

The aspects of culinary tourism in tourism satisfaction and tourists' loyalty.

Insights from Vienna

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ABSTRACT

Culinary tourism involves travelling “in order to search for and enjoy prepared food and drink” and hence acquiring “unique and memorable gastronomic experiences” (2004 cited in Kivela & Crofts, 2006). Culinary tourism or gastronomy tourism has been recognised by the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) to be one of the contributing factors to the development of tourism destinations in the world. Gastronomy, culinary, food are now becoming more influential in the process of destination selection as studies suggest that culinary plays an important role in creating quality travel experience of tourists, tourism satisfaction and hence impact their revisit intention (Kivela & Crofts, 2006). Yet the role of gastronomy in tourists’ experience has not been explored in depth. Thus, this study focuses on the aspects of culinary tourism in which influences tourists’ satisfaction and subsequently tourists’ loyalty. In the search to answer the above question, the thesis looks at how the tourists perceive images, quality of the culinary, destination familiarity and destination self-congruence to the overall culinary scene in Vienna. The study employed online convenient sampling method of international visitors who had been at least one-night stay in Vienna. The collected data was analysed by PLS-SEM, confirmatory factor analysis approach via the use of smartPLS software. The findings suggest a strong positive effect of perceived quality on tourism satisfaction and hence increasing the tourist loyalty to a destination. The findings also support the theory that tourism satisfaction influences the attitudinal and behavioural loyalty. The findings of this study could help culinary tourism stakeholders to understand better the international visitors to plan the strategies and marketing campaigns to strengthen the destination image as a culinary destination, and if culinary is to be the focus of destination tourism.

Keywords: culinary tourism, destination loyalty, destination image, perceived quality, destination familiarity, destination satisfaction, destination self-congruence, revisit behavioural intentions, Vienna, willingness to recommend.