

# 9

## THE ROLE OF MEDIA AND SOCIAL MEDIA IN PROMOTING FOOD AND DRINK TOURISM

### CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

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- To examine the growth of the media-created 'celebrity chef' and look at how television is bringing food tourism to people's homes and prompting visitation
- To explore the different media channels and vehicles that present and discuss food and drink destinations and thereby inform image development and perceptions (include radio, magazine and the internet)
- To present a discussion on the role of social media and review-based websites in the promotion and marketing of food and drink tourism
- To provide an overview of the impact of international food and drink blogs and examine the role of bloggers
- To provide useful links to resources that can be examined and analysed in terms of marketing and advertising techniques and approaches

### CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter provides an overview of how place is being promoted, and food and drink tourism is being marketed through the popular media and increasingly through consumer-authored social media channels and web-based vehicles. The chapter starts by examining the evolving promotion and utilisation of the celebrity

chef and popular food television programmes and channels, and then moves to look at media forms including radio programmes, magazines and periodicals. It then explores the growth of the internet as a key marketing tool and in particular the massive growth of user-generated content through social media channels. Social media is dominating approaches to online promotion; powered by content generated through review vehicles, blogs, vlogs (video blogs), web-based marketing campaigns and vehicles such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. Such channels are undoubtedly now the most influential approach to food and drink marketing food websites. This global, ever-changing and powerful phenomenon is at the forefront of promotional avenues and has become a pervasive and fast-paced method of marketing.

## CELEBRITY CHEF AND TELEVISION PROGRAMMES COMBINING FOOD AND TRAVEL

The rise of the celebrity chef has been well documented on television and in the press, with culinary figures enjoying huge cultural and social impact (Henderson, 2011). These culinary personalities have created an industry worth hundreds of millions of pounds. The 1980s saw the birth of a new class of restaurant-goer, the 'foodie' (Getz et al., 2014) and since then a significant market has developed for people wanting to recreate their food experiences at home. People also wanted to ensure they were visiting a restaurant of quality and began to seek out food and drink associated with a well-known personality. Mitchell and Hall (2003) acknowledge there has been significant growth and increasing desire to taste the dishes of the 'celebrity chef'. Several chefs have been credited with being the first celebrity chef, among them historically Bartolomeo Scappi, a sixteenth-century Italian and personal chef to Pope Pius V. He is believed to have written the first modern recipe books (called 'Opera di ricette'); then came the celebrity French chef and food writer Marie-Antoine Carême in the nineteenth century, credited with establishing the 'grande cuisine' and high art of gastronomy in France (Kelly, 2005). With the advent of television several chefs have been described as the 'first celebrity chef', including Julia Child in the USA, who first appeared on American television in 1963, and Fanny Craddock in the UK.

It is perhaps Keith Floyd (1943–2009) who first appeared regularly in television shows 'on location', explicitly linking food, culture and place. Keith Floyd was a British celebrity cook, television personality and restaurateur. His flamboyant presentation made him popular with millions of viewers worldwide. He is widely regarded as the pioneer of taking cooking programmes out of the television studio and into boats on rocky seas, or in hilltop mountain spots in Australia, Spain, Italy, Ireland, France, America and the Mediterranean.

Prominent celebrity chefs who have built up global brands include Gordon Ramsey (Jones, 2009), Jamie Oliver, Ken Hom, Rick Stein, Nigella Lawson and Marco Pierre White. Through the television, these chefs are now often propelled

into fame through media appearances, food shows and cookery books. One of the most popular television food programmes in the UK is *The Great British Bake Off*, which attracts a weekly audience of up to 12 million people and has made the presenters (Paul Hollywood and Mary Berry) household names as in Figure 9.1, which was taken during an autograph signing session by both (the queue was very long!).



FIGURE 9.1 *A book signing by Mary Berry, celebrity baker. Photo by author*

Henderson (2011) argues that celebrity chefs have risen to prominence in countries such as the UK and USA, where they are a powerful commercial force. However, she also argues there is now clear and growing influence in the more economically advanced parts of East Asia, including Singapore. Gordon Ramsay, for example, is certainly reported to have a huge fan base in Singapore, especially after his involvement in the *Hawker Heroes* challenge in 2013. Celebrity chefs who have opened up restaurants and have attracted consumers from across the globe include the Frenchman Joel Robuchon, Japanese chef Tetsuya Wakuda, Austrian Wolfgang Puck, Australian Luke Mangan, and American Cat Cora. In South Africa, you find vineyard tours linked to a trip to restaurants run by chef Reuben Riffel, who remains a high-profile and very well-respected member of the South African culinary community.

Television is an extremely powerful vehicle and communication medium linking place and food, enticing and inviting people to visit places with a food story, famous personality or culinary heritage. One popular programme aired in the UK in 2015 was *A Cook Abroad*, where chefs travelled to destinations and cooked iconic products.

## CASE STUDY

### A Cook Abroad, BBC2, UK

One of the most recent television series in the UK to showcase and link place with food is BBC2's *A Cook Abroad* (details at: [www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b052hdnr](http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b052hdnr) (21/3/15)). Each week it features a well-known celebrity chef travelling to a country to enjoy its sights, but particularly to investigate its food and drink offer and the dishes it is associated with. Examples have included Dave Myers in Egypt, Rachel Khoo in Malaysia, Tony Singh

in India and Rick Stein in Australia. A popular programme, it powerfully promotes the place through its food and the people associated with its production. This close link between place and food is now explicit in these kinds of prime-time television programmes, presenting the delights of different dishes and encouraging the audience to buy the food if at home, but also to visit the place. Holiday and travel shows were once about the quality of the beach, swimming pool or nightlife; now, they are most definitely about the food and drink.

Interested consumers and foodies can see and (almost) taste the world from their armchair, fuelling an ever-present explosion of television programmes and channels dedicated to food and travel. These specialist food-related television channels have become a medium for chefs to become household names. For example, in the USA, the 24-hour Food Network features shows from celebrity chefs flying around the world cooking the unusual and exotic. Many shows feature on channels in more than one country, which has made chefs truly global products with the power to endorse products extremely effectively. Furthermore, channels such as the Travel Channel are increasingly focused on food and the culinary offer of the destinations promoted. It is clear that endorsements by celebrity chefs have led to increased demand for certain food products, but they now also lead to increased visitation of countries and places. For example, Ken Hom's first television series caused a surge in sales of Peking duck, as well as raising awareness of the Far East and its culinary offerings (Halonen-Knight and Hurmerinta, 2010). Powell and Prasad (2010) claim that the celebrity is as a cultural intermediary; they present them as unique tastemakers in contemporary culture and argue that they have a powerful role in ensuring viewers are exposed to particular lifestyles across popular media forms, such as television, print, and advertising. These media construct the stars who transfer knowledge of place and food.

## RADIO FOOD AND DRINK PROMOTION

The medium of radio is powerful and pervasive in the promotion of food and drink tourism. For example, in the UK, BBC Radio 4's 'Food Programme' and

their Food and Farming Awards ([www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00zxv3j](http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00zxv3j)) are examples not only of how food is promoted, but of how food attractions and consumer engagement are celebrated through awards including 'best food market', or 'best food initiative'. The awards were launched in 2000, to mark the twentieth birthday of The Food Programme. The website gives the mission statement at the birth of the programme (remaining true to this day) as 'to honour those who have done most to promote the cause of good food'. In Australia, there are regular shows on ABC Radio discussing organic and local food and tourism ([www.touristradio.com.au/barry\\_green/ABC\\_radio\\_interviews.htm](http://www.touristradio.com.au/barry_green/ABC_radio_interviews.htm)) and SBS Radio Australia also regularly showcase celebrity chefs, recipes and place ([www.sbs.com.au/food](http://www.sbs.com.au/food)). Radio programmes are increasingly part of a complex media package of food and drink promotion, evidenced by numerous popular radio shows such as the Chef's Table, and Splendid Table (USA). All these shows generally focus on topical issues related to food; a specific food item, such as a particular fruit or traditional dish; health issues in relation to food; and, increasingly, food of a certain geographical area or of certain ethnic peoples, sparking interest in visiting these destinations.

Other mechanisms include radio shows and programmes specifically aimed at supporting and helping the tourist. For example, in New Zealand, Tourism Radio has a section dedicated to food and drink ([www.tourismradio.co.nz](http://www.tourismradio.co.nz)), claiming to be like:

having your own personal tour guide sitting in your vehicle with you. Tourism Radio will greatly enhance your travel experience here in New Zealand. As you're driving along, our Tour Guide commentators keep you right up to date with where you are, where to go and what to see and do in the surrounding area.

## PRINT MEDIA THAT BRINGS THE WORLD'S FOOD TO YOUR COFFEE TABLE

In addition to radio and television, food and tourism promotion through printed materials has become a significantly lucrative market. The explosion of food as a central story and theme in magazines is illustrated by the increase of specific food editorials and glossy magazines dedicated to food and travel. The increased range of gourmet cooking magazines includes: *Gourmet*, *Bon Appétit*, *Food & Wine*, *Art of Eating*, *Cook's Illustrated*, *Fine Cooking*, *Saveur*, *Cooking Pleasures*, *Intermezzo*, *Gourmet Traveler*, *Good Food Magazine* and *Food and Travel Magazine* published in the UK ([www.foodandtravel.com](http://www.foodandtravel.com)), *Food Traveler* ([www.foodtravelermag.com](http://www.foodtravelermag.com)) from the USA, *Food and Travel* ([www.food-travel.com/](http://www.food-travel.com/)) from Singapore, offering periodicals, editorials, reviews and advertorials. Travel magazines (such as *Lonely Planet*, *Condé Nast* ([www.condenast.co.uk](http://www.condenast.co.uk)), *Wanderlust* ([www.wanderlust.co.uk/](http://www.wanderlust.co.uk/))) are also now full of food and drink articles and advertisements. Wilson's (2003) analysis of these

food magazines provides a useful insight into their different readership, market and focus. However, it is beyond doubt that these are popular and reflect a demand for magazines combining food and travel. Newspapers also contain food and travel supplements, regularly promoting a new destination or secret foodie location.

Print media also includes promotional material in inflight magazines, and it is now commonplace to see numerous food articles focused on an airline's destinations. One example is shown in Figure 9.2 from an inflight magazine promoting Madrid as the culinary capital. Every region and destination is in a search for a unique product to differentiate itself from other destinations, and through the power of magazine articles and advertising, it is possible to showcase local food and cuisines that are unique to an area. These are powerful marketing tools to attract more visitors (Stanley and Stanley, 2015).



**FIGURE 9.2** *Madrid as a culinary capital promoted in an inflight magazine, easyJet. Permission given*

### ACTIVITY FOOD AND TOURISM MAGAZINE ANALYSIS

Purchase a magazine dedicated to food and travel. Think about who this magazine is aimed at and how you can support your answer. What kinds of messages are being relayed in the articles? What kinds of images are used and why?

## THE INTERNET

The internet is most certainly the most effective and efficient advertising medium we have today and it is now the most widely used tool for searching for tourism information: 'The information-based nature of this product means that the Internet, which offers global reach and multimedia capability, is an increasingly important means of promoting and distributing tourism services' (Doolin et al., 2002: 557). It goes without saying that the design of government tourism websites, restaurants, attractions and other culinary destinations must consider the adoption and use of presentation methods and web-based technologies that are eye-catching (Sigala et al., 2012). Certainly, to maximise the advantages of web-based marketing (such as travellers accessing information quickly, making immediate bookings, comparing costs, and so forth), destination marketing organisations (DMOs) and tourism companies have developed, redesigned and reconstructed their websites, devised elaborate technological strategies and created advanced digital interfaces (Buhalis and Law, 2008).

Kim et al. (2009b) investigated the effective use of web marketing in food tourism at sites in West Texas that would affect tourists' destination decisions, finding there was little research on food-based web-marketing. They add that, 'with the dramatic growth in the online travel market, the Web sites of destinations have been considered as an important resource to gain information for consumers and as an effective marketing tool for suppliers' (2009: 55). Information on food and drink through destination marketing organisations' websites is significant for food tourists. Kim et al. (2009b) claimed their study took an initial step to look at web marketing on food tourism and their study found information about food festivals, recipes of local and traditional food from the destinations, and food-related events, but suggested the promotion of food and food tourism on websites was still in its infancy. In the intervening years, there has been explosion of web-based activity and one only has to undertake a search for food and place on the internet to be faced with a dizzying array of options and search engine results.

Today, marketers and institutions no longer have ultimate control over the image of their destination or product (Hays et al., 2013), and this is where the power of social media and user-generated content has come into its own. Schegg and Fux (2010) suggest that the evolution of Web 1.0 to 2.0 marks a shift from users rather than organisations taking charge of the internet.

## SOCIAL MEDIA AND CONSUMER-GENERATED REVIEWS

A recent phenomenon dominating promotional avenues and marketing is the rapid growth of social media channels, online promotion vehicles and web-based marketing campaigns. Social media is particularly relevant since tourism is an

'information-intensive industry' (Gretzel et al., 2000: 147). Consumers obtain information to assist in the trip-planning process and to make informed decisions about destinations, accommodation, restaurants, tours and attractions (Xiang and Gretzel, 2010). It is a key broadcasting medium (Buhalis and Law, 2008) and we have seen the explosion of eWOM (online Word of Mouth) (Litvin et al., 2008), where consumer-generated media is increasingly the most powerful vehicle for destination marketing. This has challenged and disrupted traditional approaches to place marketing, giving way to instantaneous and informal approaches, including consumer-authored reviews and suggestions through sites such as Trip Advisor and online booking pages. The line of communication is no longer limited to producer-to-consumer, but is increasingly consumer-to-consumer, and consumer-to-producer, as well as many-to-one, one-to-many, one-to-one, or many-to-many (Buhalis, 2003; Hays et al., 2013)

Websites are now dominated by user-driven content and represent what has become commonly known as Web 2.0 technology, where the website is no longer just a static page, but a dynamic platform allowing users to engage with the autonomous generation of content and an opportunity to relay, reflect on, and rate their own experiences (Miguéns et al., 2008). Such platforms host a vast amount of user-generated content, and are proving extremely influential in directing tourists' choices. A study by Xiang and Gretzel (2010) outlines the role of social media in online travel information, confirming the growing importance of social media in the online tourism domain. It also provides evidence for challenges faced by traditional providers of travel-related information. Online restaurant reviews are also increasingly becoming a key part of the pre-research to a trip. The study by Lu and Jun Yi (2014) in China using dianping.com finds these review sites significantly increase traffic to restaurants. It is also noted that Web 2.0 approaches are increasingly used by managers and destinations to understand and accommodate ever-changing consumer preferences, needs and tastes.

### **ACTIVITY WRITE AND SUBMIT YOUR OWN ONLINE REVIEW**

Register with an online review website such as tripadvisor.com or a restaurant table booker with reviewer sections and provide your own review of a restaurant or food outlet you have visited (a good or bad experience!). Think about providing a balanced, evidence-based and accurate account of your experience. Continue to monitor how many hits/likes you receive over the next few weeks. Can you see how powerful your entry is and how it can influence others?

Many DMOs turn to social media as a relatively low-cost and global reach marketing tool, although there is limited research, according to Hays et al. (2013), which looks at use of social media. They claim that, despite social media being recognised as central to providing a competitive advantage, there remains relatively little understanding of its impact, especially in how using it in a poor manner can be more harmful than not engaging with it at all. Hays et al. claim that DMOs need to exhibit more interactive behaviour on their social media platform, given that it is publicly



available, widely accessible information. DMOs need to ensure they are up to date and understand how other tourism professionals and organisations are implementing social media strategies to learn from their achievements and mistakes.

## CASE STUDY

### Social media to promote food and drink by a Canadian DMO

The Canadian Tourism Commission provides a map and pages dedicated to promoting the food and drink offer in Canada (<http://uk-keepexploring.canada.travel/things-to-do/exp/food-drink>). Under the strapline 'Tasting Canada: Fall in love with the flavours of Canada', it uses a number of mechanisms, including an interactive calendar with 100 events; facts and figures such as '60 Okanagan grape varieties; 40 gallons of sap to make one gallon of maple syrup'; consumer photo upload, links to Facebook and social

media sites, and hyperlinks to activities and events (April 2015). It seeks to entice visitors with its colourful and rich descriptions:

Award-winning wine from a local vineyard, succulent rare breed lamb cooked in fragrant garden herbs. Who knew that sustainable eating could taste so good? Plunge into Quebec's cosmopolitan culinary scene. Pick a side: St Viateur or Fairmount? Whose bagels are the best? Learn to shuck PEI Malpeque oysters fresh off the boat; slurp, swallow, savour. Another dozen? Why not.

In terms of web 2.0 technology, one growth area has been the emergence of online diaries or regular posted commentaries, better known as blogs (weblogs) or vlogs (video diaries), where social media is providing relevant, fluid and iconic culinary commentary.

## CASE STUDY

### Taste Trekkers, Australia

This business relies heavily on social media to sell and promote its vast array of food-related

experiences. Offering 'slow tourism' experiences such as cookery schools, taste days, home visits and foodie trails, 'Taste Trekkers' is a unique food tour business specialising

in small numbers'. The company are keen that tourists feel that are not 'part of a herd', but are simply travelling with friends on a fabulous foodie holiday. It promises that 'Each day we'll duck and weave through local markets, cafes, roadside stalls and visit the homes of locals. We take time out to sit and enjoy many of the local daily customs and brews, immersing ourselves in our surroundings and soaking the senses, rather than rushing from one sight to the next' (<http://tastetrekking.com.au>). The website shown in Figure 9.3 offers a clear example of how a small food company is using social media links and evolving content to engage and interact with potential customers and interested 'foodies'.

The owner and entrepreneur behind the business, Sally Lynch, was keen to state in correspondence that social media can be a blessing and a curse: 'I do food treks to far flung locales – exploring the world of food producers and home cooks with a little bit of foodie rock-star thrown in for good measure :-)'. In social media she claims 'It is one of those issues you don't think about when full of excitement about taking over the world with your new business – but as the technological world takes over names are becoming harder and harder to get so that all your social media is aligned – with the simple replacement of a letter you have a copycat brand on your hands. Difficult to keep on top of it all too – not sure what the solution is?' (Correspondence 10/8/15).



**FIGURE 9.3** *Taste Trekkers.au website screen shot. Permission given by author. Credit Sally Lynch*

## BLOGGING AND VLOGGING

Blog is an abbreviation for 'web log' and is usually a frequently updated, reverse-chronological single web page using images and links to other social media links and applications. Blogging has become a powerful online marketing approach, with titles such as '10 Iconic Foods of New York City, and Where To Find Them' and 'Sarawak Top 10 Iconic Foods'. This consumer-to-consumer (C2C) medium has become a massive growth area (Pan et al., 2007). Tseng et al. (2015) found that food blogs in China are one of four key themes in destination marketing which prompted tourist visitation. Baker and Green (2008) found that there were 31.6 million blogs on the internet with 40,000 new blogs coming online each day. This form of online publishing has gained more and more popularity, as personal communication or word-of-mouth is viewed as a more credible and honest source of consumer information. There is now a clear need for tourism marketers to understand this new phenomenon and its implications for marketing and promotion of a destination. As Pan et al. (2007) outline, consumers are able to access opinions not only from close friends and family members, but also from strangers from all around the world who may have used the product, visited a certain destination or eaten a certain food.

One example of a website which hosts and promotes food and drink blogs is [www.foodies100.co.uk](http://www.foodies100.co.uk), the UK's largest network for food and drink bloggers, with almost 5,000 members reaching 8 million readers a year. It provides bloggers with opportunities to share and develop their blogs through the website, events and brand partnerships. Or elsewhere in the world, examples from Nigeria include [www.dobbyssignature.com](http://www.dobbyssignature.com), or South Africa [www.foodandthefabulous.com](http://www.foodandthefabulous.com); or Spain [www.latortugaviajera.com](http://www.latortugaviajera.com). For example, another site referring to Malaysia (<http://kampungboycitygal.com>) includes specific information about Malaysia's culinary offerings, supporting research that finds consumer feedback is essential to the success of a tourist offer (Kivela and Crofts, 2006).

To reduce the uncertainty associated with purchase, potential tourists often rely on the opinions and evaluations of a reference group in the decision-making process. The advice of consumers with prior experience of tourism products is particularly valued, and has been identified as the most influential form of word-of-mouth in shaping potential visitors' decision-making (Crofts, 1999). Through a blog or vlog, the consumer can seek more authentic advice from other consumers who have prior experience with the tourist destination. Pan et al. (2007) suggest bloggers are seen as interpersonally available and rank not only as the preferred source of purchase information, but the most influential in travel decision-making for many. One of the methodologies employed to research this phenomenon is netnography (Kozinets, 2010).

## **Critical Reflections: using netnography as a methodology**

Netnography is a methodological approach that analyses the behaviour of individuals on the internet to provide insights into their views and thoughts of places, services and products. Netnography explores cultural and symbolic information on the internet and is increasingly used by tourism researchers (e.g. Mkono (2012a) used this in a study of Zimbabwe). The word 'netnography' comes from 'inter[net]' and 'ethnography' and was a process and term coined and developed by Robert Kozinets. It is an adaptation of traditional ethnography using the internet as a virtual fieldwork site. Data generation takes two forms: data that the researcher directly copies from the computer-mediated communications of online community members, and reflective fieldnotes that capture the ethnographer's observations. Without both parts, it is arguably not ethnographic.

Web-based research is becoming more widely used in tourism research as more tourism consumers become active in online travel communities and social networking forums dedicated to tourism, such as Trip Advisor. Researchers can also find travel-related discussions on general networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. In particular, post-visit narratives provided on these online platforms offer a way of exploring tourists' subjective travel experiences. Through the blogosphere, they rate tourism suppliers and generate important points of reference for other travellers through their 'word-of-mouth' testimonies.

Think about the advantages and disadvantages of this research method and how you might employ it to gain insights about the food and drink tourism phenomenon.

With magazines, websites, television and Twitter feeds dedicated to food, stories are given new life and traditions transformed to fit new fashions and instantaneous consumer feedback. With advanced web technologies, destinations are establishing real and online spatial and social zones, where food experiences are packaged together into a highly interactive, evolving and enticing offer.

### **Working with food and drink tourism: social media blogging**

There is money to be made and a career to be carved through successful blogging and online food writing. Food and drink writers are in demand, but it is competitive and they often look for experience in blogging and using social media. It is free to

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start blogging, and can get you noticed very quickly. Some bloggers are freelance and attract writing contracts and paid advertising on their sites. Others move into jobs like this, recently advertised for an anonymised company in the USA: 'A company is looking for an ambitious, internet- and social-media-savvy editor with a huge passion for cooking to lead its popular food section'. Note the type of work, but particularly the skills and experiences required (listed below). Perhaps this is an area that would suit you?

**Responsibilities:**

- Write posts about food in a shareable style and tone.
- Come up with smart ideas for food posts to assign to the food team.
- Edit staff posts and generate effective, clever headlines aimed at sharing.
- Drive and oversee the production of cooking tutorial photo and video shoots.
- Grow, diversify, and innovate the food section's presence on Pinterest, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other social media channels.
- Outline and execute a vision for growing and expanding the section to reach new, diverse audiences.
- Line-edit original recipes for clarity and accuracy.
- Establish and maintain relationships with chefs, food writers, and other food-world authorities to bring fresh perspectives and ideas to the section.
- Obsessively track viral trends on Facebook, Pinterest, and Tumblr and create content around those trends.

**Requirements:**

- Two to four years of website, magazine, or blogging/vlogging experience – or similar experience in the food industry.
- Experience editing and managing writers.
- Proven understanding of the kinds of food and cooking that generate engagement on social media platforms like Pinterest and Instagram, and the ability to articulate those qualities.
- Self-starter and hard worker with tons of smart ideas.
- Obsession with and passion for cooking plus a strong interest in and knowledge of professional cooking techniques.
- Flexibility and enthusiasm about experimenting with unconventional ideas.
- The technical cooking expertise to create new image-based cooking tutorials and write posts full of authoritative tips is a plus.

## CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has provided examples and case studies to illustrate the role and impact of the media – whether online, in press or on the television. In its analysis

of these communication vehicles, it first looked at the power and influence of the phenomenon that is the celebrity chef and their role in generating interest in places they visit, or dishes they cook on camera. Furthermore, this chapter recognises the plethora of dedicated television channels and programmes across the globe that represent culinary intermediaries, bringing flavour and gastronomic delights from around the world into a viewer's home, simultaneously enticing them to visit the place of its origin and production. The chapter also focused on the increasing space on the radio or in print media dedicated to food tourism, and the explicit promotion and championing of producers and locations. Advertising, periodicals and editorials in printed magazines and publications have become big business. Very few in-flight magazines or newspaper magazine supplements do not have food articles or supplements enticing you to visit a city, region or country to savour its culinary offer.

Finally, the chapter focused on the power of the internet and web-based technologies. Widely regarded as the most effective and efficient advertising medium today, it is the most impactful and truly international tool available for searching tourist information and where to eat and visit. Coupled with this online boom, it needs to be recognised that web 2.0 technologies have become the vehicle of consumer choice and communication. There has been an explosion of online word-of-mouth methods, promoting a marketing approach which draws on consumer-to-consumer, and consumer-to-producer influence, adopting social media channels such as review websites, but also Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. and single-authored blog and vlog sites that build on our desire to check out, listen and seek the opinions and evaluations of others to inform our decision-making process.

## END OF CHAPTER POINTS

- Celebrity chefs have risen to global prominence and are now a powerful commercial force as a cultural and culinary intermediaries and tastemakers in contemporary culture.
- Television and radio have become extremely powerful vehicles and communication methods to link place and food, promoting a complex media package of food and drink promotion that encourages visitation to places with a food story or heritage.
- The internet is the main research tool for consumers seeking out information and recommendations on place and where to eat and drink.
- Marketers and institutions no longer have control over the image of their destination or product: power lies with the user and consumer.
- Online word-of-mouth mechanisms that promote consumer-generated media are arguably the most powerful vehicles for destination marketing.
- Websites are now dynamic platforms that allow users the autonomous generation of content and the opportunity of relaying, reflecting on, and rating their own experiences.

- Blogs and vlogs provide valuable advice from consumers with prior experience of tourism products to potential consumers and are therefore identified as the most influential form of word-of-mouth in shaping potential visitors' decision-making.

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