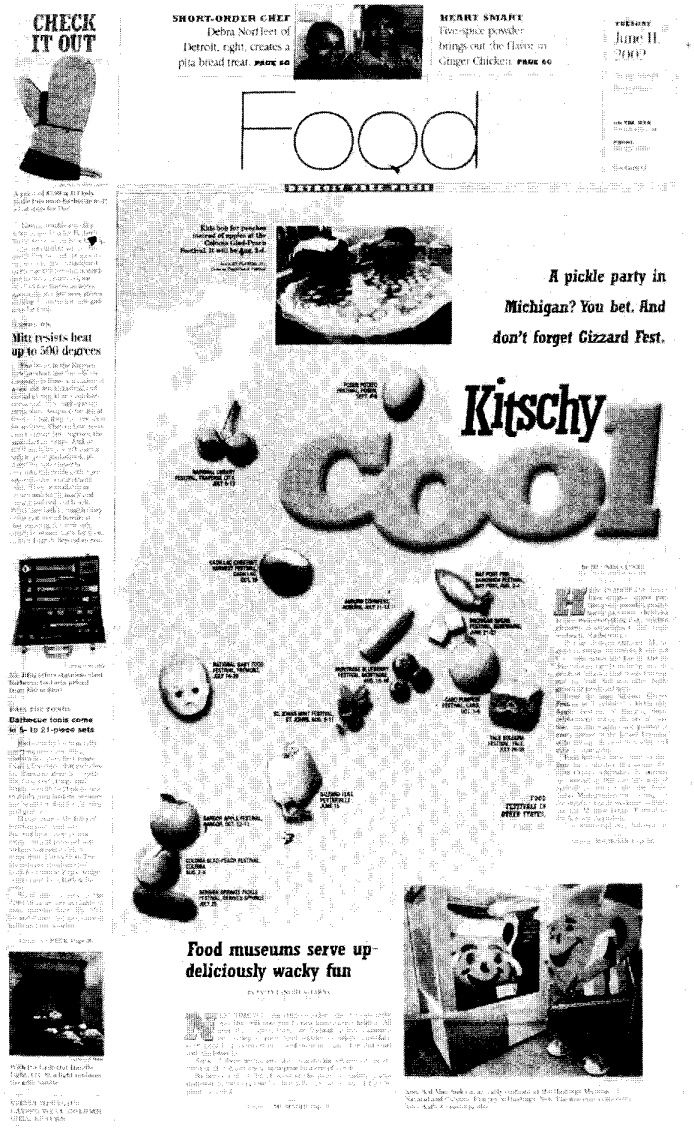
1-1. Packages from the same company but three products. One emphasizes ethnic other—"traditional Middle Eastern." The second package highlights an ethical other—vegetarianism—as does the bottle drink advertising "Soy to the World," since soy is associated with organic and vegetarian diets. *Photo by David Hampshire.*

1-2. These two food items play upon the cultural or ethnic other. The first specifies the cultural identity—"Thai Kitchen," "Thai Ginger and Vegetable." It then includes an explanation, "Instant Rice Noodles" and a photo of the product. Smaller letters at the top of the package proclaim "Authentic Thai Cuisine," just in case there was any doubt. The second product makes no claims to a specific ethnicity, but the brand name "Maruchan Ramen" identifies it as ethnic American. Originating in Korea and Japan, these instant noodles are usually packaged with "Oriental" seasonings; however, this flavor—tomato—has adapted to American tastes, incorporating Italian American cooking. *Photo by David Hampshire.*

1-3. Regional others are highlighted by these items, as is spelled out by the potato chip package that proclaims "Tastes of Amcrica." Stereotypes of Southern California are used—palm trees, skateboard, eool kid in sunglasses. The cookies imply the coastal aspect of Boston, perhaps harking back to the Boston Tea Party and the essential American-ness of the city. The package also uses the ethical other—vegan—"Egg and Dairy Free" and the socioeconomic other "Premium Gourmet." The postcard defines Louisiana in terms of its food, showing its distinctiveness from other regions and implying its ethnic otherness by presenting Cajun seafood and sausages. *Photo by David Hampshire.*

tops hamburgers in place of ketchup, representing a local food item added to a national one. There is simultaneously a distinctive Southwestern cuisine blending the Anglo, Hispanic, and Native American foodways of that region. Regional awareness is becoming more widespread in the United States as Americans attempt to define themselves as a nation but still recognize individual histories. Numerous festivals, restaurants, and cookbooks celebrate region, and place is currently used as a potent marketing tool for tourism as well as for entertainment and patriotism.

Separation by time refers to foodways of eras other than the present. The past is a rich source of culinary otherness; for example, historical reenactment feasts, samples of food served in living history demonstrations, or cookbooks offering re-creations of past recipes. Such foods frequently represent a highly selective past, and sometimes an invented one.



1-4. Region is again presented as other. The map of Michigan as well as the headline presents a region normally thought of as mainstream American, as having distinctive traditions, even if they are "Kitschy." The article also tends to make exotic the familiar by looking at common foods—cherries, pickles, Kool-Aid—as a source of "wacky fun." *Photo by David Hampshire.*

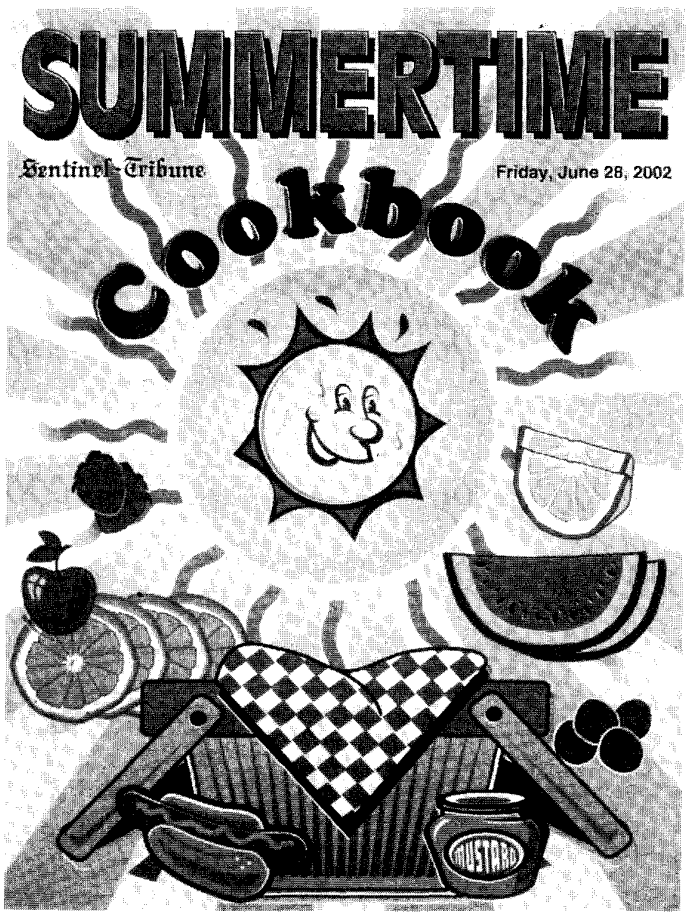
Heritage is a construction of the past based on contemporary identity and represents the interpretive stance and purposes of whoever is doing the interpreting (Lowenthall 1985; Handler and Gable 1997). It is a common destination for tourism, and food frequently plays a role in "making history come alive," as living history museums commonly express it, allowing viewers to glimpse the routines of everyday life in a past era. The full range of foodways is frequently included at these museums—from growing crops and raising livestock to harvesting and even butchering, to cooking and eating.[10]

Time as other can also refer to futuristic foods; for example, dried "astronaut" ice cream, the pelletlike "ice cream of the future" sold in amusement parks, or preparation techniques imagined for the future. Some items categorized as health foods, such as soy products, quinoa and other high protein grains, and organically grown produce, are marketed as foods that a civilized, environmentally aware nation will move toward adopting as a standard part of its cuisine in the future, while simultaneously identifying the foods with a preindustrialized, romanticized tribal past. As with foods representing the past, futuristic foods reflect a selective view of what we hope will come to pass, a time when technology will provide for all the world's population without depleting natural resources or destroying the environment—or in such a way that environmental concerns are no longer relevant.

Time as other can also include special foodways set aside for holiday celebrations or rituals. These events can be considered "time out of time" and are frequently embedded in religions and cultural others as well. Holiday traditions commonly, if not universally, involve some aspect of foodways, from foods specially designated for that holiday (candy canes for Christmas, cakes with candles for birthdays, turkey and dressing for Thanksgiving) to preparation methods (cookie exchanges for winter holidays, tamale making among Mexican-American women at Christmastime, outdoor grilling for America's Independence Day) to designated styles of consumption (family-style serving for Thanksgiving, picnic and informal eating for the Fourth of July) (Santino 1994). Candy packaged with the colors and motifs of a particular holiday signal an opportunity to get in the spirit of that holiday by purchasing and consuming that candy. Cereal, cake mixes, snack crackers, and other foods are now marketed in this way (Santino 1996). Religious rituals frequently involve food in overtly symbolic ways: Christian communion includes bread and wine as symbols of the body and blood of Jesus; Jewish Passover utilizes matzo (unleavened bread) as a reminder of Moses leading the Israelites out of Egypt.

1-5. National identity is evident in the packaging for these foods. By using motifs from the American flag ("Stars & Stripes"; red, white, and blue colors; and the character on the cake mix waving a flag) a patriotic other is emphasized. These products were all sold around the fourth of July, the date of American Independence Day, so that not only do they evoke images of the nation, but also images of that holiday—picnics and barbecues, fun with family and friends, fireworks, a day off from work. *Photo by David Hampshire.*

Ethos and religion also define the other. While both refer to worldview and systems of evaluating human actions and products, religion, as used here, implies formal, institutionalized rules for behavior based on an interpretation of the spiritual and the sacred. The religious culinary other would include food taboos and meals or food preparation methods following religious dietary requirements, such as those proscribed by Judaism, Islam, Seventh Day Adventists, and other religions. Also used for tourist purposes, as mentioned above, are dishes corresponding to calendrical cycles or ritual observances. Three kings cake for Epiphany,[11] Polish jelly doughnuts for Lent, and rice cakes for Chinese New Year are commonly sold in supermarkets where I live and are advertised as a way to experience those holidays. Church festivals, in-school demonstrations, and folklife festivals frequently offer foods representing this type of other as a way to educate outsiders about a specific religion or religious group. The foods selected for such presentations are frequently ones that are felt to be "safe," as they do not challenge the normative perceptions of what defines food and appealing tastes.



1-6. Time as other is evident in this newspaper special of recipes for this season. Although hot dogs and oranges are eaten throughout the year, they are associated here with summertime activities and vacations. *Photo by David Hampshire.*

Ethos may also be formally organized but less associated with the spiritual world. Vegetarians and vegans, for example, represent a growing population in the Western world and constitute a significant enough number to be recognized in the American marketplace. Vegetarian meals, meat substitutes, restaurants offering vegetarian menus, and cookbooks and food magazines designed specifically for non–meat eaters, offer venues by

which tourists can experience this ethos. Similarly, organic produce offers an entrée into a philosophical stance on the relationship of humans to nature. Breastfeeding can, though not necessarily, also represent an ethos of the nature of the mother-child relationship. Diet foods and dieting schedules reflect a concern with body image that represents a contemporary ethos related particularly to the female body. Any of these foods can be offered as a way of trying out those belief systems.

Socioeconomic class as culinary other divides foodways according to recognized social levels within a society. In the United States, we find genres such as white trash cookbooks, down-home diners, upscale "fancy" dining in expensive hotels or four-star restaurants, and gourmet cooking classes. Some of these foods, particularly lower-class cuisine, are presented in a humorous, satirical manner that mocks not only the cuisine, but also the cultural group producing it. For example, the cookbooks featuring Southern working-class and mountain foods tend to use stereotypes and negative imagery of these populations, presenting their food as consisting of "trash animals," such as opossums, groundhogs, throw-away parts of animals (squirrel brains), unusual grains and fruits (hominy, persimmons), and using unhealthy cooking techniques (everything fried in lard). At the same time, these books do address a somewhat morbid curiosity about groups considered outside the mainstream, and there is the potential that they can be read and their recipes tried as culinary tourism. Similarly, as commercial, mass-produced foods disseminated through grocery store chains and fast-food restaurants have become more popular and are perceived as taking over American foodways, the home cooking and plain foods of the middle classes and middle America are being presented as an other cuisine not only ripe for touristic exploration, but also rich in political implications.

Gender and age are two more categories of otherness, but neither seems to play a significant role in either marketing or intentional tourism. An example of gendered foodways would be a woman carving the Thanksgiving turkey or overseeing the barbecue grill, not out of necessity or skill, but out of curiosity to experience what are usually considered male activities. Similarly, the 1970s phrase "real men don't each quiche" can be turned into a tourist call for men to taste quiche in order to experience femininity (or possibly homosexuality). Age as the basis for an other foodways would include items such as commercial baby food, infant formula, or breast milk. There may even be certain foods that we associate with our childhood and youth; tasting them may flood us with memories of another age, allowing us to revisit experiences tied to age. For example,

I occasionally consume grape Popsicles or soda pop to see if I can recapture the intensity of flavor they seemed to hold for me as a child.

All of these others can be enacted in a variety of arenas, commercial and domestic, public and private, festive and ordinary. Restaurants, festivals, cookbooks, grocery stores, private festive food events, cooking classes, televised cooking shows, advertising, and tourism brochures are some specific sites for culinary tourism. These arenas serve as interfaces between individuals and cultures, reflecting the expectations and contexts bearing upon each exchange. Interactions with foodways are seen through the lenses of our own experiences and cultural history; our perceptions of an other are uniquely our own. Simultaneously, our expectations will shape the interchange. Using the term "interface" highlights the self-reflexive potential of such sites and the possibility for dynamic, negotiated interactions within them. The term also reminds us that encounters with the other frequently teach us more about ourselves than about the other.

Each enactment of such tourism involves at least two actors, real or imagined, the host and the guest, the producer and the consumer—each having their own perspectives on what defines otherness. Consumers select those foodways contrasting with their own culinary system; while producers, individuals, or institutions attempting to present potentially other foodways must take into account the foodways systems of their audience. An individual shapes the presentation of his or her ethnicity according to the cognitive model held of the audience's culture (Coggeshall 1986). Producers of instances and artifacts of culinary tourism will likewise adapt their presentations to their understanding of their audience's culinary aesthetics and experiences. Studies of culinary tourism, then, need to address instances of such tourism as interactive, communicative events within a larger conceptual symbolic system.[12]

Realms of Culinary Experience

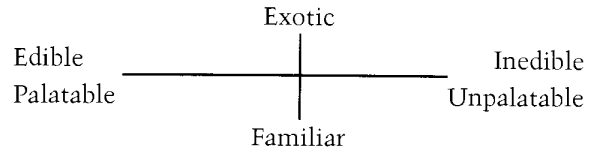
In the context of foodways, the crux of otherness involves three realms of experience—what I call the realms of the exotic, the edible, and the palatable. The *exotic* is a continuum from the familiar to the strange that defines the similarity of things to our known socially constructed universe. It is based on our individual histories and personal tastes as well as on the collective cultural experience and the generally accepted culinary aesthetic.

The realm of the *edible* consists of cultural categories of what can and cannot be eaten, in the sense that one's humanity is tied to observing such categories. While this realm has similarities with Claude Lèvi-Strauss's categories of raw and cooked (Lèvi-Strauss 1966; 1978), I do not treat it as expressive of universal cognitive structures. Edibility is culturally specific, and as Mary Douglas has demonstrated in her work on taboos and food patterns, it can be a reflection of a culture's social structure. The question of edibility automatically occurs at the extreme end of the exotic continuum since the unknown raises questions not only about whether a food can be eaten, but also whether it should be eaten (Douglas 1966).

The realm of the *palatable* is an aesthetic rather than cognitive one, dealing with what is considered pleasing within a culinary system. Foods may be considered edible, but their selection for consumption will depend on whether or not they are considered savory, appetizing, or appropriate for particular contexts. Palatability can be seen as a "shadow" realm of edibility, since the two tend to be collapsed by many eaters. Certain food items or aspects of a food system may be considered culturally edible but unpalatable to a particular eater or group of eaters, and therefore would appear inedible. Vegetarians, for example, may find meat not only unpalatable, but also inedible. The children's categories of "yuk" and "yum" also blur the distinction between these realms, translating them into a culinary philosophy shaping everyday consumption, much to the dismay of nutrition-minded parents.

The difference between the realms of edible and palatable is perhaps most clearly seen in how we use them to evaluate other eaters. The eater of the "not edible" is perceived as strange, perhaps dangerous, definitely not one of us, whereas the eater of the unpalatable is seen as having different tastes. Both realms refer to the potential consumption of a particular food or aspect of foodways, but edibility refers to the categorical possibility; palatability to the aesthetic. The first is what we can eat; the second is what we want to eat.

By treating these categories as dynamic cultural resources available for individual manipulation and responsive to change, I hope to leave the model open to the historical, the situated, the contingent, and the diversity within cultures. In keeping with this approach, it is perhaps more accurate to portray these realms as axes that cross each other, forming four quadrants. These quadrants allow for overlapping, so there can be foods that are exotic but edible and foods that are familiar but inedible.



Since the boundaries of these realms depend on the past experiences, personal tastes, and personalities of the potential eaters and producers, as well as on the cultural categories and aesthetics of those actors, these realms are flexible and dynamic. Food items can shift in their location within these realms, because individuals' and society's perceptions of edibility and exoticness can shift. This shifting can occur in any direction along these axes: from the exotic to the familiar or the familiar to the exotic, and from the edible to the inedible or the inedible to the edible. It can occur on an individual basis or on a larger scale as a regional or national trend, either informal or institutionalized. It can also occur with any aspect of foodways—a specific ingredient, a particular dish, eating style, or preparation method—as well as entire cuisines.

Shifts in Perspective and the Multivocality of Food

The shifting from the exotic to the familiar and the inedible to the edible occurs constantly in the marketing of new foods to the American public. A good example is kiwi fruit, ten years ago a rarity in grocery stores in my part of the Midwest, but now commonplace enough to be included in school lunches. Pizza provides another example, beginning as an ethnic food with some question as to its palatability. With acceptance it has become a common meal for many Americans and has lost much of its otherness, to the extent that it is now considered a genre of food with certain structural features: dessert pizzas consist of a sweet dough or cookie base covered with whipped cream or sweetened cream cheese and topped with fruit or candies; ice-cream pizzas are similar but with an ice cream base. Ironically, some producers are shifting pizza back to the exotic end of the continuum by the addition of trendy, expensive, or unusual items—whole-wheat crusts, sun-dried tomatoes, shiitake mushrooms, goat cheese, grilled shrimp, and lobster. A pizza carryout restaurant in Philadelphia owned by a Korean couple deftly mixed the familiar and the exotic by offering a dish called "Korean Pizza," a standard pizza crust with Korean grilled beef and vegetables. Similarly, tostados and tacos have moved from the realm of questionable edibility to such familiarity that they are being served in school cafeterias. Chopsticks, rice steamers, shish kebab, barbecue, hot pepper sauces, and salsa dips are other common examples of this type of shift.

While American foodways appear to be expanding, the opposite directional shift occurs also, particularly in the definitions based on ethos. Some foodways that were once mainstream, even normative, have been moved to the inedible by some segments of the population because of nutritional

or health concerns. Cooking green beans (and other vegetables) for hours with lard or bacon, as is common in traditional Southern cooking, is no longer in favor in health-conscious restaurants in the South. Butters and creams are suspect, as are traditional sauces and gravies that call for these ingredients. Rich desserts full of fats and sugar are deemed taboo for those who are health-conscious, and women's magazines frequently give alternative recipes and cooking methods for popular but cholesterol-laden foods like fried chicken, grilled cheese sandwiches, and ice cream. Similarly, vegetarians have placed animal products in the realm of the inedible, sometimes replacing them with foods formerly treated as exotic (bean curd, mashed bean pastes, and bean and grain patties) or even inedible (soybeans, seaweed, fermented dairy products). In these cases, the foodways that have shifted to inedible remain familiar to the larger population.

These shifts occur on a personal level as well, reflecting an individual's history, personality, experiences, and circumstances. Food, like any cultural product, is multivocal and polysemic, and new meanings can be recognized in new contexts. This frequently occurs when one's perceptions of foods are challenged in some way. An example of such a shift in perspective is an incident in which a friend requested suggestions of an exotic food that his young daughter could make for a school project. When I suggested that he look to his own background, he stated that he remembered only "normal foods" like bubble and squeak, toad-in-the-hole, tudgies (mashed turnips), Yorkshire pudding, and odds and sods. Although he had grown up in the urban Midwest, he lived with his Irish immigrant grandparents and was raised with their foodways, assuming that that was standard to the area. When he realized that these foods represented his Irish heritage, he looked at them differently, recognizing that they could be exotic to the Midwest. He then helped his daughter select a recipe for potato pancakes from an Irish cookbook. (The project was very successful; her classmates found the pancakes both foreign and tasty.)

A similar shift in perspective can occur when an individual physically changes location and finds him or herself living within a new foodways system. The contrast between what is accepted as normal in the new location and what is familiar from past experience can lead to foods not normally perceived as different being held up as subject for "the tourist gaze." I offer an experience of my own as an example. Twelve years ago I moved from the urban East Coast to a small town in the Midwest. In restaurants and homes, I was introduced to some regional specialties—canned sauerkraut juice, fried sauerkraut balls; Cincinnati chili (cinnamon-flavored meat sauce served over spaghetti, with a choice of

beans, onions, and cheese on top);[13] mashed potatoes mixed with gravy and noodles; sweetened tomato pudding; gelatin-and-mayonnaise layered salads; thick, syrupy, bitter homemade apple butter; the word "pop" for soft drinks, while the word "soda," which I was used to, referred to an ice cream mixture. I was now in the heart of America—meat-and-potato country—with a cuisine featuring an abundance of starch and protein with few seasonings other than salt.

At the same time, I was dismayed at the paucity of ethnic, vegetarian, and "health" foods available. Whereas I had been used to small ethnic grocery stores, market stalls, and street vendors as well as inexpensive, family-run ethnic restaurants, foods that had been a part of my everyday diet—tofu, numerous fresh vegetables and fruits, items from Vietnamese, Ethiopian, Korean, Chinese, and Afghan cuisines—were not immediately available and were largely unfamiliar to my neighbors. It was with much interest, then, that I read an edition of the local university student newspaper that was titled "International Foods in Local Restaurants." The paper listed Mexican food available at Taco Bell and at Kaufman's Family Restaurant for their weekly Tuesday night special; Italian food at the numerous pizza parlors catering to the student population and on Italian night at Kaufman's; German and Polish sausages at Kaufman's; and Chinese food at two Cantonese lunchrooms specializing in chop suey and chow mein. For real novelty, but somewhat risky, one could order Peking and Szechwan dishes at another Chinese restaurant. To an outsider from the urban East Coast, the selection was not only dismally small, but also was inaccurate in its designation of items as ethnic foods. Of course, none of the local foods I found rather exotic were listed in this article, while those foods considered exotic by the local aesthetic to me were familiar and even mundane. As an outsider, I was discovering the exotic in what was familiar to natives of the area.

Tourism as Negotiation

As this anecdote illustrates, exoticness, edibility, and palatability, like any cultural categories, are contextual, social and personal constructs that can undergo redefinition by specific cultures as well as by individuals. Likewise, they are a resource to be potentially manipulated for creative, expressive, economic, even political ends. The maneuvering between the realms of the exotic and the edible is a dynamic, creative process that is perhaps best thought of as a negotiation of the realms with the needs, interests, and aesthetics of all the actors involved. This negotiation should

be examined, then, from the point of view of both the producer and the consumer, and in terms of individual choices as well as group inclinations. There will always be some individuals who are more conservative in their tastes than others, just as there are individuals who will "push the palate," so to speak. Likewise, some populations, for whatever reason, will be more open to new culinary experiences than others. One of my children's preschool teachers actively taught the children to be good taste-testers, willing to take at least one bite of everything. Her concern was primarily a nutritional one, but she was teaching an exploratory approach to food that contrasted dramatically with the "better safe than sorry" approach pushed by some parents who cautioned children against trying new foods.

While exploratory eating can be a matter of personal preference and accessibility, it can also be promoted for commercial or ideological reasons. Individuals may want to introduce new foodways as a matter of ethnic or regional pride, as a statement of identity, as a demand for public recognition, or as social or cultural capital. They may also be a way to consolidate group belonging, define difference, and demonstrate distinctiveness. New foods may also be presented as a commodity, either as an innovation based on a tradition or as a tradition viable for new groups or uses. In such cases, producers explicitly manipulate the realms of the exotic, the edible, and the palatable to attract consumers.

Strategies of Negotiation

In examining attempts to present and explore new foods, I found five basic strategies for negotiating these realms: *framing, naming* or *translation, explication, menu selection,* and *recipe adaptation.* In the following discussion of these strategies, I focus on the producers/presenters of food, and I draw data primarily from two kinds of arenas: ethnic restaurants, specifically Korean restaurants in Philadelphia in the mid-1980s, and community-based seasonal festivals in the Midwest.[14] Ethnic restaurants are a particularly valuable arena for observation, because the need to be commercially viable forces restaurant owners to be aware of their potential customers' tastes, pocketbooks, and prior exposure to different foodways systems. The anticipated clientele, then, is a major factor in the negotiation of edibility and exoticness, and ethnic restaurants must frequently emphasize the edibility of the exotic in order to attract non-native customers.

Community-based festivals, on the other hand, tend to exoticize the

familiar; they present the mundane as celebratory and the ordinary as extraordinary. In the Midwest, many of these festivals highlight the region's agricultural roots by using as a theme a particular food item or crop associated with the locale—northwest Ohio, for example, boasts apple butter, cherry, radish, tomato, and pumpkin festivals as well as an "Eggstravaganza" featuring eggs.

Framing, the first strategy of negotiation, involves designing a context surrounding a food item that then defines that food's edibility and exoticness. I draw here on ideas from Richard Bauman (1977) and Erving Goffman (1963) to emphasize the need to situate performances in particular physical contexts. The languages used on menus and signs, the decor, the spatial arrangement of tables, and the location of public and private areas are means by which actors can emphasize the exotic or the familiar. The Korean restaurants in Philadelphia signaled their anticipated clientele through such framing. Those catering to primarily Korean customers frequently displayed signs and menus only in Korean, had Korean paintings or objects, but had none of the stereotypical Asian decor. Those anticipating both Korean and non-Korean customers had menus and signs in Korean and English and more of the Asian decor. They also had designated back rooms for in-group customers. These usually were rooms upstairs set aside for large group dinners and parties where the eaters would sit on cushions on the floor at low tables. One establishment even had a disco and bar that was not publicly advertised to non-Koreans. The restaurants expecting a non-Korean clientele tended to use the more stereotypical Asian decor, such as beaded curtains, dragon motifs, and red napkins, with a familiar large dining room seating arrangement.

Similarly, placing an otherwise familiar food in an unusual context can signal a potentially new interpretation of that food. The community-based festivals in Ohio juxtaposed local history with particular foods, assigning those foods associated (both imagined and actual) with cultural heritage and identity. Such framing essentially signifies the need to recognize familiar foods as potentially other, to see them as outsiders would.

The second strategy of negotiation, naming or translation, involves the identification of items. This may be a literal translation of the name of a dish or food item or the invention of a new name. For example, the Korean dish *bulgogi* is translated literally as "fire meat" but is frequently identified as "grilled beef strips." Such names frequently draw from the familiar end of the continuum in order to demonstrate their similarities to the larger foodways system. In doing so, the naming places the food analogously within a framework accessible to Americans. For example,

1-7. A menu from a restaurant plays upon regional as well as cultural and ethical other. Indiana can represent the American Midwest (an exotic region for many Americans) and therefore represent the wholesome values of rural America. The restaurant offers Amish cooking, a culture that is felt to value purity, quality, and tradition in its food as well as in its lifestyle. *Photo by David Hampshire.*

the Korean dish *kimchi* is frequently identified as a pickle, although it is not made with vinegar. It could more accurately by identified as "cabbage and turnip fermented with salt, garlic, hot pepper, and rotted shrimp," but such a description would push it toward the inedible—or at least the unpalatable—for many American consumers.

Festivals also used this strategy to draw attention to the exotic quality of otherwise familiar foods. Prefixes such as "old-tyme" or "old-fashioned" emphasize the foods' representativeness of the past. Similarly, local regional or geographic ties may be made explicit by adding place names to the identification of a food item—Grand Rapids apple butter, Cincinnati chili, Ohio buckeyes (for a chocolate and peanut-butter confection made to resemble horse chestnuts). Religious identities associated with an area were also highlighted—Amish chickens and eggs, Mennonite whole-grain breads—as were characteristics felt to be representative of the region's ethos—homegrown, family-farmed, handpicked.

A third strategy is that of explication: description and explanation of the ingredients, manner of cooking, context for eating, or history and symbolism of the item. In this strategy, the consumer is drawn into the foodways system of the item and given a "native" perspective on it. In an

1-8. More food products that are packaged emphasizing regional others. The scone mix blends a variety of others: "Southern Delicious Contagious" is blended with an ingredient, cranberries, associated with New England and Thanksgiving and a food item, scones, associated with British cuisine. It also implies an ethnical other in its use of "folk art," which, according to the blurb on the package symbolizes this company's food because it "is the very definition of homemade; it's simple, pure and from the heart." Black-eyed peas are associated with Southern and African-American cooking, and in case a consumer is unaware of that, the package states, "Popular in Southern Culture." A drawing of a farm tells us that this food represents a down-home, rural other as well. The jar contains candy in the shape of pebbles and is identified with a city in North Carolina. *Photo by David Hampshire.*

1-9. Jars of apple butter with the packaging highlighting the rural and wholesome associations with this food. *Photo by David Hampshire.*

intentionally humorous use of this strategy, a Thai restaurant in Milwaukee, The King and I, identified the spiciness of the dishes on their menu according to a scale that began with one star for "coward," two stars for "careful," three stars for "adventurous," and four stars for "Native Thai." Similarly, waiters and waitresses in most Korean restaurants were prepared to give a complete description of the ingredients and preparation methods of the dishes being offered. Likewise, they would demonstrate techniques for holding chopsticks, for cooking one's meal with the tableside grill—the *sinsullo*, and for serving oneself from the communal dishes. I played a similar role at the Festival of American Folklife at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., in the early 1980s when I was a presenter for a Korean foodways section. While two older Korean women, neither of whom spoke a great deal of English, demonstrated preparation techniques for a number of dishes, I fielded questions, most of which were about the edibility of those dishes, particularly *kimchi*. This dish is known among Americans for its extreme spiciness and powerful odor, features that have been played upon in American images of Koreans. In my explanations of the diversity of recipes for the dish and of its central role in Korean foodways, I attempted to make the audience familiar enough with *kimchi* to see it as at least edible. They may not personally like the item, but they gained an appreciation for why some people do.

Many cookbook authors attempt a similar negotiation of the exotic by including introductions to the food system being presented or by including narratives and anecdotes about the recipes. For example, a Korean cookbook written in English specifically for Americans provides descriptions of the basics of Korean cuisine and of Korean table settings and has photographs of ingredients potentially unfamiliar to that audience. Another cookbook compiled of recipes used at various Smithsonian folklife festivals includes descriptions of the significance of a recipe in a community or family tradition along with quotations from the original cooks. Such a strategy personalizes, and therefore humanizes, otherwise exotic, potentially inedible foods. A recipe for octopus, for example, is accompanied by the cook's memories of her family's procuring and eating of the creature (Kirlin and Kirlin 1991:95).

The local festivals in Ohio, on the other hand, frame the commonplace as worthy of attention through descriptions of the history and social uses of the item and through explanations of the otherness of familiar foods. Frequently, the food items are familiar, but the cooking methods are not, being "old-fashioned" ones used historically in that region. The Grand Rapids Apple Butter Festival, for example, offers apple butter pre-

pared in large iron pots over outdoor fires, a method that used to be common in the region. While apple butter itself is still a familiar item in the region's foodways, that preparation method is not. During the festival, volunteers demonstrate the cooking method and discuss it with the audience. Similarly, some dishes are not recognized as being representative of the region until their distinctiveness—and their potential exoticness to an outsider—is pointed out. Items such as potpie (a thick chicken or turkey stew with large flat noodles) or Cincinnati chili, apple butter, and tomato ketchup are now being included as part of presentations of regional identity. Other food items may be presented as representative because of their commonness and therefore interrelatedness to other aspects of the regional culture. Recognizing a food item does not shift it toward the realm of the exotic so much as it clarifies the symbolic weight of that food.

Menu selection, the fourth and perhaps the most common strategy, is the selecting of particular dishes thought to best appeal to the consumer. This strategy involves the producer's cognitive model of the tastes of the potential eater as well as the producer's notions of which dishes best represent the cuisine. In Korean restaurants, waitresses frequently suggest the blander dishes to American customers, assuming that too much garlic and hot pepper is offensive to most Americans. Several dishes in particular are thought to be unpalatable to anyone except Koreans—*kimchi chigye* or stew, and *naengmyun*, a cold buckwheat noodle soup served with a thick, black, fermented soybean paste and a raw egg. Several restaurants have actually refused my order of these dishes.

Menu selection clearly reflects the intentions of the producer and the anticipated consumer. Korean restaurants catering to a primarily Korean clientele featured specifically Korean dishes prepared in an "authentic" manner, that is, using more spices. Those anticipating a mixed clientele frequently highlighted on the menu those dishes thought to appeal to non-Koreans. Restaurants targeting mostly non-Koreans selected those dishes using ingredients and quantities of spices known to be acceptable and liked by most American customers. A common strategy among these last establishments was to offer Korean food alongside other Asian cuisines, such as Japanese or Chinese, already established in the United States. By juxtaposing the relatively unfamiliar Korean cuisine with the others—still exotic but more familiar—Korean food was brought into the realm of the edible.

Similarly, a Cantonese restaurant owner in Memphis described to me how he "educated" American children to eat Chinese food by offering them Chinese dishes such as egg rolls and chop suey that he felt would not be too strange to them. Once they were familiar with these foods, he

gradually offered them a larger selection until they had acquired a taste for Chinese cuisine. Ironically, his teaching was too effective, and the children, when they became adults, went on to acquire tastes for the Peking and Szechwan styles offered by other restaurants. He concluded that his Cantonese-style cooking was too bland for them, too familiar, and no longer offered the excitement of the exotic.[15]

Using the same strategy, the community-based festivals selected dishes thought to be familiar to the crowds but also fitting of a particular public identity, one that was usually based on an imagined past. Apple butter or popcorn was standard demonstration fare at these festivals; neither needed explanation to regional audiences. By grounding foodways in the familiar, these festivals emphasized the similarities, the unity of the area, thereby helping it qualify as a cultural region, one of the underlying themes of many of these festivals.

The final strategy, recipe adaptation, involves the manipulation of the ingredients and preparation methods of particular dishes in order to adapt to the foodways system of the anticipated consumers. Potentially offensive ingredients, or those not easily obtained, may be omitted or replaced with more familiar ones. Again, *kimchi* provides an excellent example. The dish comes in numerous variations of ingredients depending on the season, the locale, the occasion, and the social status of the eaters. The most typical kind, a winter *kimchi*, is made of, among other things, Chinese cabbage, turnips, green onions, garlic, red pepper, ginger, shrimp and oysters, water, and salt. The mixture is left in a cool place to marinate for at least four to five days, preferably several months. As mentioned above, the result is very hot and pungent. When preparing *kimchi* for American customers, most of the Korean restaurants in Philadelphia made a less spicy version. One cook described how she left out the shrimp and decreased the amount of pepper and garlic for her "American *kimchi*." She also told of another restaurant that substituted paprika for the red pepper normally used, keeping the red color of the *kimchi* but reducing its spiciness.

In a reverse process, festivals frequently adapted recipes to produce foods that would seem familiar yet still out of the ordinary and with an aura of exoticness. These adaptations often emphasized the rural background and "hands on" attitude of the region. Instead of store-bought, canned, or frozen foods, festivals used homegrown, freshly picked ingredients prepared home style in a family setting, such as freshly picked cherries, homegrown pumpkins, farm fresh eggs, or apple butter prepared over outdoor fires instead of in crock pots.

This look at some of the strategies used in negotiating the realms of

1-10. This T-shirt displays the basic idea of culinary tourism—shopping at this store is more than simply stocking your pantry; it enables one to "taste" the whole world. *Photo by David Hampshire.*

exoticness and edibility confirms the need to locate culinary tourism in the perspectives of the individuals involved; that is, tourism is in the eye of the beholder—or on the tongue of the taster. What to one individual is a culinary adventure may be mundane and familiar to another and vice versa. As with any cultural tradition, there can be a discrepancy between the meanings assigned to food by the producers and those assigned by the consumers. Furthermore, foodways serve a multitude of functions in our culture; culinary tourism is but one.

Concluding Thoughts

Locating culinary tourism in the perspectives of individual consumers and producers addresses the question of why it occurs. Some scholars have interpreted the impulse to eat the other as a colonialist, hegemonic act, a taking over of another group by appropriating its cultural traditions, or as representing the capitalist inclinations to display superiority by mastery over ever-expanding arenas, including new cuisines (Goody 1982; Mintz 1985; Montano 1997; Heldke 2001). Culinary tourism can also be seen as a sign of prosperity, allowing producers and consumers to elevate food from being mere sustenance to the realms of art and recreation, and therefore tools for the expression and manipulation of social power (Appadurai 1981, 1986; Bourdieu 1984). A more optimistic interpretation sees culinary tourism as the willingness of humans to experience the cultural worlds of other people, as the result of curiosity about other experiences and other ways of life. This is not to deny the political implications of tourism or the ethical responsibilities attached to it. Nor does it ignore the fact that tourism turns culinary traditions into commodities to be bought and sold. Beginning at the level of individual involvement in tourism, however, illuminates the complexity of cultural productions and allows us to see the workings of personal meaning within larger institutional meanings.

In my research, I found the motivations for culinary tourism to be complex and to reflect what appears to be a basic and universal impulse. People intentionally consume an other because they are curious, and that curiosity stems from any number of reasons: because they are bored with the familiar, they do not want to be rude to a host, they want to balance their nutritional intake, they want to belong to a specific community of eaters, they feel pride in the heritage represented by a foodways, or they want to authenticate an experience by relishing it, so to speak. As both social system and aesthetic system, food is a powerful medium through which to enter another culture. Through food we can communicate identity, relationships, ideologies, and emotions, as well as fulfill basic physical needs. Food offers us an aesthetic experience, and like other aesthetic realms—music, dance, art—it draws us into its own universe of meaning. The materiality of food allows an individual to experience an other on a sensory level, not just an intellectual one. By consuming the foods of a group distinct from us, we may be acting out larger cultural impulses, but the aesthetic and material nature of food, I think, explains the pervasiveness of food in tourist sites. The act of eating offers a way to share our

basic humanity, while also acknowledging and negotiating our differential identities.

The model of culinary tourism suggested here provides a framework for seeing the varieties of interfaces in which adventurous eating occurs as instances of negotiating individual and social perceptions of the exotic. As such, they represent a movement toward expanding the definitions of edibility and palatability and the horizons of the familiar. These instances are connected to a multitude of culinary experiences occurring throughout our culture, all characterized by the dynamic exploration and redefining of our culinary universes. As destination and vehicle for tourism, food expands our understanding of both food and tourism.

Notes

1. For contemporary folkloristic approaches to the study of food and foodways see Jones, Giuliano, and Krell 1983; Brown and Mussell 1984; Neustadt 1992; Gutierrez 1992; and Lockwood and Lockwood 1991. For examples of a folkloristic approach to recipe collections see Kirlin and Kirlin 1991, and Kaplan, Hoover, and Moore 1986.

2. I borrow here from folklorist Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's use of the phrase "gastronomic tourism" (personal communication, February 1996). Kirshenblatt-Gimblett is well known for "pushing" the boundaries of folklore and for her insightful critiques of the discipline (see, for example, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1988). She has also been a major influence in the folkloristic study of foodways.

3. I draw here from the extensive body of literature on the anthropology of tourism and on the critique of touristic productions. Three classics in the field are Smith 1989; MacCannell 1976; and Jules-Rosette 1984. For more experiential and ethnographic-based approaches, see Urry 1990, 1995; Smith and Eadington, 1992; Baranowski and Furlough 2001; and Desmond 2001. The journal *Annals of Tourism Research* specializes in tourism. Tourism has also been of particular interest to folklorists, partly because it raises questions over such issues as the nature of authenticity, the relationship between producer and consumer, and the aesthetic and political quality of cultural representations.

4. This conception of culinary tourism draws heavily from contemporary folklore theory, hence the title, "a folkloristic perspective." Some scholars use the term "folkloristic" to distinguish the field of folklore studies from its subject matter (Georges and Jones 1995). The definition of folklore offered by Dan Ben-Amos in 1972—"artistic communication in small groups"—is still useful today, succinctly characterizing folklore. Folklore is generally thought of as those products and patterns of behavior expressing a communal ethos and aesthetic and being transmitted over time and place in a way that allows for individuals and groups to create variations, enacting their particular histories, identities, and circumstances in each performance. I draw from a number of scholars in my own formulation of folklore as the processes and products by which individuals construct, negotiate, and maintain meaningful connections with past, place, and people (see Toelken 1996).

5. Jane Desmond's work on public displays of bodies as sites for tourism demonstrates the power of the materiality of things to ground experience. She states that Western thought reflects a philosophy "dependent on the body to anchor systems of knowledge that articulate social difference" (2001:xiv). Furthermore, she points out that "live performers not only authenticate these packages' differences: they also offer the possibility of contact with them" (2001:xv). Food similarly grounds the tourist experience in our own bodies and physicality.

6. The quote is taken from Yoder 1972:325. Yoder's source is Honigman 1961.

7. The notion of other has informed the field of folklore studies since the 1970s and has drawn from both anthropological models and literary theory as well as from philosophical inquiries into the nature of knowledge. See, for example, Turner and Bruner 1984.

8. For more discussion on ethnic identity as a contextualization process, see Royce 1982.

9. For folkloristic approaches to region and regional foodways, see Jones 1976; part 3 of Brown and Mussell 1984; and Allen and Schlereth 1990.

10. Personal communications with historian and folklorist, Dr. Chris Geist, who has worked at Colonial Williamsburg, have made me aware of the extent to which food is used in heritage tourism.

11. Three kings cake is baked with several "fortune-telling" items inside—a thimble for spinsterhood, a ring for marriage, a coin for wealth. Although usually associated with Catholic communities, it is spreading in popularity. A Protestant church in Findlay, Ohio, holds an "Epiphany Party" every year and serves a three kings cake. A small figure is wrapped in foil and, along with other items similarly wrapped, is baked inside the cake. Whoever gets the figure has to make the cake the following year.

12. This approach draws from performance theory (see Bauman 1977) to attend to actual incidents of consuming an other with awareness of the varying levels of context present. It also reframes Dell Hymes's ethnography of speaking model as "ethnography of eating" (see Hymes 1962 and 1974).

13. For a full discussion of this dish, see Lloyd 1981.

14. In the fall of 1983, for a course in folklife taught by Don Yoder, I began an ethnography of Korean foodways in the Philadelphia area, looking specifically at the varieties, uses, and symbolic meanings of the dish *kimchi*. This work resulted in a term paper, a paper on *kimchi* read at the 1986 American Folklore Society meeting, and an unpublished paper on varieties of restaurant experiences. My work on festivals in the Midwest began in 1986 and has continued to the present. In 2002, I produced a documentary video on a local apple butter festival titled *Stirring Up the Past: The Grand Rapids Apple Butter Fest*.

15. This interview was a part of a larger survey on Asian communities in Memphis that I conducted for the Center for Southern Folklore in Memphis, Tennessee, from January through June of 1980.

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PART 1

Culinary Tourism in Public and Commercial Contexts

Part 1 addresses culinary tourism in public contexts. These venues are usually commercial, where food is being not only presented but also sold to outsiders. Such contexts shape the relationship of the producer to the food—food is literally a commodity and, as such, complicates and frequently distances the emotional content of the food for those offering it and receiving it. The public commercial context also shapes the relationship between the producer and the consumer, mediating it as a monetary interaction in place of, or perhaps as well as, a social one. Public settings often include festive or ritual activities. Special foods are frequently used to mark an event or setting as festive, but the reverse is true as well. A festive setting may frame a particular food as special and imbue it with new meanings specific to that context.

Jennie Germann Molz's essay begins this section by examining the concept of authenticity—a quality often held as the ideal in tourism. Using Thai restaurants in Texas as a case study, Molz explores the ways in which authenticity is central to the touristic experience and yet is constructed out of the experiences of the consumers. Jeffrey Pilcher then discusses the development of a tourism industry that surrounds Mexican food. By offering Mexican culture as a touristic subject, producers and promoters have had to negotiate the stereotypes held by Anglo-Americans. Utilizing a different context, Kristin McAndrews focuses on a food festival in Hawaii, exploring how it frames a particular foodways as both exotic and festive. The festival offers tourists a safe arena for trying new foods and also serves as a means through which they can feel they are experiencing the local culture by eating the local foods.

Eve Jochnowitz also addresses culinary tourism in restaurant settings but demonstrates the multivalent nature of food and commercial transactions. She examines Jewish food in contemporary Poland, observing that the commercial foods offered on a main street in Cracow function as a Jewish "theme park." Jochnowitz concludes that the presentation of Jewish food in Poland reflects the position of Jews in Polish folklore, and culinary tourism allows the Polish people to "taste" the experiences of Jews in their culture.

increasing number of arenas in which people can engage in touristic practices within their own culture and as part of their everyday life. When John Urry, in his study of tourism, comments that "people are much of the time tourists" (1990:82) he is referring to the process by which everyday local sights and experiences come under the tourist gaze. Ethnic restaurants are an example of how dining establishments have come under the tourist gaze and how dining out has become a touristic practice. Eating out has been described as a form of identity work (Lu and Fine 1995), where the restaurant is "a theater for thinking and fashioning a self" (Shelton 1990:507). The ethnic restaurant, then, is a symbolic stage upon which the exploration of the exotic, facilitated through the concept of authenticity, becomes an expression of identity. While these social dynamics play out in a variety of ethnic restaurants, this essay focuses on Thai restaurants in the United States, with their connotation of exoticness, as particularly valuable venues in which to examine culinary tourism and authenticity.

Authenticity

Authenticity has been categorized as one of those plastic words that "have come to mean so much that they really mean very little while nonetheless signaling importance and power" (Bendix 1992:104). In a brief essay on culinary authenticity, Arjun Appadurai expresses how the term "authenticity," in spite of its relatively simple definition, can be so difficult to grasp:

> Authenticity measures the degree to which something is more or less what it *ought* to be. It is thus a norm of some sort. But is it an immanent norm, emerging somehow from the cuisine itself? Or is it an external norm, reflecting some imposed gastronomic standard? If it is an immanent norm, who is its authoritative voice: The professional cook? The average consumer? The gourmand? The housewife? If it is an imposed norm, who is its privileged voice: the connoisseur of exotic food? The tourist? The ordinary participants in a neighboring cuisine? The cultivated eater from a distant one? (1986:25).

Appadurai's questions outline the basic debate over authenticity: where is it located and by what authority is it judged? Appadurai believes the term should not be applied to culinary systems at all, because it cannot account for the inevitable evolution that occurs in cultures and their cuisines. He claims, "the idea of authenticity seems to imply a timeless perspective on profoundly historical processes. Thus, the transhistorical ring of authority with which the word authenticity is sometimes used in the evaluation of foreign cuisines is spurious" (1986:25). Appadurai's rejection of the term "authenticity" lies in his perception that it connotes an *objective* reality. In contrast, many scholars believe that authenticity is a subjective or emergent quality that is constructed and negotiated within a social context (Moscardo and Pearce 1986; Evans-Pritchard 1987; Cohen 1988; Lu and Fine 1995; Edensor 1998). The debate Appadurai brings up here in terms of ethnic foodways is also evident in tourism studies.

The notion of authenticity as a motivation for tourism first appears in Dean MacCannell's work *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class*. In this early study of tourists, MacCannell suggests that modern society has become inauthentic and that the modern tourist is on a quest to recover this lost authenticity. According to MacCannell, "Modern Man is losing his attachments to the work bench, the neighborhood, the town, the family, which he once called 'his own' but, at the same time, he is developing an interest in the 'real life' of others" (1973:91). MacCannell's tourist locates authenticity in some premodern realm—in people, places, and times that have not yet been dispossessed of their authenticity by the processes of modernity. However, MacCannell's tourist can never find or experience true authenticity, for the tourist world is constructed in such a way as to thwart the tourist's quest. "Touristic consciousness," he explains, "is motivated by its desire for authentic experience, and the tourist may believe that he is moving in this direction, but it is very difficult to know for sure if the experience is in fact authentic" (1973:101). MacCannell says that tourists are almost always caught in a paradoxical situation where what they think is an authentic experience is really an experience of staged authenticity.

He derives the concept of "staged authenticity" from Erving Goffman's (1959) study of social performance, in which Goffman divides the social world into back regions and front regions. Back regions, which are off-limits to outsiders or audience members, are areas where social actors prepare their performances and store props, and relax between performances. Front regions are areas where social actors actually perform in front of an audience. MacCannell says that the true back region is not available to tourists, but that the travel industry, understanding the modern tourist's desire for authenticity, has created a middle ground: staged authenticity. In between the inauthentic front region and the authentic back region, he argues, is a continuum of representations that are more or less authentic, depending on how close they are to the back or front re-

gion, respectively. This explains the tourist's confusion over whether an experience is authentic or not, because a front region may be presented *as if* it were a back region. It appears to be a behind-the-scenes peek at another culture, when in fact it is as carefully orchestrated as any other presentation for the tourists.

The Thai restaurant, a representative enclave of Thai culture within the United States, is a good example of staged authenticity. A Thai restaurant is a behind-the-scenes peek, if you will, at Thai-ness. Thai restaurants use several strategies to imbue their food and the overall dining experience with a sense of authenticity. But as MacCannell asserts, these representations ultimately fail to be truly authentic, because they are arranged to fool the tourists into believing they are having an authentic experience. The Thai restaurant tends to reflect the American perception of what constitutes an authentic Thai experience, even when this perception veers from the reality of Thai culture. According to MacCannell's framework, Thai restaurants are, at best, examples of staged authenticity.

The Thai Restaurant as "Staged Authenticity"

Participant observation in several Thai restaurants, most located in the Dallas metropolitan area, initially substantiates MacCannell's theory.[1] Restaurant owners and designers obviously realize and attempt to cater to their customers' desire for an authentic experience. The menu and ingredients, as well as the décor, appear to be created to engender a sense of authenticity, even when other factors expose the fact that these representations are not necessarily authentic.

The Menu

The most straightforward marker of authenticity in a Thai restaurant is usually found on the menu, where the restaurant often states that its food is authentic or original, or that its ingredients and cooking techniques adhere to traditional Thai recipes. Some restaurants, like Tuppee Thai, create this sense of authenticity by identifying the region in Thailand from which their food comes: "Original Thai country cuisine from the south of Thailand." The menu at Chiang Mai Thai restaurant asserts that its dishes "are prepared based on traditional methods." In addition to establishing the authenticity of the food and its preparation, the Chiang Mai menu tells diners how to have an authentic dining experience: "Thai food has always been *meant* to be shared with friends and family amid

lively discussions and much laughter. This interaction is *what eating Thai style is all about*" (emphasis mine).[2]

Restaurants also imply culinary authenticity through the selection of dishes on the menus. The menus include those dishes commonly found in Thailand: rice and noodle dishes, soups, cold salads, stir-fry dishes, and beverages such as Thai iced tea. Occasionally, a parenthetical note, such as "(A favorite Thai Noodle Dish)," will assure the authenticity of the dish by implying that Thai people themselves eat this dish. By making these claims of authenticity on their menus, Thai restaurants appeal to what they perceive as their customers' desire for an authentic culinary experience.

While most Thai menus include typical dishes, such as Tom Yum soup and Pad Thai noodles, other equally authentic dishes and preparation techniques may be omitted with the customers' preferences in mind. For example, although in Thailand it is common to put a fried egg on top of a dish of fried rice, most Thai restaurants will only do this as a special request and usually charge extra for this authentic addition. Serving fried rice *kai dao* (with a fried egg) does not appeal to most Western diners, and therefore Thai chefs omit the egg. The Thai restaurant's menu, then, is self-contradictory, claiming authenticity on one hand, but adapting to the Western parameters of culinary acceptability on the other.

The Ingredients

Thai restaurants also attempt to provide an authentic experience by using typical Thai ingredients. More than any other ingredient, the chili pepper has come to stand for Thai-ness. Thai restaurants understand this equation, and spiciness is indicated in every menu. The Thai restaurants in this study use the chili and spiciness as measures of authenticity. Chiang Mai Thai explains in its menu that "Thai food is famous for being spicy." This menu uses small red fireballs next to spicy dishes to indicate how hot the dish is. The menu at Bangkok City offers the following scale for indicating how spicy diners want their food: "When ordering 'Please' Specify Degree of Spice Desired. *Coward, **Careful, ***Adventurous, ****Native Thai." This scale implies that the hotter the dish, the more authentic, or native, the food will be. These menus indicate that the kitchen is capable of making each dish as hot as it would be made in Thailand ("If you want, you can have *all* the chilies in the kitchen"), but every restaurant caters to diners' requests for milder food ("All meals are individually prepared and suited to your palate"). Again, the need to cater to the cus-

socially constructed. Tourists bring their own symbolic systems and cultural experiences to bear on this negotiation of authenticity. As Cohen explains, "the question here is *not* whether the individual does or does not 'really' have an authentic experience in MacCannell's sense, but rather what endows his experience with authenticity in his *own* view" (1988:377–78). In other words, authenticity is created as much through the tourist's own perceptions as it is by the host's performance of otherness.

Therefore, in addition to looking at how Thai restaurants construct authenticity through the menu, ingredients, and décor, it is necessary to consider how diners determine authenticity in such an environment. As demonstrated above, Thai restaurants bend their own representation of authenticity to meet the expectations of their diners and remain commercially viable. In this sense, the restaurant owners and designers are constructing a new definition of authenticity, one that is based on an American perception of Thai culture rather than on a purely Thai point of view. At the same time, the diners themselves also construct a definition of authenticity, albeit a definition that continues to be constrained by Western stereotypes of Thai-ness and otherness, as well as by personal taste preferences. By looking at these constraints we can understand the cultural code with which diners are "reading" or understanding the authenticity of their culinary experience. What this code reveals is not necessarily a depiction of Thai culture and cuisine, but rather a Western picture of what Thai-ness is or should be.

Culinary tourists in Thai restaurants are like the respondents in Shun Lu and Gary Fine's study of Chinese restaurants who "define authenticity in association with their own social experience" (1995:543). They construct a set of criteria by which they judge authenticity. This set of criteria is based primarily on comparisons to their social experiences of Thailand or Thai culture, including media images of Thailand, their own travel experiences, and experiences in other Thai restaurants or other Asian restaurants. In addition to setting the criteria for determining authenticity, these diners also decide when to apply this measuring stick, and they judge their own level of expertise in deciding whether or not their experience is authentic.[7]

Respondents who have traveled to Thailand before use their travel experiences to set criteria for authenticity. One respondent considers the food at the Thai restaurant she eats at in the United States authentic "because it seems most like the food I ate in Thailand." Another decides that a restaurant's menu is authentic if it includes dishes she ate while traveling in Thailand, such as green mango salad, and she describes what she expects an authentic Thai restaurant to look like: "Thai umbrellas hanging everywhere, wooden Thai carvings on the wall and in restrooms, celadon dishes, perhaps, plus a picture of the king hanging on the wall. Because that would be . . . the way you would see it in Thailand, or the items described would lend themselves to a Thai environment, as one would find these kinds of things in Thailand."

Even respondents who have never been to Thailand, though, have some sort of expectation of what authentic Thai food and décor should be. Of the décor, they expect bamboo and greenery, red and gold decorations, gold and wood statues, and Asian-influenced or Buddhist art. Several respondents acknowledge that they judge a Thai restaurant's authenticity, in part, based on media images they have seen of Thailand. Their expectations of gold décor, wooden statues, and colorful textiles come from images they have seen in movies.

Regarding the food, the main criterion for authenticity is the degree of spiciness. In addition, diners look for typical Thai ingredients, such as coconut milk, lemon grass, and basil. Most of the diners who had not been to Thailand still had opinions about what constituted authentic Thai food and a genuine Thai atmosphere. Frequently, these criteria are based on comparisons to other Thai restaurants. For example, to one respondent, Star of Siam is more authentic than Thai Soon because Star of Siam puts bowls of chili sauce, shrimp paste, and sugar on the table. She bases her judgment not on experiences in Thailand, but rather on an experience in another Thai restaurant. To a certain extent, Thai restaurants are formulaic, both responding to and creating their diners' expectations of authenticity. The formula, then, becomes another point of comparison in judging authenticity.

Another criterion that most respondents use to determine the authenticity of a restaurant is the perceived ethnicity of the staff and other diners in the restaurants. Roger Abrahams notes that American diners "look for public places where the cuisine is served with such authenticity that the 'ethnics' themselves eat there" (1984:23). The respondents in this study seemed embarrassed to admit that they look to the ethnicity of the chef, the servers, the other diners, and even the delivery person who brings their take-out orders, to determine if the restaurant is authentically Thai. Some even admit that it doesn't matter if the staff and other diners are Thai, as long as they appear to be Asian. Thus, this particular criterion is important, but not strictly applied.

In addition to establishing the criteria by which they judge a restaurant's authenticity, these diners also ascertain their own or others'

authority for making this determination. Some respondents were open to giving their opinions, whether or not they had been to Thailand. As one respondent qualified her response: "In the perspective of someone who has never visited Thailand, Krung Thai is the most authentic [restaurant] because most of their entrées are spicy (even if you ask for mild)." But several others acknowledge that they are not qualified to judge the authenticity of Thai restaurants, because they have never been to Thailand. One respondent explained, for example, that he is "a little scared of Thai food, so I'm not a good judge of authenticity." Another refused to answer any questions regarding authenticity, because "I am not Thai and I have never been to Thailand." And one respondent admitted that even though he has "a sneaking suspicion that all [of the Thai restaurants] pacify their dishes to cater to the delicate American palate which can't tolerate the spice that a Thai can," he cannot prove his suspicion, because "I haven't been to Thailand; I also haven't been told by anyone who knows whether the places I eat at are authentic or not."

In addition to establishing the various criteria for judging authenticity, these respondents also determine that the authority to measure authenticity lies in one's ethnicity (being Thai) or must be learned or acquired through travel. Not all of the respondents felt comfortable assessing authenticity, but every one of them felt qualified to make judgments regarding taste. Respondents were asked to rate the importance of authenticity against the importance of palatability in their decision to patronize a Thai restaurant. While all of the respondents claimed that they want to have an authentic experience at a Thai restaurant, they overwhelmingly admitted that they would not go to an "authentic" restaurant if the food did not taste good to them. So, regardless of the criteria they establish to judge the authenticity of the restaurant and the food, diners do not consider authenticity as the only—or even the most important—factor in deciding where to eat. All of the respondents claimed to want an exotic, authentic experience, but not at the expense of palatability and familiarity.

Thus, in constructing their notion of authenticity, these diners express and validate their individual and social identities. The concept of authenticity is a useful theoretical tool for exploring the discourse concerning identity construction and validation as it occurs in culinary tourism. The way the culinary tourist defines and uses the notion of authenticity to negotiate his or her experience of the other is clearly more indicative of the diner's identity and mindset than it is of the other. Although the Thai restaurant purports to express authentic Thai-ness, these restaurants serve as the backdrop of otherness and difference against which

the culinary tourist's Western identity is defined. The negotiation of authenticity brings to light the processes of identity making that occur in arenas of culinary tourism.

Culinary Tourism as Identity Work

Foodways and tourism converge within the wider social discourse concerning identity making. Both include processes of identity construction that occur along a perceived cultural divide between that which is familiar and that which is different, between the edible and the exotic, the self and the other. Culinary tourists contest and explore this dividing line by using food as a means of interacting with and experiencing the other while expressing and validating their own social identities.

As many food scholars point out, food is a means of expressing and reinforcing identity (Douglas 1971, 1982; Brown and Mussell 1984; Abrahams 1984). Individual preferences and tastes are a clear indication of a person's identity, as the cliché phrases "You are what you eat" and "One man's meat is another man's poison" imply. Food and identity are intimately connected, not only at the individual level, but in terms of group identity as well. According to Mary Douglas, food is a form of social communication that speaks of a group's identity through "different degrees of hierarchy, inclusion and exclusion, boundaries and transactions across boundaries" (1971:61).[8] Food systems "bind individuals together, define the limits of the group's outreach and identity, [and] distinguish in-group from out-group" (Brown and Mussell 1984:5). By participating in certain food behaviors, therefore, individuals can clearly express their particular group affiliations. The in-group/out-group or familiar/exotic identifications expressed through food behaviors imply more than just culinary preferences. They indicate wider cultural differences between groups. As Allison James explains: "[T]he very concept of 'foreign' food . . . derives from the marking out of difference: 'foreign' food is food from abroad consumed at home, food of the 'other,' strange and unfamiliar. Shared patterns of consumption thus mark our difference from others and mapping, as they often do, on to other signs of difference—from the organization of domestic space through to the division of labor and concepts of sexual intimacy—food consumption practices provide confirmation of wider differences between cultural orders" (1996:78–79).

Culinary difference can also express cultural difference. If the cultural identity of the other can be expressed via food, then it is through food that the culinary tourist can interact with the other. Unlike the for-

eign language or other cultural processes or rituals, food is accessible to outsiders and therefore makes cultural difference accessible to tourists. Culinary tourism is predicated on this notion that foodways can be a stage upon which a group's identity is performed.

Many studies of tourism are similarly focused on the issues of identity expression (Lanfant, Allcock, and Bruner 1995; Rojek 1993, 1997). In his study of tourists at the Taj Mahal, Tim Edensor (1998) approaches his topic from Mark Neumann's (1988) view that: "Tourism is a metaphor for our struggle to make sense of our self and world within a highly differentiated culture . . . it directs us to sites where people are at work making meaning, situating themselves in relation to public spectacle and making a biography that provides some coherency between self and world" (cited in Edensor, 22). It is worth noting that the meaning making that occurs in a tourist site has more to do with the self than the other. The tourist's project is to understand and locate the self, and this project often takes place in relation to the other.

The idea that an interaction with the other reveals more about the self is a common theme in tourism studies. Daniel Boorstin quips, as tourists "we look into a mirror instead of out a window and we see only ourselves" (1961:117). Any touristic interaction is filtered by the tourist's own cultural mindset. Not only can the notion of exotic be defined only against what the tourist understands as everyday, but any experience of the other is necessarily viewed through the tourist's own historically and culturally located lens. Sometimes an encounter with the other is needed to bring the tourist's own cultural identity into better focus. This is what occurs in Thai restaurants, where diners, while experiencing a taste of Thai culture, are really validating their own individual identity and affiliating themselves with a particularly American identity.

In instances of culinary tourism, then, food is doubly expressive. By participating in a food system, the culinary tourist is expressing and reinforcing his or her own identity while exploring the identity of the other that is represented by that food system. Consider MacClancy's description of eating in ethnic restaurants: "Just like those cannibals who gobbled up others to strengthen their own identity as a group, Westerners who today dine on ethnic or regional meals are indirectly reminding themselves of what is their own 'national cuisine.' By eating the Other, they redefine the Self" (1992:204). As Lucy Long suggests, while culinary tourism is "the intentional, exploratory participation in the foodways of an Other" (1998:181), it often results in "teach[ing] us more about ourselves than about the Other" (1998:185).

This identity expression is negotiated through the concept of authenticity, and, as I will discuss later, through the concept of inauthenticity. Though Thai restaurants attempt to create a sense of authenticity, the result is generally a formulaic representation that mirrors American expectations of Thai-ness rather than reflecting the reality of Thai culture. At the same time, American diners in Thai restaurants use the concept of authenticity to contextualize their experience of the exotic other within their own field of apprehension. In the end, this interface reveals more about the Western mindset and culture in which the Thai restaurant operates than it reveals about the other that the restaurant purports to represent.

Authenticity and Identity

Authenticity has been both an implicit and explicit inspiration for classifying tourists and tourist behaviors. Valene Smith's (1989) typology classifies tourists and tourism into five categories: ethnic tourism, cultural tourism, historical tourism, environmental tourism, and recreational tourism. Though Smith does not overtly identify her tourist types with the concept of authenticity, an implicit connection exists. Whereas recreational tourism focuses on rest and relaxation, ethnic, cultural, and environmental tourism—and to an extent, historical tourism—are motivated by a desire to "get off the beaten path" of mass tourism, to engage personally with the other, and to glimpse vanishing cultural practices. This latter motivation resonates with MacCannell's theory of tourist motivation. Even if they are not explicitly on a quest for authentic experience of the other, these tourists are certainly motivated by a desire to get closer to the other than mass tourism structures allow.

On the other hand, Erik Cohen (1979, 1988) does overtly use the concept of authenticity to create a typology of tourists and touristic experiences that provides a useful framework for understanding how authenticity facilitates identity construction and validation in Thai restaurants. Cohen bases his typology on the tourist's use of the concept of authenticity in negotiating their experience of the other. Those tourists who are motivated by a desire to have a deeply meaningful encounter with the other will require a more authentic experience than those tourists who are motivated by fun and recreation. Thus Cohen establishes a scale of touristic experience with existential tourists at one end and diversionary tourists at the other. The existential tourist is intensely interested in the authenticity of his or her experience and maintains a very rigid and objective set of criteria for judging that authenticity. A little further down the

The American cuisine contains cultural difference by embracing the proliferation of ethnic restaurants and culinary styles. Eating in Thai restaurants is only a small part of the overall ethnic eating experience of most Americans. A survey of the locations of the Thai restaurants in this study reveals that these restaurants are part of a smorgasbord of ethnic and regional restaurants. In Dallas, for example, Thai restaurants are found literally next door to Italian, Mexican, Cajun, Middle Eastern, and Japanese restaurants.

This variety of ethnic food may be the best way to define the American identity and cuisine at all. Sidney Mintz recounts the reaction he received from a class of students when he casually mentioned that America did not have a cuisine. After several students responded that America *did* have a cuisine, "another student took a different tack. He talked happily about 'eating Thai' one night, and 'eating Chinese' the next, and asked rather plaintively whether *that* couldn't be 'our cuisine.' He plainly felt that having access to a lot of different 'cuisines' was a wonderful idea—and certainly better than meat loaf" (1996:107). To Mintz, the American identity is expressed by our tendency "to try new foods, seeking novelty in eating, as we do in so many aspects of life" (1996:116). This sense of novelty and playfulness directs us to another way of considering authenticity and identity in culinary tourism.

The Culinary "Post-Tourist"

Cohen's recreational tourist is synonymous with what other scholars refer to as the "post-tourist" (Feifer 1985; Urry 1990). Cohen's recreational tourist is "prepared playfully to accept a cultural product as authentic, for the sake of the experience, even though 'deep down' they are not convinced of its authenticity" (1988:377). Unlike MacCannell's tourist, who is motivated by a quest for authenticity, post-tourists "delight in the *inauthenticity* of the normal tourist experience" (Urry 1990:11)(emphasis mine). Post-tourists are primarily characterized, as Cohen and Urry describe, by their playfulness and disregard for authenticity. Urry describes the "post-tourist," a term introduced by Feifer, as someone who "delights in the multitude of choice, . . . [who] knows that they are a tourist and that tourism is a game, or rather a whole series of games with multiple texts and no single, authentic tourist experience" (1985:100). The term, deriving from Feifer's self-proclaimed "postmodernist" excursions through Paris, connotes a contemporary tourist who negotiates the visually and sensually prolific culture of postmodernity with savvy. For the post-tourist, the

novelty and variety of experience is paramount to concerns over authenticity. In fact, the post-tourist enjoys experiences often *because* they are inauthentic.

This tourist revels in the culinary and cultural pastiche that marks contemporary America. In his own exposition on postmodern culture, David Harvey describes the compression of the world's cuisines into the supermarket: "Kenyan haricot beans, Californian celery and avocados, North African potatoes, Canadian apples, and Chilean grapes all sit side by side"; and into the restaurant culture: "Chinese take-aways, Italian pizza parlours (run by a U.S. chain), Middle Eastern felafel stalls, Japanese sushi bars . . . the list is now endless in the Western world" (1990:300). Harvey criticizes this concentration of culinary styles as evidence that the modern Western individual engages only in vicarious, inauthentic experiences of simulacre. Taking a different view, MacClancy claims, "some people thrive on this cultural jumbling" (1992:208). He recounts an advertisement from a restaurant in suburban Cincinnati that read: "'The Italian restaurant with the Spanish name hosted by the Jewish couple with the Greek partner featuring American steaks, French onion soup, Ecuadorian ceviche and Swiss fondue.' Dare you ask for couscous?"(1992:208). Harvey, like MacCannell, seems to mourn the disappearance of authenticity in the culinary realm, but others, like MacClancy and the post-tourist, find inauthenticity a small price to pay for culinary variety and the spice it adds to everyday life.

Take, for example, the respondents quoted earlier. All of the respondents had eaten at Thai restaurants, but within a context of many other types of restaurants. They said that, besides Thai, they eat out at Chinese, Japanese, Indian, Malaysian, Vietnamese, Korean, Middle Eastern, French, Italian, Mexican, Spanish, Mediterranean, German, Cuban, and Caribbean restaurants. Their ethnic dining experiences are defined by variety rather than by authentic difference. As they admitted, authenticity is important but not paramount in their experience at an ethnic restaurant. To them, enjoyment of the experience is more important than the authenticity of the experience. According to one respondent who loves Thai peanut sauce: "If 'authentic' peanut sauce had shells in it—plah! [*sic*] I would not order it. If someone told me that the sauce I love was really a Mexican recipe, [I] wouldn't care. Olé, I'd say!" By qualifying authenticity this way, the culinary post-tourist self-consciously plays with the symbols that encode the ethnic restaurant. The post-tourist is aware of the social and commercial constraints to authenticity and decides to overlook them. In this way, the post-tourist copes with the proliferation of

of extended-stay eating, the experience of finding edible and palatable food items plays an important role in the perception of foodways of the host culture; however, the continuum of familiar and exotic food items takes on special significance. In contrast to the short encounters with the food items of the touristic other, where novelty and the exotic are highly valued, the extended stay usually requires an ongoing negotiation between the exotic and the familiar. People who live on a military base or another type of compound in a foreign country may be able to avoid unfamiliar foodways during an extended stay. However, the long-term visitor or resident is confronted with more experiences of inedible and unpalatable foodways than the culinary tourist. The long-term visitor also has more incentive to find familiar foods or make exotic foods acceptable, because learning to eat in the new culture is a prime and recurring human necessity and maintaining cultural isolation is often difficult, costly, and undesirable.

Most extended-stay eaters anticipate, either with positive or negative expectations, a longer exposure to the unfamiliar foodways and the other culture; usually these eaters enter relationships and encounter institutions that the tourist may never discover. Only the most adventurous or well-connected culinary tourist starts out procuring unprepared food in local markets or eating in homes of native residents. Because the extended-stay eater often faces frequent and sustained contacts with a new culinary system, familiar food items and well-known ways of procuring and preparing food usually become highly valued and comforting. The extended stay demonstrates dual aspects of eating habits described by foodways historian Donna Gabaccia: "Human eating habits originate in a paradoxical, and perhaps universal, tension between a preference for the culinarily familiar and the equally human pursuit of pleasure in the forms of culinary novelty, creativity, and variety" (1998:6). Such negotiations of exotic and familiar foodways over an extended stay, although not experienced for the sake of experience as with the touristic encounters, invariably become significant personal experiences that reveal as well "the historical, the situated, the contingent, and the diversity within cultures" (Long 1998:186). The length of the stay itself frequently reinforces the eater's need to experience exotic foodways in a manner that does not erase all familiar assumptions about edibility and palatability and that does not preclude experiences with food items and culinary systems from his or her own culture. However, the familiar food items must be experienced within the frame of the new host culture; often the more exotic food experiences in the new culture become some of the most significant, memorable, and recountable aspects of the extended stay. These moments of negotiating the familiar and exotic initiate and inform an eater's quest to align with, respect, and know the cultural other.

One Extended-Stay Group: Mormon Missionaries

Reasons for the extended stay will contour the experiences in unique ways and will allow eaters different latitude in negotiating edible, palatable, and exotic foodways. Some extended-stay situations isolate visitors from new relationships and institutions in the host culture, while other situations require almost constant interaction. The exploratory eating of military personnel in a foreign country will differ for individuals and families living on or off the military base, and military experiences will differ from the experiences of study-abroad students, expatriates, business transfers, diplomats, ethnographers, missionaries, humanitarian workers, or refugees who also spend extended time in an unfamiliar or alien culture. The possibilities for study of extended-stay eating experiences of these groups are fascinating and numerous. While comparative study of various groups in extended-stay situations would be particularly intriguing, a focused study can explore how members of one extended-stay group negotiate the realms of edible, palatable, and exotic eating experiences. To initiate such study and to expand and contribute to the discussion of culinary tourism, this essay offers examples and analysis of the intentional, exploratory eating experiences of Mormon missionaries.[1]

As a former Mormon missionary, I immediately recognized that my eating experiences in the mission corresponded with the culinary tourism model of using food to help negotiate otherness and boundaries of the familiar and strange. I also realized that extended-stay eating would be a useful contrast and comparison with arenas of culinary tourism, such as restaurants, grocery stores, festivals, magazines, and advertising. I drew data from my personal journals written during my time in the highlands of north central Guatemala from 1984 to 1986, as well as from other Mormon mission experiences shared in letters and documented in projects collected by students in folklore courses at Brigham Young University (BYU). William A. Wilson, the doyen of Mormon folklorists, explains why the study of Mormon missionaries requires considering individual and collective identities and experiences: "Mormon missionaries are not uniquely missionaries. Each is a composite of the identities he has brought with him to the field; no two are exactly alike. However, unlike the rest of us, who are constantly changing roles (and therefore identities), mission-

The Oreo Cookie as an American Icon

Since its market launch in 1912, the Oreo cookie has held the imagination and the taste buds of a nation in thrall. Asked simply to name *the* quintessential American cookie, respondents to an informal—and quite unscientific—poll immediately and definitively cited the Oreo. Only one respondent thought for a while, waffled, and then asked, "Um, the Toll House?" When I prompted her by saying "a packaged cookie," her response was instant—the Oreo. (Knowing my general proclivity for freshly baked versus prepackaged cookies, she was perhaps afraid to mention the Oreo off the bat.)

What, though, is the Oreo's appeal? For any product to reign supreme in America for a single year requires formidable marketing and incredible luck. And then whatever is new and most innovative will likely usurp that product's position. Yet even today, despite a ninety-one-year history, the Oreo retains enormous popularity and is a firmly entrenched symbol of popular American culture. Perhaps it is this very history that immunizes the Oreo against an otherwise fickle consumer culture. The cookie was in its infancy in 1914, but nonetheless survived two world wars and the Great Depression—as did the United States. Sentimentality for this classic cookie is even reflected by the trade in both classic and modern Oreo memorabilia.

Moreover, ritual surrounds the eating of Oreos. We recognize the significance of the question "Are you a twister or a dunker?" and associate it with an activity no more illicit than cookie eating. In an article entitled "Creative Eating: The Oreo Syndrome," Elizabeth Mosby Adler frames a thesis regarding our methods of consumption around the recognizable and common phenomenon of Oreo-eating rituals (1983:4–10). A recent national survey conducted by Nabisco regarding Oreo-eating techniques received an overwhelming response. Over 174,000 consumers voluntarily phoned 1-800-EAT-OREO and reported their rituals ("How Do I Love Thee Oreo? America Counts the Ways"). The fact that people were so eager to share their techniques suggests they have quite an attachment to the cookies.

The Oreo seems to have symbolic meaning that extends even beyond more obvious food associations. So familiar are we with its appearance—black on the outside, white on the inside—that "Oreo" has been used as a racial descriptor. In a racial context, the term is not generally applied positively. But the image of the cookie is sufficiently resonant to have served as a useful title for Gerald Thompson's book *Reflections of an Oreo Cookie: Growing Up Black in the 1960s.*

Another example of creative Oreo use is described in the November 1999 issue of *Gourmet* magazine. In "The Last Word" column, Perri Klass wrote about the Oreo's value in the lunchbox trade: "Once, in my older son's day-care class, a little boy traded away his winter coat (in Massachusetts, in midwinter, with snow on the ground), for an Oreo cookie" (1999:244). Thus, it appears that even the toddler set appreciates the value of the Oreo cookie. And the opinions of youngsters matter very much, considering the fervor with which the advertising industry directs its efforts toward them.

Given that, it is important to note that the Oreo cookie contained lard until 1993. So the cookie representative of the United States, land of freedom and equal opportunity, was off-limits to American Jews, or at least to observant ones. It is understood that certain foods are inherently nonkosher—there is a biblical mandate against them; for example, pork and shellfish. But there's no particular reason why a *cookie* ought to be nonkosher. For decades, though, plenty of Jewish kids—and their parents—felt a little "left out" in the cookie aisle.

There could be no speculation about the status of the cookie, no pretending that it might be okay to eat because the ingredient list betrayed no presence of questionable items. If there is one thing that non-Jews know about Jewish dietary restrictions, it is that Jews do not eat pig, or any of its derivatives. What is interesting in the case of the Oreo is that there is no particular reason—at least from the perspective of Jewish consumers—that a cookie ought to contain lard or to be off-limits, but, of course, it did, and it was. The Oreo possessed the aura of a "secret recipe" item—one whose formulation was perfect (aside from that pesky pork fat), yet shrouded in secrecy. It could be savored (by those permitted to enjoy it), but not duplicated.

Jews in America

Why should lack of access to a cookie (even if it is an iconographic cookie) matter? After all, *kashrut*-observant Jews willingly accept a construct that creates a barrier to eating certain foods. The cookie concern may be rooted in the staunch support Jews display for the ideals America represents. In return, there is a desire for inclusion in American society at large.

In the book *Jewish Identity in America*, Henry Feingold addresses this issue in an article entitled "The American Component of Jewish Identity." He points out: "Not only were Jews 'present at the creation' of America, but the creation itself had a Hebraic cast. As late as 1925, Calvin

desire to explore and to understand what it is other Americans prize in the genuine, nonkosher items may motivate experimentation with the kosher versions. Or it may be that *kashrut*-observant Jews desire the freedom to have unlimited access to all foods and create an artificial construct to fulfill that desire. Jenna Weissman Joselit postulates that the value of foods like beef-frye "was as much symbolic as gustatory: it held out the very real and tantalizing possibility that the observance of *kashrut* posed no barrier to participation in the wider world, at least in a culinary sense. After all, even kosher Jews could now eat bacon!" (1994:193). Convenience too, and the ability to "follow" nonkosher recipes without seemingly significant changes, factors in. "Pepperoni" pizza and "shrimp" salads are no longer off-limits. The line between staunch religious observance and extreme acculturation is blurred.

Just Visiting

Discussions of culinary tourism often center on the experience of, or experimentation with, the exotic. But it is interesting to consider the idea of tourism in the traditional, travel-oriented sense, particularly concerning tourism's temporal or transient nature. In that context, there may be greater psychological openness to experimentation with new foods or foodways; if the tourist is just visiting, the exotic may feel more like a safe adventure and less like a threat to the familiar. Whether the exotic is ultimately abandoned or adopted is another issue entirely. But the initial approach may be eased by the knowledge that back at home the familiar is waiting, in case the new experience turns out to be somehow unsatisfactory.

For the *kashrut*-observant tourist, that notion of a home base is quite important. As a religion that is at once fiercely communal and highly introspective, Judaism lends itself to negotiating between private and public realms, even in terms of culinary tourism. No matter how that tourism finds its expression, it bridges the private, domestic realm with the public, commercial realm. Perhaps more precisely, there's a private ethos or motivation behind this variety of tourism, though it is often acted out in a public or commercial context.

Getting What One Wants, and the Ramifications Thereof (or So What if Oreos Are Kosher?)

Many Jews derive a heightened sense of spirituality from keeping kosher. But it may be a challenge to maintain that spirituality while grabbing

packages by rote from supermarket shelves because they bear an acceptable symbol. Some commentators maintain that the value of *kashrut* is its elevation of mundane necessities (the preparation of food and the eating of it) to a spiritual level. One such mundane necessity could be the searching out of kosher symbols. This theory assumes, of course, that one considers cooking and eating mundane. In fact, though a necessity, it is arguable that food preparation and eating are rather direct links to spiritual fulfillment. Jewish theology considers each person a partner with God. It is assumed that God provides the raw materials (water, produce, animals) necessary to nourish the bodies we occupy. The act of preparing food provides the opportunity to enhance this partnership by facilitating the process of nourishing the body. Eating and digestion can be considered daily miracles. Even without comprehending the Krebs cycle—the complex series of biochemical reactions through which energy is generated from the metabolites of ingested food—we feel a change in energy level, mood, and comfort when we eat. The blessings observant Jews say before and after meals and snacks ideally foster reflection on these matters.

The difficulty, then, is that as opportunities for food preparation (or at least the likelihood thereof) are diminished, the more tenuous the spiritual connection to food becomes. American Jews are very much a part of American culture. And American culture is a product culture, with an emphasis on the well-packaged, the quick and convenient. As *kashrut* certification proliferates, it is easier than ever to participate in America's consumer culture, at least with regard to food. As Elizabeth Ehrlich points out in *Miriam's Kitchen*, even *kashering* meat (the process of salting and soaking meat to remove any blood), which used to be done in the home, is now done by the butcher as a convenience to the customer (1997:229). An individual's active involvement used to be essential to ensuring a food was kosher; used to even, in the case of *kashering* meat, complete the process. It is perhaps far more difficult to imbue the quick visual check for a symbol on a package with meaning.

Haym Soloveitchick, writing about the Modern Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox Jewish communities, elucidates further:

> Even the accomplishments of Orthodoxy had their untoward consequences. The smooth incorporation of religious practice into middle-class lifestyle meant that observance differentiated less. Apart from their formal requirements, religious observances also engender ways of living. Eating only kosher food, for example, precludes going out to lunch, vacationing where one wishes, and dining out regularly as a form of entertainment. The

> proliferation of kosher eateries and the availability of literally thousands of kosher products in the consumer market, opened the way to such pursuits, so the religious way of life became, in one more regard, less distinguishable from that of others. The facilitation of religious practice that occurred in every aspect of daily life was a tribute to the adaptability of the religious and to their new mastery of their environment; it also diminished some of the millennia old impact of observance." (1999:329)

On the other hand, Rabbi Joseph Grunblatt, Rabbinic Vice Chairman of the NCSY (National Conference of Synagogue Youth) National Youth Commission views "high level *kashrut* certification" as a "theological statement." Lucy Long's "other" (non-Jews, nonobservant Jews) may consider the Jewish exegesis a static one—unchanging, perhaps even unyielding—and this may be viewed in a negative sense, as a lack of adaptability. So, too, may the observant Jew appreciate this characteristic from an alternate point of view. The Torah, while a "living" treatise, or blueprint for life, does nonetheless derive its essence from certain inalienable, divinely ordered principals—the truth is unchangeable, but our interpretations or understandings are not. Torah is therefore dynamic and fluid. The emphasis placed on the importance of widespread certification, it is argued, suggests to the world that *kashrut*, indeed Jewish religious observance itself, is vital, adaptable, and relevant to today's world.

The Gastronomic Jew, Redux

Many American Jews, though not religiously observant, nonetheless feel very connected to Judaism in a cultural sense. Often, this connection manifests itself via the consumption of foods perceived to be specifically "Jewish." Bagels and lox, chicken soup, blintzes, *kreplach* (wontonlike dumplings), and brisket are among the foods that resonate as Jewish foods. The term "gastronomic Jew" has long been applied to a person who may not attend synagogue or observe the Sabbath but will eat a corned beef sandwich as if he's fulfilling a sacred commandment.

With the rise in popularity of Orthodoxy, there may be a new kind of gastronomic Jew evolving. In kosher restaurants today, the diner is unlikely to find chopped liver on the menu. It has been replaced by foie gras. This is perhaps a signal of extreme acculturation, on the one hand, or a sign of Jews who are increasingly comfortable with their identities in America, on the other. As Edward S. Shapiro points out, eating out is an indication of the willingness to publicize one's Orthodoxy, and demonstrates "a greater confidence in American Pluralism." Furthermore, he

says that kosher restaurants "disclosed an impulse toward cultural amalgamation as the Orthodox strove to combine the best of the Jewish and the outside worlds. The consumption of haute cuisine, even if kosher, was in itself essentially a secular act" (1992:182).

Jews who are not *kashrut*-observant have long been "touring" cuisines of their own accord, and the certification of kosher restaurants may have no significance for them. The Jews who have been keeping kosher all along, both in and out of the house, now have their passports, so to speak. This may be part of the power of the certifying agencies. So, too, the presence of a certifying symbol on a food product communicates social acceptance to the *kashrut*-observant Jew. Major manufacturers not only accommodate the rather intricate and particular requirements of a very small population, but also facilitate comfortable, and public, religious observance. Historically, that level of accommodation was not a privilege afforded most Jews. In some ways, each newly certified food represents an invitation to tourism—the chance to taste, and to get more deeply involved in American culture.

Conclusions

Paradoxically, widespread *kashrut* certification has at once complicated and simplified the experience of keeping kosher. Observant American Jews can now shop with the same convenience, for many of the same foods, as their fellow Americans. They can travel the country or the world, "treasure hunting" for specialties that bear *kashrut* certification. Eating out, discovering the foodways of others, even reconnecting with the exotic foodways of other Jews, is now possible on a scale never before experienced. But there are new considerations to grapple with for every advance of the *kashrut* industry and for each new product launch.

What happens, for example, when Jews are presented as a market niche? Is the marketing of kosher foods and restaurants totally innocuous? As agencies assume the responsibility for ensuring the *kashrut* status of foodstuffs, what happens to the individual's spiritual connection to observance? Is re-creating or remembering meaning for *kashrut* the new discipline for the observant Jew who can now buy a kosher version of nearly every food product?

For much of their history, Jews have been an itinerant people. In the past, though culinary tourism occurred naturally on some level—as Jews adapted available ingredients to suit the dietary laws—it was nonetheless borne of necessity. Perhaps one of the greatest indications that Jews at last