■ The evolution of food tourism: Hjalager's typology of value added in gastronomy tourism

Hjalager (2002) proposed a categorization that has relevance for both an evolutionary perspective on the development of food tourism (not that a deterministic model of progression is suggested) and as guidelines for destination and cluster development. Her 'first order' category consists of food tourism based on enjoying the produce of an area. Food might be promoted as an attraction, and there might be food events to enjoy, but this is supply-side food tourism based on what the region has to offer.

In the 'second order' of gastronomy tourism, Hjalager proposed that understanding the food should be more important. The destination engages in development through quality controls and certification, preserving culinary traditions, and bringing the service sector to the fore (as opposed to solely relying on producers). In this scenario high cooperation must be achieved across the entire supply chain.

In the 'third order', experiences are paramount. Entrepreneurial resources must be mobilized in order to meet the needs of discriminating food tourists who value unique, authentic experiences. New organizations might be required, and the destination develops trails, attractions, events, cooking classes, holidays for foodies, and the opening of production sites (like farms and factories) to visitors. This category resembles the highly-advanced food destinations of today – those that realize they are catering to sophisticated foodies with special requirements.

Finally, and perhaps nowhere is this yet evident, the 'fourth order' concentrates on knowledge as the main resource. In other words, highly successful food destinations can profit by sharing their expertise. To do so they might require new structures that have a global reach, and they must invest in research and development plus demonstration projects.

Food tourism clusters

According to Michael Porter (1990, 1998, 2000) location is not as important as it once was, nor are the comparative advantages traditionally enjoyed by cities and nations who relied upon natural endowments or good access to markets. His popular notion of business clusters and agglomerations helps explain why certain areas have flourished.

> *A business cluster is a geographic concentration of interconnected businesses, suppliers, and associated institutions in a particular field. Clusters are considered to increase the productivity with which companies can compete, nationally and globally. In urban studies, the term agglomeration is used.* (Porter, 1998; 2000)

A number of food and wine tourism clusters have emerged in various countries, with or without planning and intervention. This concentration of attractions and services can evolve naturally, based on unique terroir and pioneering entrepreneurship, but if a country really wants to grow food tourism there will have to be a concerted effort to establish more of them.

From a supply side, the logical starting point is where the food, wine or other produce originates. If there is sufficient supply and will power, then why not take the next step and develop food tourism to its maximum potential? Essentially, this means building the value chain to include tourist consumption and (hopefully) resulting exports. But from a demand-side point of view, there is much more potential within cities, resorts and other places where visitors naturally concentrate. To the extent possible, clusters should incorporate both urban and rural (even remote) partners.

The cluster concept brings all stakeholders together in specific cities and regions for their mutual benefit and for synergies that require full co-operation. The main functions (and goals) of clusters are:

- Attract and hold dedicated food tourists; increase their spending and loyalty; add value through quality, authentic food experiences for all visitors.
- Minimize leakages by stressing 'fresh and local' produce; grow the value chain to the benefit of local and regional suppliers.
- Brand the cluster, reinforcing the national food brand.
- Increase marketing reach and effectiveness of the cluster; gain new and larger export markets.
- Improve network efficiencies; bring all stakeholders together.
- Develop tourist experiences; continuously improve quality.

According to Mossberg et al. (2014: 340) "A successful food tourism model should be grounded in a bottom up approach as most innovation comes from local community driven networks and collaboration." This was the approach taken by Failte Ireland in promoting its food tourism strategy, involving primarily social media and food champions.

Figure 5.4 is an illustration of the food tourism cluster concept, stressing key stakeholders and their roles. Start with agriculture and fisheries, because a food tourism cluster rests on a foundation of good produce: fresh, local, organic and ecological are accepted brand values. This particularly applies when meal providers (from chefs to the catering at convention centres and food festivals) can rely on local producers for top quality. The provenance of food needs to be explained to foodies, and can be provided to them as souvenir-style information booklets.
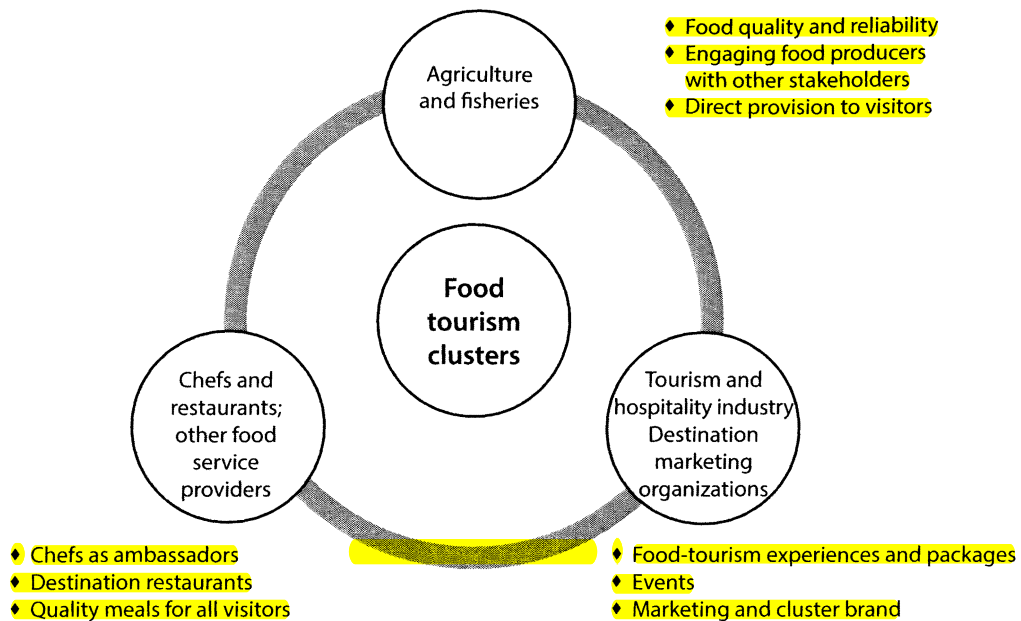
Figure 5.4: Food tourism cluster concept

Although fishers and farmers can sell directly to tourists, and export through various intermediaries, they need to be convinced of the advantages of working more closely with providers of meals and the tourism and hospitality sectors in general. Farmers can diversify their revenue base in numerous ways, as farm stay or agri-tourism destinations and educational hubs, many of which can be developed in partnership with other regional cultural and natural endowments. Moreover, research suggests these farmers' produce can attract premium prices and even be resilient in declining markets. When communities collaborate these benefits diffuse throughout regions, both adding value to local brands but also keeping land in production and settling land use disputes.

Chefs, restaurants and other food-service providers are key players in the cluster concept. Their primary responsibility (to the concept) is to ensure that every visitor has a quality food experience, hence the importance of programmes that stress constant improvement and certification. This is partly because of the hygiene factor, namely that bad food experiences are likely to discourage existing and potential tourists. It is also important to realize that food is the one cultural experience that all visitors have in a city or country and so they should at least have the option of purchasing fresh and local and authentic recipes.

Those establishments with the potential to attract food tourists have added roles to play, as they are likely to be the focal points for media and foodie reviews, at the hub of tourist districts, and flagships for the food brand. Chefs also have an important role to play as ambassadors of the food brand and authentic cuisine.

Destination marketing organizations (DMO) must develop distinct cluster brands, and market to potential food tourists. This can only be done when there is confidence in local and regional produce. The tourism/hospitality industry and marketing organizations have the additional role of creating innovative food tourism events and other experiences, some of which will require the active participation of food producers.

■ Rural cluster

Clusters can be developed in rural or remote areas, centred around fishing ports, a town or villages within farm districts, or at resorts. In this context, a resort could be a self-contained property where people spend their holidays (e.g. skiing, seaside/lakeside, spa) or a town that caters to all the needs of visitors (i.e. accommodation, meals, transport, entertainment, recreation). In the cases of fishing and farm-based food tourism clusters the emphasis is on fresh and local produce, whereas at resorts (and cities) the food has to be largely brought to the tourists.

■ Urban cluster (or agglomeration)

What we see developing naturally in many cities are entertainment and food/drinking districts. Agglomeration benefits businesses who can pool their marketing and parking, rely on higher levels of public transport and police security, and generally benefit from the tendency of residents and visitors alike to spend time in areas where there are lots of choices and plenty of activity. Cities often label these districts and develop them through various regulations.

Top foodie cities

Any ranking is going to be subjective, but what is interesting is how various 'experts' or 'enthusiasts' compare destinations with foodies in mind. The following excerpts are from Gregory Cartier, Fine Living Correspondent at the website Ask Men (ca.askmen.com/fine_living/wine_dine_archive_60/87_wine_dine.html) accessed Nov. 10, 2013:

> *People take food seriously, perhaps none more so than I. As a result, I can understand if you disagree with some of the choices below. But before you read on, here are some of the factors I chose to single out in my quest to find the ultimate world food capitals.*
>
> **Food history:** *Does the city have a history or reputation as a culinary hotbed?*
> **Food variety:** *Does the city have a diverse food landscape? Is this a city with a unique mix of cultures and as a result, culinary styles?*
> **Food price:** *Does the city accommodate a host of budgets with not just good, but superior cuisine?*
> **Food soul:** *As intangible a quality as there is, but nonetheless, does the city exude a soul and a passion for food? Do the residents as a collective care about food?*

To Gregory Cartier, Melbourne, Australia "...can lay claim to some of the most inventive cuisine in the world", while New York City, USA is a "food mecca" with "...just about every kind of cuisine imaginable to accommodate every budget." Montreal, Canada has old-world charm and its real allure comes from "...those neighborhood jewels that ooze with hospitality and charm (and allow you to bring your own wine to boot)." San Francisco, USA "...is a gorgeous paradise for food lovers and presents a feast of impossible choices to gourmands game enough to take on the challenge."

Its rather difficult for all but a few major world cities to get on to lists like this, implying the need for hierarchical considerations of countries, major cities, minor cities, rural regions and small towns or villages. Not every food tourist goes to major cities and even if they do they are potential visitors to the world's most out-of-the-way places as well.

Creative Cities of Gastronomy is a UNESCO movement. From its website (www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/creativity/creative-cities-network/gastronomy/) we find criteria for joining:
- Well-developed gastronomy, characteristic of the urban centre and/or region;
- Vibrant gastronomy community with numerous traditional restaurants and/or chefs;
- Endogenous ingredients used in traditional cooking;
- Local know-how, traditional culinary practices and methods of cooking that have survived industrial/technological advancement;
- Traditional food markets and traditional food industry;
- Tradition of hosting gastronomic festivals, awards, contests and other broadly-targeted means of recognition;
- Respect for the environment and promotion of sustainable local products;
- Murturing of public appreciation, promotion of nutrition in educational institutions and inclusion of biodiversity conservation programmes in cooking schools curricula.

Délice: Good Food Cities of the World "...is an international network of like minded cities engaged in promoting the benefits of culinary excellence and good food. Created in 2007 by the City of Lyon (France), Délice gathers today 19 cities from 4 continents and offers a platform to exchange and meet with chefs and gastronomy professionals." (delice-network.org)

The activities and events of Délice revolve around five main themes:
- City marketing
- Education and transmission
- Local products
- Health and nutrition
- excellence of chefs

Destination development concepts

Resources are the foundations of food tourism development, whether they be natural (e.g. gathering wild foods, fishing or hunting), farmed (including pick-your-own places) or manufactured (as in beverages and processed foods). Resources for eating have to be packaged and marketed in order to become tourism products. To become experiences, more value must be added through co-creation and interpretation.

Attractions are places, businesses and experiencescapes that can motivate a trip. They are the pull factors, or whatever food tourists are seeking. Resources become attractions only when the tourist can find out about them, get to them, and find a way to enjoy them. That means attractions are mediated experiences, with managers actively seeking visitors and facilitating their experiences.
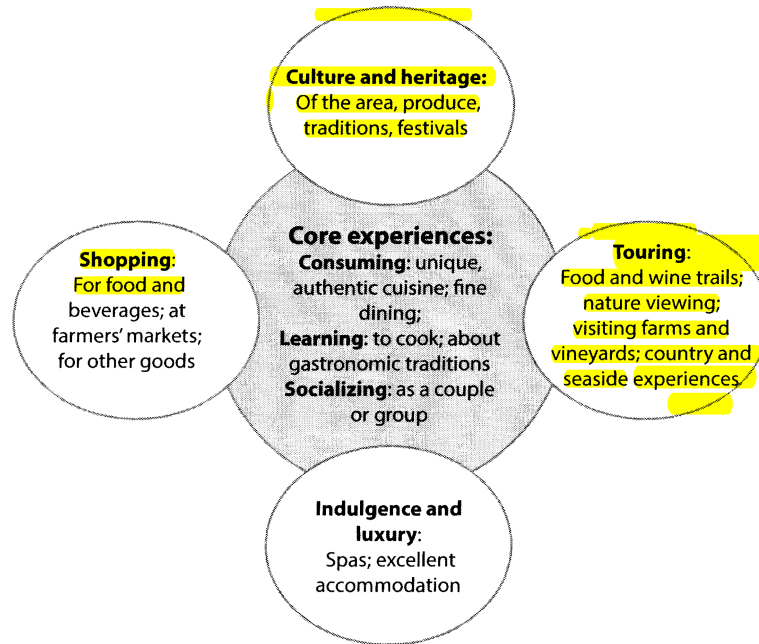
5

Culture and heritage:
Of the area, produce, traditions, festivals

Core experiences:
Consuming: unique, authentic cuisine; fine dining;
Learning: to cook; about gastronomic traditions
Socializing: as a couple or group

Shopping:
For food and beverages; at farmers' markets; for other goods

Touring:
Food and wine trails; nature viewing; visiting farms and vineyards; country and seaside experiences

Indulgence and luxury:
Spas; excellent accommodation

Figure 5.5: A destination concept for food tourism

■ Export-ready

To be an 'export-ready' attraction means the experience is available for purchase outside the region or country, as through travel agents, tours companies and other wholesalers, and online bookings. Information has to be easily accessed by potential visitors and the advance purchase made simple. In food tourism, examples are few and far between (see the New Zealand example on p. 134), which is a major limitation on growth.