

## SEARCHING FOR THE NEW CULINARY EXPERIENCES AS A NEW TREND IN NUTRITIONAL BEHAVIOUR OF CONSUMERS

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**Abstract:** *The nutritional needs are the basic and the most important needs of people. However, nowadays, fastidious and bored consumers are searching for new experiences and sensations also in food area. The aim of this article is to identify the new culinary experiences, which are new trends in consumer nutritional behaviour based on secondary sources of information published over the period of 2009-2016. Across the studies covered by this paper it was found that the combination of consumers' needs and social, demographic and economic determinants had led to create some new food trends, such as food tourism, street food, food-trucks and food blogging.*

**Keywords:** *food-trucks, food blogging, street food, food tourism, consumer behaviour*

### 1 Introduction

Consumption of food is necessary for proper functioning of human body. Therefore, the nutritional needs, according to the key concepts and theories of human needs prioritized by famous scientists such as Maslow, McCeland and Alderfer, are considered as physiological needs and the most important needs of every human being. The fulfilment of these needs has significant impact on the development of further needs<sup>1</sup>.

Nutrition, besides satisfying hunger, satisfies much more various needs, such as respect, sense of security and belonging. Furthermore, the social and cultural environment, which human exists in, extends human nutritional needs by the elements of prestige or imitation<sup>2</sup>.

The nutritional behaviour of consumers is one of the forms of consumption and is associated with consumers' attitudes and ways of dealing with satisfying nutritional needs. They include the choice of food, the way of buying and preparing it for consumption, the time, place and people with whom food or dishes are usually consumed<sup>3</sup>.

Nowadays, consumers get bored very fast with taste and way of eating, so they look for new experiences in this area. They also search for the possibility to express feelings and experiences related to cooking skills and have some impact on other humans' lives. For these reasons, the popularity of food tourism, ethnic street food or food-trucks and food blogging increases rapidly.

The aim of this article is to identify the new culinary experiences, which are new trends in consumer nutritional behaviour based on secondary sources of information published over the period of 2009-2016. Article shows the specification of food tourism, street food, food-trucks, food blogging and consumer behaviour in these areas.

### 2 The food tourism

Nowadays, the tourism has evaluated. One of the reasons of that is the fact that people in move look for new and various destinations, which offer unique experiences. This creates new trends in tourism associated with increasing popularity of destinations, which are non-traditional and less-crowded. Modern tourists have different needs, they look for new sensations and experiences. In traditional meaning travelling

(especially cultural travelling) was associated with observing architecture, countryside or visiting museums, what engaged only one of the five senses – sight. It means, that other senses were not used enough by tourists, and their experiencing was limited. Therefore, contemporary consumers, who are more aware of their own needs, demand voyages where the other senses are also involved. Tourists wish to take part in some events, feel the atmosphere of the place and enjoy the local food<sup>4</sup>.

Food and tourism have strong connections. It has been estimated by various authorities which food is main tourism resource for. It is necessary for physical sustenance that all travelling people have to eat during journey, however, the searching for new taste experiences could become the major aim of their trip. With regard to advantages, food is associated with pleasure and entertainment, moreover, it has a social purpose. The eating habits can make a clear image of way of life and make it possible to understand cultural differences between countries.

Food tourism, which can be called culinary tourism, gastronomy tourism or tasting tourism<sup>5</sup>, is kind of response for increasing consumer interest in local food. Local products can be bought at local supermarkets or retailers as well as in farm shops and farmers' markets. Also restaurants serve food, which is prepared from local ingredients in order to add value to eating experiences and be updated with customers' preferences associated with local food<sup>6</sup>. The present interest in local food is related to the ethics, sustainability, environment and health awareness. More and more consumers feel obliged to support local economy and networks<sup>7</sup>. Furthermore, consumers prefer perceiving these products as fresher, tastier, of better quality, pure and traditional. There have been indications that phenomenon of interest in local food is observed not only among local consumers, but also among tourists. In each local food market people in move can find another experiences as every market is unique. The differences are caused by many determinants such as local culture, tradition, history, environment and socioeconomic situation, local consumers' nutritional preferences. Due to the food variation in every country the popularity of culinary-gastronomic food tourism is increasing<sup>8</sup>.

It is observed that food, local gastronomy and meals are often used in the places branding. Food and gastronomy are used as a significant component in creating some destinations more attractive for consumers. There have been indications that food and meals may be used for creating some atmosphere at the places as well as protecting and strengthening the identity of the place. Distinctive local or even national cuisines, which are used to reinforce the identity of larger regions or nations such as Thai, Russian, Greek, Italian and French cuisines can be assumed as good examples. Gastronomic tradition can be also treated as an element of historical heritage, which has the significant impact on place identity. The interesting example is Bangkok, where food markets and canal markets presenting Thai cuisine are main tourists attractions.

Food can also be used for changing the old image of a city. One example is the famous path, called 'fun walk' created in between railway stations to the Cape Town Stadium during World Cup in South Africa. Although 'fun walk' was created to solve traffic

<sup>1</sup> Zalega, T.: *Consumption of food in households with unemployed members in the Mazowieckie voivodeship*, Scientific Journal of Warsaw University of Life Sciences in Warsaw - Economics and Organization of Agri-food Economy, nr 93, Warsaw, 2011. 119 p.

<sup>2</sup> Grzelak, A., Gałazka M.: *Relations between needs, demand and food consumption – a theoretical perspective*, Economic Annals of Kujawy and Pomorze University in Bydgoszcz nr 4, Publishing House of Kujawy and Pomorze University in Bydgoszcz, 2011. 40p.

<sup>3</sup> Goryńska-Goldmann E., Ratajczak P.: *Nutritional awareness and nutritional behaviours of consumers*, Journal of Agribusiness and Rural Development 4 (18), 2010. 41-48 p

<sup>4</sup> López-Guzmán, T., Sánchez-Cañizares, S.: *Culinary tourism in Cordoba (Spain)*, *British Food Journal*, 114(2), 2012. 168-179 p.

<sup>5</sup> Henderson, Joan C.: *Food tourism reviewed*, *British Food Journal*, Vol. 111 Iss 4, 2009. 317 – 326 p.

<sup>6</sup> Björk, P., Kauppinen-Räsänen H.: *Culinary-gastronomic tourism – a search for local food experiences*, *Nutrition & Food Science*, Vol. 44 Iss 4, 2014. 294 – 309 p

<sup>7</sup> Pearson, D., Henryks, J., Trott, A., Jones, P., Parker, G. and Dumaresq, D.: *Local food: understanding consumer motivations in innovative retail formats*, *British Food Journal*, Vol. 113 No. 7, 2011. 886-899 p.

<sup>8</sup> Björk, P., Kauppinen-Räsänen H.: *Culinary-gastronomic tourism – a search for local food experiences*, *Nutrition & Food Science*, Vol. 44 Iss 4, 2014. 294 – 309 p

problem during the 2010 FIFA World Cup, it was transformed into place with numerous restaurants, food-trucks and cafes very fast.

Summarizing, the traditional tourism changed. Tourists have new needs, they look for new experiences, so the old aims of tourism such as visiting famous places or observing architecture and conventional destinations are less popular. Consumers search for new sensations; they want to involve all senses in discovering world. The above mentioned trend is used by some authorities, to encourage tourists to visit their areas. Especially food, meals and gastronomy are used in many ways to promote the image of cities, affect their identities or make them more attractive for visitors and persons, who look for place to live and work<sup>9</sup>.

### 3 Street food and food-trucks

Street food is very old custom, which is more and more popular in many developing countries. It is one of the most significant consumption patterns of urban life, mostly in developing world and very often it is one of the city attractions. The main factors of increasing popularity of this kind of gastronomy among consumers are busy lifestyle and long working hours<sup>10</sup>. Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) defines the street food vendors as persons who sell food other than fresh vegetables or fruits from trucks or trailers<sup>11</sup>.

Food-trucks are the large vehicles, which are equipped to prepare and sell food. This kind of mobile restaurants has become increasingly common recently, especially in Poland. The characteristic feature of it is serving various and international cuisine. The beginning of the popularity of food-trucks is noted for 1600s. In those times, it helped to deal with feeding of workers during long cross-country cattle drives. The stew, roast beef, boiled potatoes and beans were generally served then<sup>12</sup>. Over many years this way of serving dishes has become very popular and fashionable. The main determinants of development of food-trucks are popularity of sport, touristic and cultural events, outdoor music concerts and historical reconstructions, which are associated with numbers of people in one place, where permanent dining options are usually not provided.

Food-trucks are essential in promoting cuisines of various countries, which are very often exotic for the natives. The average consumer has opportunity to try new tastes. One example is food-truck named 'La Chica Sandwichera', which is specialized in cuisine of Cuban emigrants living in Florida, USA. Another example is 'Carnitas Food Truck' the gastronomy company serving simple Mexican dishes, such as tacos and burritos with chilli habanero or guacamole<sup>13</sup>.

There are some indications, that street food and food-trucks are good alternatives for consumers who look for fast eating, new taste and saving money.

### 4 Food blogging

Looking for new experiences in eating does not always have to be associated with satisfying hunger. The result of some studies indicates that nowadays consumers look for a way which allows them to escape from temporary life, gain knowledge and

socialize. For this kind of individuals, eating and drinking is a wonderful opportunity to meet friends and enjoy their life<sup>14</sup>. That is the reason of growing popularity of food and wine festivals, cooking classes, culinary TV programs and writing and reading food blogs.

There have been few studies on food blogging as a serious leisure. Consumers are willing to share their culinary knowledge, skills and discoveries by writing about them. Blogs are kind of personal diaries online, composed of personal thoughts, advises, experiences, photos, links and images, with comments left by readers, generally organized in chronological order. The same rules are referred to food blogs. Food blogs usually represent authors' recipes created by gourmet, some culinary advises and photos. Majority of food blogs authors use their own photos. Many of them write cook books' reviews. Food blogging can be something more than writing about some culinary recipes. It might focus on some personal, emotional or physical matters and have impact on health, well-being and environmental human awareness<sup>15</sup>. Food bloggers can be treated as communities in local and global meaning. Foodie blogroll (www.foodieblogroll.com), one of the largest culinary portals, listed 16 938 blogs in October 2016 and more than 510 715 daily visits<sup>16</sup>. Whilst the majority of food blogs ought to probably be treated as a hobby and pleasure activity, there are lots of examples that food blogs have been successful and have come into cooperation with food industry, however it is probably rare for people to make a living from food blogging<sup>17</sup>.

### 5 Conclusions

Summarizing, nutritional needs are the basic and the most important needs of people. However, nowadays consumers are very changeable. Their needs and expectations are changing very fast, because of the fact that they are bored very fast. Consumers are searching for new experiences and sensations. Across the studies covered by this paper there have three areas been described: food tourism, street food and food-trucks and food blogging, which are examples of new trends created by consumers' behaviour on food market. Some conclusions have emerged across the studies. Firstly, the phenomenon of food tourism was created by consumers, who had deeper needs in discovering world than only visiting architecturally unique cities, who wanted to feel atmosphere, taste and smell of place. The consequence of this trend was using food, as one of the main attractions in some destinations. Secondly, the determinants such as busy lifestyles, long working hours and popularity of big cultural and touristic events led to an increase of consumers' interest in street food and food-trucks. Thirdly, searching for new experiences in eating can have different meaning than satisfying hunger. Sometimes consumers simply want to escape from mundane life, learn something new or make new acquaintances. They have also a need of expressing their feeling about cooking, boasting their cooking skills or having some impact on human awareness and healthy life, so they are writing a blog about food.

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