GASTRO-TOURISM: Mobilizing Local Food & Drink Resources for Destination Development

HELENA A. WILLIAMS, Ph.D.
WHAT IS GASTRO-TOURISM?

“The pursuit of memorable, authentic food & beverage experiences while traveling locally, regionally or globally.” (Williams et al., 2014)
WHAT GASTRO-TOURISM REQUIRES

Identifying local food & beverage resources

Knowledgeable people willing to share their kitchen cultures in genuine ways.

WHAT IT DOES NOT NEED!

Extraordinary natural or man-made features such as mountains, amusement parks, 5-star hotels.

All geographic destinations have unique food & beverage cultures to share.
ABOUT GASTRO-TOURISTS

- Travel more often
- Stay longer
- Spend more
- Create more eWOM
- Post more on social media

They are food enthusiasts who want to go behind the scenes to taste, touch, and learn about region specific foods or beverages with local kitchen culture experts.

50% of all travelers are FOODIES!
INTERNATIONAL TOURISM TRENDS

SEEKING EXPERIENCES

PERSONALIZATION

DIGITALIZATION (HIGH TOUCH & HIGH TECH)

IMPLICATIONS OF OVER-TOURISM

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ABOUT THE MARKET
MARKET SIZE

- Global Travel/Tourism market
  $7.6 Trillion (2014)
  $11.4 Trillion (2025)

- Global Food+Beverage market
  $380 Billion (2014)
  $570 Billion (2025)

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BABY-BOOMERS LED THE WAY

Emulating the celebrity chefs they watched on TV

Trying to recreate the authentic culinary experiences they watched and read about. (Barcelona Field Studies Center, 2012)

24% of Baby Boomers identify as foodies and spend disposable income on food-related activities (Boyle, 2013; Levin, 2015)

“Sleep on the floor if you have to. Find out how other people live, eat, and cook. Learn from them wherever you go.” - Anthony Bourdain

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MILLENNIAL GASTRO-TOURISTS

50% of Millennials self-identify as foodies

52% would rather attend a food festival than a music festival

78% chose to spend discretionary money on a memorable food experience over a purchased item

44% have posted a photo of a food or drink experience on social media

(Eventbrite, 2014; UCI Trend Lab, 2014; Boyle, 2013; BBDO Atlanta, 2013)
CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF SUSTAINABLE GASTRO-DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT
CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF SUSTAINABLE GASTRO-TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

(Williams, Yuan & Williams, 2018)
## MOST IMPORTANT HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>DRINKING WATER</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>SAFE FOOD HANDLING</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>CRIME &amp; SECURITY</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>SAFE LODGING</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>CLEAN BATHROOMS</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>SAFE TRANSPORTATION</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>CLEAN LODGING</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Results of Friedman Non-Parametric Test
1 = Most Important

(Williams, 2018)
# Preferred Method to Determine Health & Safety While Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Read Written Information</td>
<td>Look for assurances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Online Website</td>
<td>Look for assurances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Online Blogs/Social Media</td>
<td>Look for assurances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ask People Who Have Been There</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Call the Destination with Questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ask Tourism Professionals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Email the Destination with Questions</td>
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Results of Friedman Non-Parametric Test

1 = Most Important

(Williams, 2018)
### MOST IMPORTANT TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS FOR GASTRO TOURISTS

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<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>SAFE</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>RELIABLE</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>CLEAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>FRIENDLY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>EASY/CONVENIENT</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>QUICK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ECONOMICAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>LEISURELY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>AUTHENTIC COMPONENT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Results of Friedman Non-Parametric Test*

*1 = Most Important*

- **Green**: Transportation related
- **Light Green**: Health & Safety related
- **Red**: Memorability related
- **Dark Red**: Direct person-to-person communication

(Williams, 2018)
“This investment generates employment and energizes other sectors, especially tourism,” said President Carlos Alvarado, “with better air terminals, tourists will have the option to reach remote destinations in a short time.”

Recent Comments from Tourism Minister María Amalia Revelo

Tourism currently contributes between 9% and 10% of Costa Rica’s GDP, which justifies the need for investments. Foreign tourists (3 million last year) who arrive in Costa Rica visit an average of five destinations, which allows extending the benefit of tourist income throughout the territory.
## MOST IMPORTANT LODGING CONSIDERATIONS FOR GASTRO TOURISTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>CLEAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>RELIABLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>SAFE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>FRIENDLY STAFF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>COMFORTABLE BEDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>ECONOMICAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>EASY TO GET TO / CONVENIENT LOCATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>HAS WIFI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>HAS POOL, HOT TUB, EXERCISE FACILITIES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results of Friedman Non-Parametric Test
1 = Most Important

- **Lodging related**
- **Transportation related**
- **Health & Safety related**
- **Direct person-to-person communication**
- **Indirect communication**

(Williams, 2018)
# Most Important Communication Factors for Gastro Tourists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>WIFI on site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>MY NATIVE LANGUAGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>INTERNET COMMUNICATION WHILE PLANNING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>CELL PHONE COVERAGE AT THE DESTINATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>PHONE ACCESS WHILE PLANNING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>ACCURATE COMMUNICATION / NO MISCOMMUNICATIONS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>AUDIO TRANSLATIONS OR INTERPRETERS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>WRITTEN SIGNS OR HANDOUTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>INTERACTIVE MOBILE APP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results of Friedman Non-Parametric Test

1 = Most Important

- Direct person-to-person communication
- Indirect communication

(Williams, 2018)
# FACTORS THAT HAVE FRUSTRATED GASTRO TOURISTS WHILE PLANNING

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>NO PHONE NUMBER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>PROBLEMS BOOKING LODGING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>DIFFICULTY PLANNING LOCAL TRANSPORTATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>COULD NOT FIND RELIABLE HOURS OF OPERATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>COULD NOT SPEAK WITH A HUMAN PERSON</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>LANGUAGE, COMMUNICATION, OR TRANSLATION PROBLEMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>TRAVEL INDUSTRY DID NOT HAVE INFO ON FOOD AND BEV SITES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>LACK OF ONLINE INFO REGARDING FOOD AND BEV EXPERIENCES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>DIFFICULTY GETTING PRICE INFO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results of Friedman Non-Parametric Test
1 = Most Important

- Red: Direct person-to-person communication
- Red: Indirect communication
- Green: Transportation related
- Green: Lodging related

(Williams, 2018)
MEMORABILITY
MEMORABILITY

SEVEN ATTRIBUTES LINKED TO MEMORABLE TOURISTS’ EXPERIENCES’

(Williams, Yuan & Williams, 2018)
TOP 14 AUTHENTICITY DESIRES

1. Having fun
2. Tasting is part of the experience
3. Enjoying the food
4. Unique cuisine
5. Knowledgeable hosts

6. Interesting cooking techniques
7. Making memories/building intimacy with friends/family/loved ones
8. Hands on experiences
9. Bringing home new recipes
10. Casual dining is part of the experience

11. Learning about a new culture
12. Watching an experienced cook or chef
13. Hosts and tourists co-create the experience
14. Local or regional host

Items were distilled from qualitative data and then rank-ordered by gastro-tourists in quantitative questions. (Freidman Non-Parametric Ranking Test)
STAKEHOLDERS
KEY PRIMARY STAKEHOLDERS

1. TOURISTS
WHO SEEK
GASTRO-EXPERIENCES

2. OWNERS/MANAGERS
OF GASTRO-BUSINESSES

2. DEVELOPERS
OF TOURISM
DESTINATIONS

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WHAT THEY WANT AND NEED

1. TOURISTS
WHO SEEK
GASTRO-EXPERIENCES

- EASY TO FIND GASTRO-ACTIVITIES
- CONVENIENT ACCESS
- RELIABLE CONTENT
- TRUSTWORTHY
- AUTHENTIC
- MEMORABLE EXPERIENCES

2. OWNERS/MANAGERS
OF GASTRO-BUSINESSES

- STEADY FLOW OF OUT-OF-AREA TOURISTS TO SUPPLEMENT LOCAL LOYALS
- STRENGTHEN THEIR BRAND IMAGE
- HIGHER REVENUE
- ELEVATED STATUS
- COST-SHARING WITH PARTNERS

2. DEVELOPERS
OF TOURISM DESTINATIONS

- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IMPACT
- JOB CREATION
- IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE
- REDUCE POTENTIAL FOR OVER-TOURISM
- REDUCE FOOD WASTE & ELIMINATE HUNGER
- RECOGNITION AND PRESTIGE

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PRIMARY STAKEHOLDERS

GASTRO DESTINATION

LOCAL CUSTOMERS
VISITORS & TOURISTS
CUSTOMER SERVICE EMPLOYEES
GASTRO COMPETITORS
LOCAL CITIZENS
EMPLOYEE EXPERTS
UNIQUE LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS
VENDORS & DISTRIBUTORS
FRIENDS & FAMILY
TOURISM ATTRACTIONS

(Williams, 2018)
SECONDARY STAKEHOLDERS

- Hotel & Lodging
- Restaurants
- Food & Beverage Trade Groups
- Professional Service Firms
- Media Reviewers & Critics
- Banks & Investors
- Conventions & Convention Bureaus
- National & International Government
- Religious Institutions
- Community Groups
- Local Businesses
- Special Interest Groups
- Local & Regional Govt
- Unique Regional Stakeholders
- Transportation Services

(GASTRO DESTINATION)

(Williams, 2018)
What DEVELOPERS VALUE MOST ABOUT GASTRO-TOURISM

- **Boosts** local economies through new outside-of-the-area monies

- **Creates** local jobs and a skilled workforce

- **Elevates** local living standards such as potable water and sewage management to attract and satisfy tourists but citizens benefit as well.
WHAT WORKS?

6+ CLUSTERS ATTRACT TOURISTS & IMPACT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

(Williams, Yuan & Williams, 2018)
INTERNATIONAL GASTRO-TOURISM INITIATIVES
Wales Named Gastronomic Destination (2015)*

Government Grants awarded to help fund specific projects and activities that promote Welsh Food.

This spurred increases in the number of Food Festivals, tourist trails, and added gastronomic components to existing tourist packages.

The brand has been embraced by the Welsh people as well – new businesses that bring out-of-town tourists into the kitchens of Welsh families now exist.

* The Guardian

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“By the year 2021, ensure Peruvian cuisine is recognized worldwide for its high quality in diversity and richness, and that the country is consolidated as the main dining destination in the world.”

“Promote gastronomy as a factor of identity, sustainable, decentralized and inclusive development.”
PERU’S BRANDING

Annual Food Festival
(392,000 attendees)

World’s leading culinary
destination 2012-2017
PERU’S GASTRONOMIC MARKETING CAMPAIGN
“To positively impact local Indian economies and living standards through new or expanded gastro-tourism destination development that highlights India’s world-class cuisine and unparalleled hospitality.”

(Alfaro, Bauman, Chapa, & Williams, 2018)
MATCHING CULINARY REGIONS & INFRASTRUCTURE
QUESTIONS?

EMAIL HELENA A. WILLIAMS
FOR REFERENCES AND ADDITIONAL FINDINGS AT
gastrogatherings@gmail.com
END

Additional Background & Research Slides Follow
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attributes of Memorable Gastro-tourists’ Experiences</th>
<th>Features and Definitions</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| **Two Types** of gastro-travelers report memorable experiences. | ▪ **Deliberate** gastro-tourists plan trips that revolve around food  
▪ **Incidental** gastro-tourists travel for some other primary reason, like business or visiting friends, and also go on side trips to experience food or drinks |
| **Memory** trigger moments occur across travel stages. | ▪ Planning  
▪ Traveling  
▪ Experiencing  
▪ Reflecting |
| **Foodie Risk-Taking** is prevalent in memorable gastro-experiencing. | ▪ Desire to taste and prepare new exotic unusual foods and beverages  
▪ Willingness to experiment  
▪ Willingness to travel to extreme locations  
▪ Luxury accommodations are not requirements |
| The **Quality of the Relationship** between hosts and tourists contributes to memorability. | ▪ Interdependent  
▪ Co-created  
▪ Genuine |
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<tr>
<th>Attributes of Memorable Gastro-tourists’ Experiences (cont.)</th>
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</table>

**Authenticity** is important to the memorability of gastronomic experiences but how it is defined varies per individual tourist and host.

- Involves the local food and drink
- Involves local kitchen cultures
- Involves cooking methods and practices
- Authenticity is individually defined based on expectations and practices
- Co-creation or hands-on involvement intensifies authenticity

**Sociability** aspects between traveling companions and hosts, chefs and support staff contribute to memorability.

- Traveling with friends or family
- Traveling with like-minded strangers
- Friendly, helpful, knowledgeable support staff

**Emotions** bring about triggering moments that contribute to creating memorable experiences.

- Intense emotions such as awe, wonder, acceptance, excitement, wonder, love, are words tourists use when describing their most memorable experiences.

(Williams, Yuan & Williams, 2018)
GASTRO HOST & ENVIRONMENT

GASTRO-TOURIST ENGAGEMENT CONTINUUM

ENEMY - UNWELCOMED STRANGER - INDIFFERENT PERSON - TOURIST - VISITOR - CUSTOMER - TRAVELER - GUEST - HONORED GUEST - FRIENDS & FAMILY - WELCOMED GUEST

(Williams, 2018)
COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

- Self-regulating / Co-promoting
- Difficult to copy or replicate
- Indirect tourism competitors can become affiliates

(Williams, 2018)
TRAVEL AND TOURISM ECONOMIES SPAN THE GLOBE

T&T % OF TOTAL ECONOMY

United States $488B
Mexico $79.7B
China $224B
Japan $106.7B

Travel and Tourism % of Total Economy
Highly Reliant: More than 7.0%
Reliant: 5.0% - 7.0%
Somehow Reliant: 2.0% - 5.0%
Least Reliant: Less than 2.0%
MARKET MULTIPLIER EFFECT

TOURISM IMPACTS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AT MULTIPLE LEVELS
(Williams, Yuan & Williams, 2018)