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Planning a Vietnamese Lunch Buffet Menu

for a Finnish Restaurant: Case Sulo Restaurant



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Abstract

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There have been studies on Vietnamese dishes or Vietnamese restaurants in Finland; however, there is no specific research in Kajaani about Vietnamese cuisine, especially applying Vietnamese dishes into a Finnish restaurant's menu. The choice of topic was based on personal interest in the restaurant business operation and menu creation. The author hopes that the thesis will contribute to the development of the restaurant industry in Kajaani becoming more diverse.

During the process, the author used results from previous studies as a resource for this research. The main goal of the thesis was to develop a lunch buffet menu for Sulo by adding Vietnamese food during the timeframe from November 2019 to November 2020. The thesis consists of a theoretical background related to the food culture of Vietnam and Finland, product development, menu planning. Respondents of the survey were 154 customers who visited Sulo restaurant for three days in September 2020. A combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods was used through interviews and surveys among Sulo's staff and customers to collect in-depth information for the idea to design the new menu.

As a result of the thesis, many customers expected that Vietnamese food would be served by Sulo restaurant monthly. Also, four suggested menus have been selected by the author, which have to be useful and suitable in accordance with all the rules and regulations of the Sulo restaurant. The research paper has answered the research questions, although there are some limitations. The author wishes to have the opportunity to continue the studies, or another student interested in the topic might implement the suggested menu at Sulo to get accurate feedback from customers on Vietnamese food.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	REASONS BEHIND THE RESEARCH	2
3	PROBLEM STATEMENTS, RESEARCH QUESTIONS, AND OBJECTIVES	4
3.1	Problem statements.....	4
3.2	Research questions	4
3.3	Research objectives.....	5
4	SULO RESTAURANT AND RESTAURANT MARKET IN KAJAANI	6
5	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	7
5.1	Food culture background	7
5.1.1	Vietnamese food culture.....	7
5.1.2	Finnish food culture	8
5.1.3	Comparison	9
5.2	Product development	10
5.2.1	The necessity of developing a new product	11
5.2.2	Product development process	11
5.3	Planning a menu.....	13
5.3.1	The important of menu.....	13
5.3.2	Considerations in menu planning	14
5.3.3	Food cost calculation method.....	15
6	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	16
6.1	Research groups.....	16
6.2	Qualitative and Quantitative research.....	16
6.3	Research ethics	17
6.4	Roadmap of the research.....	18
7	RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH.....	21
7.1	Analysis of interview results.....	21
7.2	Analysis of survey results	21

7.3	Summary of the research results	26
8	VIETNAMESE LUNCH MENU SUGGESTIONS	28
8.1	The suggestions for the Vietnamese lunch menu at Sulo Restaurant	28
8.2	Food cost calculation.....	29
9	DISCUSSION	32
9.1	The outcome of the research	32
9.2	Limitations.....	33
9.3	Recommendations	34
10	CONCLUSION	35
11	LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES	36
12	REFERENCES.....	37
13	APPENDICES.....	40

1 INTRODUCTION

For most travellers, apart from enjoying the local culture and scenery, the cuisine is an indispensable part of their trip. The demand to enjoy another local or foreign cuisine, not only occurs while travelling but also occurs in everyday life. Changing taste by going to a foreign or local restaurant is not a new habit in nowadays life. Besides, having foreign dishes as a special event can bring a new image to the Restaurant. Base on that, the author chose to develop Vietnamese food in Sulo restaurant's buffet menu list in this thesis.

Planning a Vietnamese menu at a Finnish restaurant - specifically at Sulo - Kajaani was not an easy project because there was no previous research on people's tastes. Furthermore, the limited source of raw materials for processing was also a challenge for the author.

For the theoretical background of this thesis, the author first described Vietnamese and Finnish culinary cultures by briefly compared the similarities and differences in the culinary cultures of the two countries. Next, the author outlined the steps to develop a new product, and food cost calculation to count recipe prices for suggested items when planning a menu.

Based on the theoretical background and survey results, suggested items have been sent to Sulo Restaurant. The author gave comments on the feasibility of the new menu, including considerations to improve the topic for the future in conclusion. The research process details would be mentioned in the next parts of this thesis.

The purpose of the thesis was to add a new lunch menu for Sulo Restaurant - present the process of planning a foreign menu at a Finnish restaurant - in this situation, adding a Vietnamese menu to Sulo Restaurant in Kajaani. The author hoped that the thesis would also help other culinary businesses in the Kainuu region as well as Finland as a whole, to develop their products. The personal purpose when creating this thesis was to develop a menu that suits the taste of Finns so that this knowledge could be applied in the author's future career. This thesis could also be considered as a supporting reference for students of the Tourism programme at Kajaani University of Applied Sciences by providing a well-structured theoretical background in developing a food product for the restaurant.

2 REASONS BEHIND THE RESEARCH

The current studies on applying the culinary of another country in Finland is not a new topic. There are many studies on the establishment of Chinese restaurants, Nepalese restaurants, Indian restaurants, etc., in local market research. However, there have been only a few studies that mentioned Vietnamese food in Finland. Some examples of these studies are "Business plan for a Vietnamese restaurant and Coffee shop in Helsinki (Do, 2014), "Establishment of a Vietnamese restaurant in Rauma, Finland – A business idea" (Dinh, 2016), "Vietnamese fusion restaurant business plan" (Nguyen & Heino, 2017) and "Spacing Planning for a Vietnamese Hotpot Restaurant in Helsinki, Finland" (Nguyen, 2017).

After researching the first study, the author believed that the Vietnamese restaurant business plan had great potential with unique food and special features in the Restaurant (Do, 2014, 53). The second research paper explored the feasibility of establishing a Vietnamese restaurant in Rauma through market research and SWOT analysis (Dinh, 2016, 52). In the third research, the author concluded that Vietnamese food became more famous in the world (Nguyen & Heino, 2017, 44). In addition, the market was still in the thirst of a Vietnamese Restaurant (Nguyen & Heino, 2017, 9). In the last study, through the author's researched and expressed in the business plan, the author gave the conclusion that the Finns will be a potential customer group for Vietnamese Hotpot restaurant (Nguyen, 2017, 57). These studies mentioned above illustrate the potential of Vietnamese cuisine in many areas of Finland.

Additionally, there were two other studies on the new flavour responsiveness of Finnish: "The taste preferences of Finnish people towards Southeast Asian food: The case of Vietnamese food and Thai food" (Dinh, 2013) and "On authenticity and adaptation of Vietnamese cuisines in Finland: project Nam" (Lieu, 2020). Those studies had high value in the results; specifically, the fish sauce did not meet Finns taste; however, almost all Finns prefer rice. The result also revealed that the Finns were interested and had a positive attitude towards Vietnamese food (Dinh, 2013, 52). Moreover, Vietnamese dishes cooked well with meat and served hot were considered more suitable for the flavour (Lieu, 2020, 33). Aside from that, two-thirds of the survey respondents said that they would come to a Vietnamese restaurant where served typical Vietnamese dishes as the author's menu (Lieu, 2020, 31). Thanks to previous studies, it is possible to make a statement that Vietnamese food can satisfy the tastes of the Finnish people in need.

Correspondingly, the previous thesis in 2017 by author Nguyen Thuy Thao Nguyen "South Vietnamese cuisine: a new potential in Finnish's culinary map" with the result of 96 out of 130 Finns like Vietnamese food. The research raised excitement for Vietnamese food to further clarify the potential of Vietnamese cuisine in Finland (Nguyen, 2017, 31). Those studies mentioned above illustrate the high potential of Vietnamese food in Finland.

However, the application of Vietnamese cuisine to Finnish restaurants was still limited. The reasons brought the motivation to research the possibility of Vietnamese cuisines at a Finnish restaurant specifically at Sulo Restaurant, Kajaani. Vietnamese food could develop in Kajaani because the restaurant market in Kajaani has limited Vietnamese cuisine, and there is no restaurant serving Vietnamese food here currently. In addition, a previous thesis "Lounasruoan Asiakastytyväisyys – Ravintola Sulo" of author Minna Torvinen in 2017 mentioned that "the customers of Sulo Restaurant were mainly satisfied with the lunch food. Development proposals are salads, and warm vegetables should be more diverse and more alternating, and the food could be healthier" (Minna, 2017). Accommodate for the statement above, Vietnamese cuisine was chosen because Vietnamese cuisine is healthy as Aruna Thaker and Arlene Barton mentioned in the book *Multicultural Handbook of Food, Nutrition, and Dietetics* that traditional Vietnamese cuisine can be low fat and abundant in fruit and vegetables (Thaker & Barton, 2012, 177).

Lastly, because of the personal interest in the Food and Beverage Industry, so the author conducted a study on the food area. In addition, the author had a semi-structured interview with Sulo's staff before, and it showed that the Manager, Mrs Hannemari Kuronen, was very interested in diversifying the lunch buffet menu with Vietnamese cuisine.

In summary, there were three main reasons for the study. Firstly, seven previous studies mentioned above express the potential to develop Vietnamese cuisine in Finland and the adaptation in the taste of Finns towards Vietnamese food. Secondly, the lack of Vietnamese food in the Kajaani Restaurant Market and Vietnamese cuisine adapted the healthiness statement in the previous study at Sulo Restaurant. Lastly, the personal interest of the author and the supported from Sulo Restaurant's staff to conduct research on Vietnamese cuisine by thesis topic: Planning a Vietnamese lunch buffet menu for a Finnish restaurant: Case Sulo Restaurant.

3 PROBLEM STATEMENTS, RESEARCH QUESTIONS, AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Problem statements

The two main research problems in the thesis were the possibility of Vietnamese food in Sulo and research the considerations in planning a menu for Sulo. In order to solve the problems of the topic, the author researched the culinary culture of the two countries to evaluate the feasibility. Furthermore, the survey of customer needs was critical to solve as the first research problem. The second issue of the topic was to research the necessary work to be able to build a new menu for the restaurant in order to bring Vietnamese food into Sulo's lunch buffet menu.

3.2 Research questions

There were three main arguments that the author wants to find out when planning the research questions, and it included sub-questions in each main question:

1. Why should we apply Vietnamese cuisines in Finnish's menus?
 - 1.1 What are customers' experiences with Vietnamese cuisine?
2. How would the author develop suitable dishes for Sulo's lunch buffet menu?
 - 2.1 What kind of food should be suitable for the customers?
 - 2.2 What kind of food should be suitable for Sulo Restaurant?
 - 2.3 Which elements should be considered in menu planning?
3. Should Sulo have Vietnamese cuisine on the frequent menu?

In addition, the author also expected to search Kajaani people's thoughts about Vietnamese cuisine - where only Thai and Chinese restaurants were considered representatives of Asian cuisine. Through research, the author could estimate the potential of Vietnamese food in Kajaani, as well as at Sulo Restaurant.

3.3 Research objectives

The research objective presented customers responses to the idea of Vietnamese food at Sulo restaurant as well as reflected customers' responses to having Vietnamese food on a Finnish menu. In addition, such data would be useful for Sulo restaurant when planning to diversify their lunch menu in the future. The thesis approached employees and customers at Sulo to collect data to create a suitable menu for the restaurant aimed at two specific objectives. The first objective was to explore the attractiveness of Vietnamese cuisine to Finnish customers through the customers' perspective. The second objective was to describe an availability in ingredients and taste of customer in order to propose some representative Vietnamese dishes that may apply to the lunch menu. The goal of the research was to create a practical solution for Sulo Restaurant to implement Vietnamese food into the lunch menu.

4 SULO RESTAURANT AND RESTAURANT MARKET IN KAJAANI

Sulo restaurant is located in Kajaani Town centre next to Sokos Valjus Hotel. The restaurant, established in 2012, is known as a cosy restaurant with about fifty seats. Sulo offers a lunch buffet and A La Carte menu, which mainly serves Finnish food for the whole year-round. In addition, there is a separate cafe area that offers drinks for about 40 customers. At this moment, Mrs Han-nemari Kuronen - Manager and Mrs Anna Turunen - Head Chef are mainly responsible for the operation at Sulo.

According to the information from interview and observation of author in 18th December 2020, regarding the lunch buffet, the restaurant currently serves a breakfast buffet, lunch buffet, À la carte menu, and coffee bar. The lunch buffet is served from Monday to Friday from 11:00 - 14:00, and it costs 11.9 euros per person. Items served at buffet lunch are Finnish food and are changed every day by the menu planner. Every day, the lunch menu will have fresh vegetable salad, two main courses, and drinks are tea and coffee. The food cost is in the range of an average of 5 - 6 euros, which will be profitable for the restaurant. The main customer segment for the lunch buffet is the office worker, and office worker prefers ingredients made from locally sourced, like vegetables and meats that are often grilled or stewed in the oven, and the food served must meet the lactose-free and gluten-free requirements.

The restaurant market in Kajaani still has great potential because the number of restaurants and types of restaurants in Kajaani is not diverse compared to the number of residents in this city. According to Statistics Finland, there are about 36 709 people currently living in this city as of the end of 2019 (Statistics Finland, 2020). However, the Restaurant in Kajaani is currently limited in number and the type of restaurants to offer diners a rich culinary culture. There are about twenty-one restaurants based on the results search on Google Maps with the keyword "Ravintola Kajaani". Those restaurants include professional restaurants, fast food restaurants, and cafes. Restaurants are mainly Finnish, Thai restaurants, and one Chinese restaurant that has been present for a long time. A list of some popular restaurants in Kajaani is available in Appendix 1. Fast food restaurants serve junk food such as Hamburgers, Kebab, Pizza, etc. In addition, cafes serve simple food like soup and sandwiches. Arguably the restaurant market in Kajaani still has many opportunities, especially for Asian food.

5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, the author mentioned the main theories which apply to the thesis topic: Planning a Vietnamese Lunch Buffet Menu for a Finnish Restaurant: Case Sulo Restaurant. The first theory would be the Food Culture Background of Finland and Vietnam; the second theory was Product Development, and the last was the theory of Menu Planning.

5.1 Food culture background

To clarify the reasons for the thesis as well as the foundation for planning a new menu, the author chose to analyze the culinary culture of Vietnam and Finland in the first part of the theoretical chapter. In this section, the author would first describe the cuisine of the two countries based on sources such as books, e-books, and online, etc. and then the author synthesized based on the research to find the similarities and differences between the cuisine of a Southeast Asian country and a Nordic country. The purpose of this part was to explore the ingredients can used in both the food culture of two countries so that the author could develop the ideas for the Vietnamese lunch menu at Sulo Restaurant after research.

5.1.1 Vietnamese food culture

Vietnamese culinary culture is a natural culture formed in life. For Vietnamese, the cuisine is not only simple food but also a part of the culture. The ethics, rules, and customs in the Vietnamese way of eating are also expressed through cuisine. Vietnamese have the habit of serving food on a tray with many dishes in one meal at the same time. The daily meal is considered as a reunited family meal as everyone is gathered together and have dinner after a day (Thaker & Barton, 2012, 175). Typical Vietnamese family meals often include white rice and side dishes - as Mr Nir Avieli, author of *Rice, Talks on Vietnamese meal in Hoi An*, commented (Avieli, 2012, 19). According to him, white rice and side dishes are known as a twofold structure, and it is explained in more detail in a fivefold structure; it includes rice, soup, and green vegetables, "dry" dishes, and fish sauce. (Table 1)

Rice	"Things to eat."			
Rice	Soup	Greens	"Dry" dish	Fish Sauce

Table 1 The "twofold - turned – fivefold" structure of the Hoianese daily meal (Avieli, 2012, 19)

In addition, rice is single important food items (Avieli, 2012, 21) or basic ingredients for dinner (McLeod & Nguyen, 2001, 133). More than a kind of food, Vietnamese rice contains history, and it is a gift of attachment and closeness to spiritual life. Rice appears in many forms, being Vietnamese, it is difficult to eat something that is not made from rice. Rice appears on the tray every day, as an obvious thing, but also in most dishes that can replace rice such as Pho, vermicelli, glass noodles, sticky rice. Snacks like rolls and cakes are also made from rice flour. For the three meals a day of Vietnamese people, there is no meal without rice (Thaker & Barton, 2012, 170).

Vietnamese food uses a lot of vegetables and greens for soup or stir, boiled, fried, pickled, and raw. The most commonly used meats are pork, beef, chicken, goose, duck, shrimp, fish, crab, snail, mussels, and clams in the same kind of cooking methods (Thaker & Barton, 2012, 176). As a country with a long history and different geographic, each region on this S-shaped strip of land has its own unique dishes. The geographical, cultural, and ethnic characteristics define the specific characteristics of the cuisine of each. It contributes to diverse Vietnamese cuisine. In addition, Vietnam is divided into three regions: North, Central, and South, along with 54 ethnic groups. Northern cuisine is characterized by a salty and rich, not often spicy, not fatty or sweet tasting as other regions, and mainly use fish sauce and shrimp paste. Southern cuisine has a tendency to have a sweet and sour taste. Southern Vietnam is influenced by Cambodia and Thailand cuisine by adding sugar and coconut milk to create sweetness and fattiness. Central food is known for its pungent taste with all its unique characters reflected in its distinct flavour. In addition, cuisine in the Central is influenced by the royal culinary style, so it is very careful in processing and presentation (Thaker & Barton, 2012, 170).

5.1.2 Finnish food culture

Finland is located in the beautiful Nordic region with diverse nature from the sea, rivers, lakes, forest, and natural beauty. That natural condition has formed a rich cuisine for the cold country. The traditional food culture of this country is relatively fussy and meticulous from ingredients to processing. For the past thousand years, Finnish culinary culture has generally been a harmonious

combination between typical Scandinavian cuisine and Russian cuisine (Tanttu & Tanttu, 1988) and considered as one of the world's great culinary crossroads (Ojakangas & Adams, 1989, 2). However, the traditional dishes originate from different regions of the country.

The Eastern region typically is Karelia, which is influenced by a number of Slav dishes, particularly Russian, with signature dishes such as sieniruuat (dishes made from mushrooms), Karjalanpaisti (fried or grilled dishes). Karelia style is composed with Kalakukko (fish wrapped in flour to bread and baked) and Riisipiirakka (rice-coated oval flatbread, served with boiled eggs mixed with butter) and these are considered current "specialities" dish of Finland.

The West and Southwest regions are features dishes with Roman cultural roots and from Sweden, such as black bread dishes and cooked or stewed dishes and keitto (soup). The most typical of this region is Leipäjuusto (cheese bread).

The North is a combination of Eastern and Western dishes with typical dishes made from reindeer meat. Poronkäristys (thinly sliced reindeer meat stewed in a pot with spices, served with wild berries such as lingonberry or blueberry is the most common dish and is considered a speciality of Northern Finland. Reindeer meat is also dried in the spring and eaten all year round. (Tanttu & Tanttu, 1988, 8)

According to the books "Food from Finland" (Tanttu & Tanttu, 1988, 8) and "The Finnish Cookbook" (Ojakangas & Adams, 1989, 2), potatoes and bread are generally the primary sources of carbohydrates in Finnish food. Salmon, Zander, and Perch can be grilled simply over the fire while camping, or traditionally smoked or made into a creamy soup. Regarding protein, the typical unusual meats of a thousand lakes country are moose and reindeer. In addition, pork, beef, and chicken raised on farms are also the main source of protein used in daily life. The roots are the main vegetables and are used in a stew. Distinctively, a special nature's gift is mushrooms. The mushrooms are mainly harvested in the local forests in Autumn and processed in traditional methods or dried.

5.1.3 Comparison

After researching the culinary literature of Vietnam and Finland, the author draws some comparisons on the similarities and differences between ingredients, as well as cooking methods. The comparison helps the author to detect the characteristics of the cuisine of the two countries,

thereby manipulate as a basis for proposing menu ideas for a Finnish restaurant in the following section.

The similarity between Vietnamese and Finnish cuisine both use common protein sources from pork, chicken, and beef and normal spices such as salt, sugar, and pepper. It is understandable that Vietnamese and Finnish cuisine does not have many similarities because one country is located in the Nordic region and the other in Southeast Asia. The natural and geographical features are completely discrepancies.

There are many different characteristics in the cuisine of the two countries, but the author focuses on four features that included sources of protein, carbohydrates, fat, and vegetable. In Finland, there are a number of food sources containing protein that are especially rare in Vietnam such as reindeer, moose, bears, and salmon - these are considered the specialities of this Nordic country. In addition, the food source that contains one important nutrient in every meal is carbohydrates - an important ingredient that provides more than half of the body's active energy source according to the book "Food choice and the consumer" (Marshall, 1995, 106) mentioned the main dietary sources of carbohydrates in Finland are potatoes and rye bread.

Moreover, dishes in Finland often use ingredients such as butter, cheese, cream and milk to add fat and flavour to the dish. Root vegetables are also a popular ingredient. In contrast, thanks to the geographical feature located close to the sea and many rivers, shrimp, crab, sea fish, river fish, clam, etc. are also used in the processing of dishes in Vietnam. As for carbs, rice is the main source of energy for the Vietnamese - Vietnamese usually eat twice rice with food during the day at lunch and dinner. Some dishes use coconut milk to increase fattiness, but it is not often used in everyday dishes. The green leafy vegetable is a popular source of vegetables in Vietnam people like vegetable soup and cooks it every day in the family meal.

5.2 Product development

After researching Vietnamese and Finnish cuisine, the author comprehended the potential of bringing Vietnamese cuisine to Finns because of the differences in culinary culture. Developing a new product took a steps approach towards the goal of developing a successful product. In this section, the author demonstrated the necessity of developing new products and new product development process with the theory mainly based on the book, "Product Design and Development (3rd Ed.)" (Karl & Steven, 2004).

5.2.1 The necessity of developing a new product

There are many definitions of product development; however, emblematic is the perspective of Ulrich and Eppinger in the book "Product Design And Development", also Tukker and Tischner in their book "New business for old Europe are suitable for research purposes. Ulrich and Eppinger defined that product development is a process that involves in-depth research regarding the market and opportunities it offers and finishes with the production, sale, and delivery of a product (Karl & Steven, 2004, 2). In addition, Tukker and Tischner said that it is an activity to create and realize products (Arnold & Ursula, 2006, 101). The definitions explain the meaning of product development; however, it does not yet reveal the importance of the new product. Another author, Cooper, said that "Simple! New products are your future" because new products are important to keep your company image popular and generating revenue (Cooper, 1999, 12). Aside from that, in the book "Effective Marketing" of Geoffrey Randall describe that new products are needed to keep the market alive for products that have only a limited shelf life: competition, changes in demand, etc. (Randall, 1994, 87).

Besides, from a macro perspective, new products also play a role in the economic development process, as Annacchino said that new product development keeps an integral part of a strong and rising economy (Annacchino, 2007, 1). Moreover, Kahn illustrated in his book that the development of new and improved products and services is important to the survival and wealth of the modern corporation (Kahn, 2012, 3). Furthermore, the new and improved product keeps an important role in economic growth, improve living standard and technological progress in the consumer food market (Marshall, 1995, 182). The arguments above prove the necessity of developing a new product of the business.

5.2.2 Product development process

As the author mentioned above, Ulrich and Eppinger defined new product development as a series of activities. Specifically, it is named "the generic product development process". This process includes six stages: Planning, Concept Development, System-Level Design, Detail Design, Testing and Refinement, Production Ramp-up. In this section, the author will describe each stage in the product development chain, according to chapter two of the book "Product Design and Development". In addition to the theories above, menu planning is the key theory of this essay. In this

section, the author will discuss the importance of menus, factors to consider when planning menus, and how to calculate food costs.

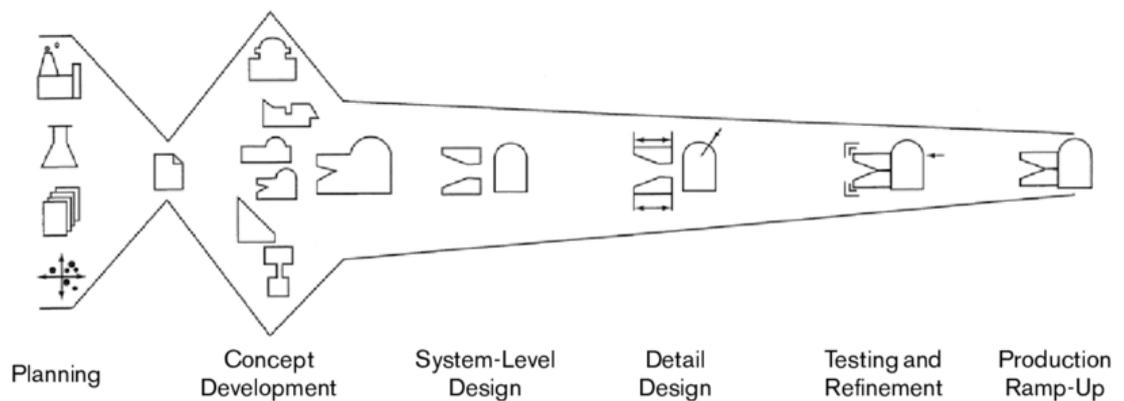


Figure 1 Product development process (Karl & Steven, 2004, 13)

Planning is the first stage; according to Ulrich and Eppinger, product planning is a process that included conceptualizing and evaluating a product's potential (Karl & Steven, 2004, 13). The first is identifying product opportunities in the current and future markets. Identifying product opportunities can be based on gathering data through customer feedback about old products, interviewing consumers, or researching competitor products. In addition, define market segments is an important element in this stage. Planning creates a big picture for the whole next stages, which decide the success of the new product.

The second stage is Concept Development. In this step which is essential to define the needs of the target market. To reach that business needs to collect customers' needs and identify competitive products.

At the third stage, System-level Design which is mentioned the business begins to plan new product development more specifically. Options for product development and the expansion of similar products should be considered. In addition, the calculation of product prices must be mentioned at this stage. Other important matters related to the manufacture of products should be identified, like choosing the supplier, determining the costs required to manufacture, etc. (Karl & Steven, 2004, 15)

After the System-Level Design stage, the next stage is Design Detail mainly mentioned bringing the product to market. Specifically, it is necessary to design a perfect marketing plan to introduce

the product to the market and reach the target market. In addition, the selection of materials and tools needed to develop the new product will also be decided. (Karl & Steven, 2004, 15)

Testing and Refinement is to perform an experiment to test one or more elements of the product in real terms field to measure sales, real acceptance product, or potential profit. Testing aims to see what happens in the real market, compare with real competitors, and bought by real customers before launching the product officially. (Karl & Steven, 2004, 15)

After successful market testing, the product will be decided to hit the market by increasing production at production Ramp-Up stage. This means the product is strongly received by the market and the customer demand for the new product. (Karl & Steven, 2004, 15)

5.3 Planning a menu

Two main reasons are leading to the author choosing to apply the above model. First, because the correctness of the model is proven in the book. In addition, this model is suitable for the author's purpose in the thesis.

5.3.1 The important of menu

The menu is one of the factors that build a restaurant brand image and plays a major role in bringing in the restaurant's income as mentioned in the book "Food and Beverage Management" that "the menu is the key marketing and selling tool available to the restaurateur" (David, 2007, 151). In order to create its own style, each restaurant should have its own unique dishes that attract customers and meet their expectations. Adapting to customer expectations can lead to success and profitability for a restaurant business (David, 2007, 151). A similar statement, according to Lundberg and Walker in their book "The Restaurant: From Concept to Operation (Second Edition), in the restaurant, business the menu and planning menu keeps position as "front and centre" because the menu decides pleasure in customer's experiences (Lundberg, D. E. & Walker, J. R, 1993, 63). Moreover, Dennis and John said that selling aid is the function of a menu (Lillicrap & Cousins, 2006, 70). Thus, menu planning is an important task that should be prioritized in the routine of creating a successful and profitable business.

5.3.2 Considerations in menu planning

As the author mentioned above, planning a menu is an important part of managing a restaurant, so this requires many elements to create a potential menu. Lundberg and Walker said that there are elements that should be considered while planning a menu: demand of the customers, the number of chefs, cooking facilities, availability of menu ingredients, price, nutrition value, contribution margin, accuracy, menu type, the actual menu items, menu analysis, menu design and layout, standardized recipes, food cost percentage (Lundberg & Walker, 1993, 64).

The menu design should be established by the market segment and target market expectations, along with that, the menu must adapt the expectations. It means the restaurant owner can not only design a menu as dishes just he wants, but he has determined his target customer and what customer expect at his restaurant. In addition, the condition of human resources and kitchen equipment should be considered to make sure the food can be prepared in the kitchen. The chef cannot make good food if the ingredients are unavailable in his kitchen, ensure the ingredients for items in the menu should always be available in stores. Importantly, the price is a major factor because it decides the profitability of the restaurateur; however, the selling price must be acceptable at the market and value of the dish. The value of the dish is evaluated by the cooking technique and ingredients chosen. Nowadays, healthy eating is getting more and more attention because the need for health care is important. Typical healthy foods come from fruits and vegetables, followed by seafood and then low-fat meat. The above is also found by the World Health Organization as a healthy diet recommendation. (World Health Organization, 2020).

Another important need to consider in menu planning is the type of menu. There are two popular types of menu: Table D'Hôte and À la carte (Lundberg & Walker, 1993, 69). Table D'Hôte provides a complete set of menus available to customers. This is convenient; however, it limits the choices for customers to satisfy their dining needs. Therefore, Table D'Hôte menu is often used at a venue party or buffet (Lundberb & Walker, 1993, 70). A la carte menu offers many items at different prices, this type of menu is often used by restaurants because it is flexible for customers to choose the dishes that customer like (Lundberb & Walker, 1993, 70). In addition, the menu design should be of concern because the tangibility of the menu will influence the senses and choice of the customer (Lundberg & Walker, 1993, 74). Moreover, a standard recipe keeps the restaurant flavourful. It is also a basis for calculating the number of ingredients to buy or calculating a food cost percentage. The Food Cost Percentage is usually calculated weekly, monthly, quarterly, or annually with the following formula:

Opening inventory + Purchase – Closing inventory = Food cost

Food cost/ Sales of food = Food Cost Percentage

Figure 2 Food cost percentage formula (Lundberg & Walker, 1993, 80)

In this thesis, the author only calculates the price of food - it belongs to the "purchase" in the formula. However, the other categories are business secrets, as well as some other factors, not related to the thesis topic and, therefore, it will not be covered in depth.

5.3.3 Food cost calculation method

Food cost calculation is an essential part because it relates to defining the selling price as well as the profitability of the business. Food cost is simply a total cost of all ingredients in the necessary amount (Committee, BC Cook Articulation, 2015, 53). There are five steps as an easy way to calculate food cost according to a recipe. First list all the ingredients in a recipe then determine the cost of each ingredient in unit price. Third, list the necessary amount of each ingredient and calculate the cost of the ingredient by the amount of each item. Summary of all the costs together to have the food cost. The table below shows an example of food cost calculation for Sea-food Newburg (Committee, BC Cook Articulation, 2015, 57).

Ingredient	Quantity	Units	Cost/Unit	Extension
Lobster Meat	500g	kg	\$38.00	\$19.00
Scallops	250g	kg	\$25.00	\$6.25
Shrimps	250g	kg	\$14.00	\$3.50
Sole	250g	kg	\$8.50	\$2.13
Cream, heavy	250mL	L	\$4.00	\$1.00
Fish Velouté	750mL	L	–	\$1.00
Butter	250g	500g	\$2.85	\$1.43
Pepper and Salt	–	–	–	–
Paprika	5g	–	–	\$00.15
Sherry	250mL	750mL	\$12.00	\$4.00
Egg yolks	6	12	\$2.00	\$1.00
Patty shells	10	each	\$00.12	\$1.20
Total	–	–	–	\$40.66

Table 2 An example of food cost calculation for Seafood Newburg

6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

6.1 Research groups

The research was performed on employees and customers at the Sulo Restaurant. First, the information will be collected and synthesize from Sulo's staff to get general information about customer eating habits. After that, the author does in-depth research based on customers which includes background information to get more details about customer's Vietnamese food experiences, to assess the possibility of Vietnamese dishes at Sulo's Restaurant. In addition, the classification of the sample size in the group of subjects who liked or disliked food as well as want to try or did not want to try Vietnamese food (question number 4 and 5 in the questionnaire) had great decisive significance on the results of the study. If the majority of the participants answered "No" to the two questions mentioned above, then it was not feasible to build a Vietnamese menu at Sulo restaurant, in contrast, if the survey results were with positive answers to Vietnamese food, the following questions in the questionnaire would be the basis for the author to propose a suggested menu.

6.2 Qualitative and Quantitative research

Qualitative research is most commonly characterized by knowledge-building aimed at generating meaning (Leavy, 2014). This approach is used to explore, roughly investigate, and unpack social activities, events, or situations or to build an in-depth understanding of some dimension of social life (Leavy, 2014). Qualitative research is appropriate when the primary goal is to explore, describe, or explain (Leavy, 2017, 28). Qualitative approaches to collecting data, analysis, interpretation, and report writing are a means for exploring and understanding the meaning of individuals' or groups' approaches to social or human problems (Creswell, 2009, 27-37). The most common qualitative methods are observation, interview, focus group, survey, or secondary research (Bhandari,2029).

In contrast, the quantitative method involves the process of collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and writing the results of a study (Creswell, 2009, 27). Quantitative research has a more deductive approach to the research process aiming to prove, disprove, or lend credence to already existing theories. Linear methods of data collection can be employed to gather statistical data. Values in

quantitative research generally include neutrality, objectivity, and acquisition of a sizeable scope of knowledge. The quantitative approach is generally most appropriate when the primary purpose is to explain or evaluate (Leavy, 2017, 28). Commonly used research methods are an experiment, survey, systematic observation, and secondary research (Bhandari, 2020).

To solve the research problems and questions, the author applied three stages: Planning, Concept Development, and System-Level Design of Product Development Process (Karl & Steven, 2004, 13) as a practical part of the research. Research methods were combined with qualitative and quantitative methods based on Sulo's staff and customers.

First, the author applied a qualitative method to collect and synthesize customer behaviours by interviewing Sulo staff in phase 0: Planning. The interview helped the author to define the market segment as a whole. Based on the result of the interview, the researcher would have a foundation to design a questionnaire to continue to explore the customer. The planning step also identified the new product opportunity in the market so that the first seven questions could be aimed to gather more information related to the customers background about Vietnamese food as a quantitative method. These questions were related to gender, age group, and customer's own experiences with Vietnamese food.

After phase 0, phase 1, Concept Development began with a quantitative research method in the next four questions. The author continued in-depth research based on customers to get more details about their preferred cooking methods, ingredients, and tastes of food. In this step, the author was keen to know the taste preference of customers as necessary information mentioned in the theory part Product Development Process.

The last question was optional and aimed to gain additional data from the customer's suggestion as a qualitative method. The result of the research would have all the necessary data for the author to accurately create a functional lunch menu for Sulo Restaurant.

6.3 Research ethics

An article published on the American Psychological Association (APA) about five main standards of ethics for research is "Discuss intellectual property frankly, Be conscious of multiple roles, Follow informed-consent rules, Respect confidentiality, and privacy, Tap into ethics resources"

(Smith, 2003). In addition, produce quality research that enhances the ability of the educational community to promote individual and social welfare (Strike, 2006)

The thesis "Planning a Vietnamese Buffet Menu for a Finnish Restaurant: Case Sulo Restaurant" was independent research under the guidance of an instructor of the Kajaani University of Applied Sciences. In this study, the references have been cited and clearly in the References part. The research was the product that the author has tried to research during the learning process at the university and did the internship at the Sokos Valjus Hotel. The data and results presented in the report were completely true base on the survey at Sulo Restaurant.

6.4 Roadmap of the research

The research process is described by the author through two phases. Theoretical part and practical part. Specifically, each stage will be explained in the next paragraphs and illustrated by figure 3 created by the author.

Beginning of the research, the author worked on the theories related to the study as a theory part. After the author was done with a search on theories: Finnish and Vietnamese food culture, product development process, and menu planning the culinary culture theory helped to build the foundation of a Vietnamese style menu in Finland. It was important to recognize the similarities and differences in ingredients as well as to the taste of Finns. This was the prerequisite for the research process of the thesis: Planning a Vietnamese Lunch Buffet Menu for a Finnish Restaurant: Case Sulo Restaurant. In addition, the theory of new product development with specific steps created a basic process for the author to conduct the research. Thanks to the theory of planning a menu, the author has planned a menu that is suitable for Sulo customers and restaurant. Theoretical background basis helped the author to gain the knowledge to continue implementing the thesis in practice at the second stage.

The process of doing the practice part of the thesis implemented at the Sulo restaurant according to the theoretical framework of Ulrich and Eppinger however, due to the limited time and scale of the topic, the author only performed the three first steps of the new product development process are Planning, Concept Development, and System-Level Design in this thesis.

In the first step - Planning, through research on literature review as well as the culinary market in Kajaani, the author saw the opportunity of Vietnamese cuisine here, thereby formed an idea for

the topic of thesis: Planning a Vietnamese Lunch Buffet Menu for a Finnish Restaurant: Case Sulo restaurant. Thanks to the internship period at the Sokos Valjus hotel before, the author had basic information about the operation of the restaurant, so it was easier to be accepted to do research here. Applied qualitative research method in this stage through a short interview with the restaurant manager Mrs Hannemari Kuronen and chef Anna Turunen, who was working at the restaurant, and had a good understanding of the restaurant's operations and the customers said that the Manager and Head Chef were very interested in the thesis topic. In addition, the interviewee commented that Vietnamese food has the potential to develop. Moreover, the author had researched lunch buffet prices at restaurants in Kajaani centre to clarify the potential of Vietnamese food in Kajaani, the results of market research on lunch buffet prices, and style of food were described in the table below.

In the second step of new product development: Concept development, the author delved more deeply into customer needs by quantitative research method through a survey with questionnaires related to ideas for new product development - a Vietnamese buffet menu at Sulo restaurant. The survey was done in person at Sulo Restaurant for three days in September 2020.

After the survey results were available, the author continues to do the research in the third step: System-level design by elaborating more detailed ideas for the menu. The author formed ideas of Vietnamese food which are suitable for Sulo Restaurant and consider the cost calculation as well. The suggested items that could be applied with the food cost calculator table and the recipes are attached in the appendices.

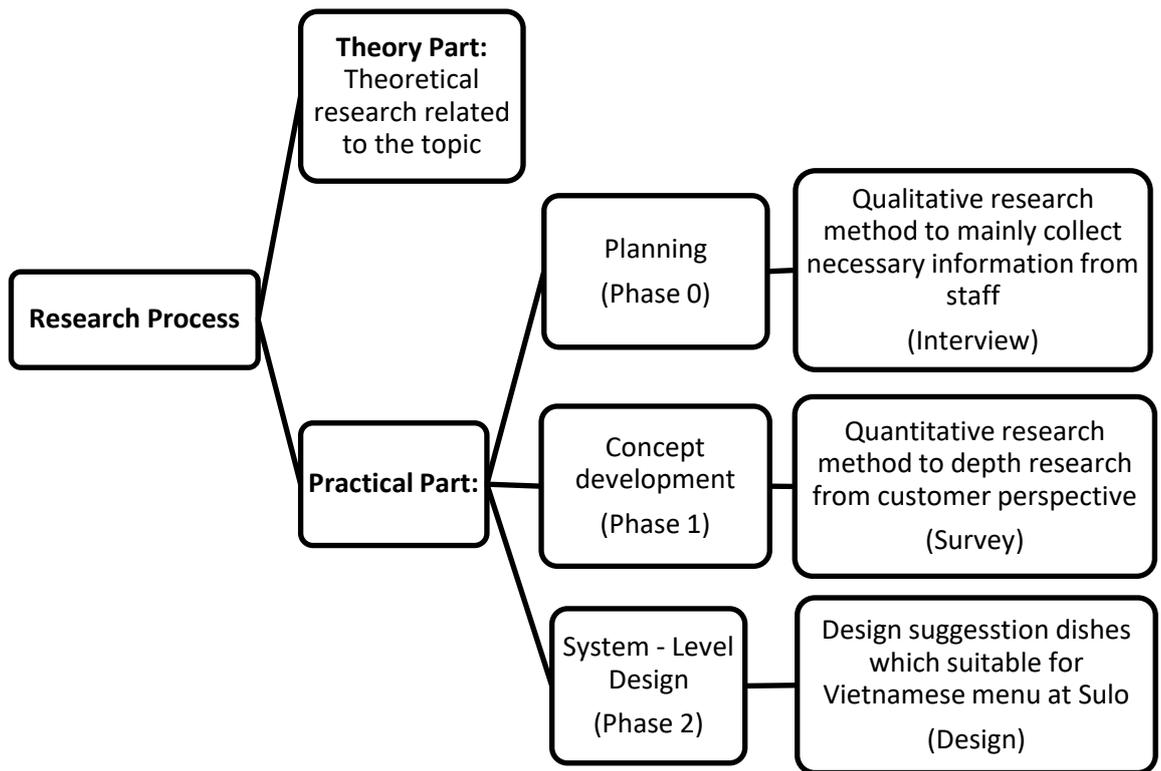


Figure 3: Roadmap of the research

7 RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

In this section, the author will describe the results obtained from the survey and interview. Along with illustrative diagrams, the author will analyze the collected data to clarify the survey results.

7.1 Analysis of interview results

The interview took place on December 18, 2019, when the topic was being started. The interview took place in an informal atmosphere between the author and Mrs Hannemari Kuronen and Mrs Anna Turunen as a normal conversation. The author has prepared the questions to ask in advance and took note briefly the answers from the interviewee. The interview conducted by qualitative method aimed to answer an internal question about the operation of the lunch buffet at Sulo Restaurant. The research group in this stage are the Manager and Head Chef, who understood the operation process of the restaurant.

The content of the interview presented basic information about the restaurant's operations such as there were about 150-200 customers coming to Sulo for lunch every weekday and most of them were office workers. Consumers typically liked grilled or baked in oven food and prefer foods made from vegetables and local products. The most important part of this interview was the elements that should consider when choosing a menu item. Currently, Head Chef, Mrs Anna Turunen was the menu planner, she believed that factors such as restaurant facilities conditions, chef's skills, availability of ingredients, and processing costs should be within the allowable cost of 5-6 euros per serving. Moreover, the structure of the lunch buffet menu was included salad, two main dishes and tea and coffee.

The interview was included only short questions. However, the information obtained in the author's interview could not be accessed by other methods. Accurate internal information created reliable for the following research steps of the author.

7.2 Analysis of survey results

After searching theories about cuisines, new product development, new product development, menu planning considerations, and information were collected from Sulo's staff before the author conducted a survey in Sulo on September 17, 18, and 19, 2020 - on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. The survey obtained 154 responses (n=154) with positive results and could completely be

used as the original purpose of the topic. The survey results could help Sulo understand more about their customers and expectations.

The first seven questions were about customer background with Vietnamese food. Figure 4 showed the gender split of all participants were nearly equal. In addition, the majority of Sulo customers were middle-aged between 30 and 50, the group age under 30 and above 50 was a similar amount and total of them are almost half of all customer.

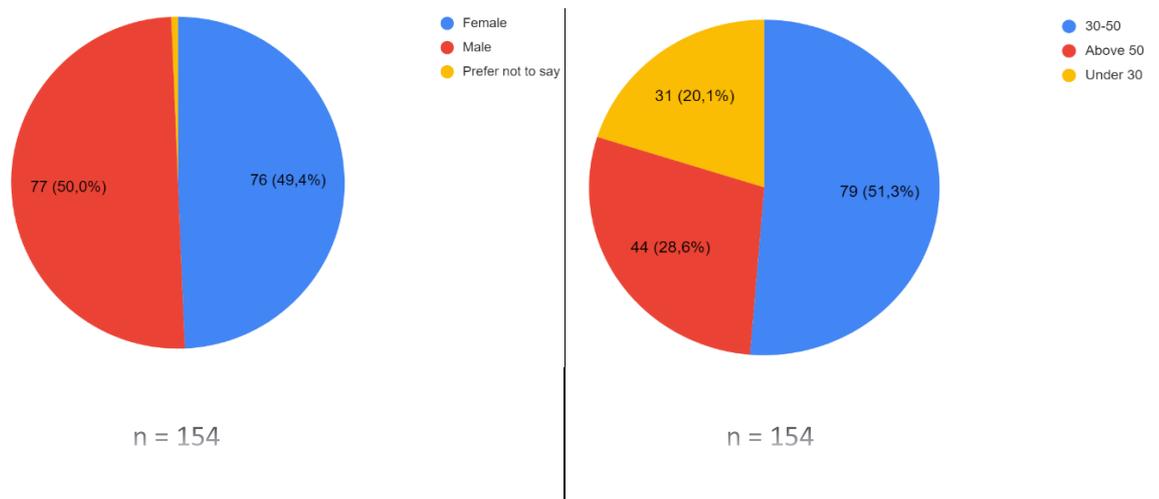
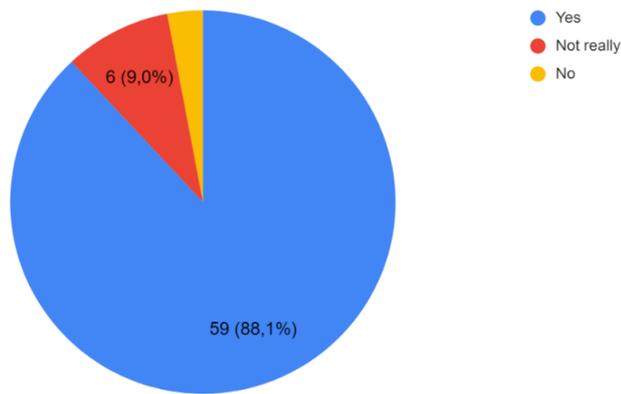


Figure 4 Gender and Age of customer at Sulo (n = 154)

Of all the respondents, only 43.5% had ever tasted Vietnamese food. Those who already had a chance to taste Vietnamese food continued to answer question number four—a customer who had not tried Vietnamese food before answered question number five.

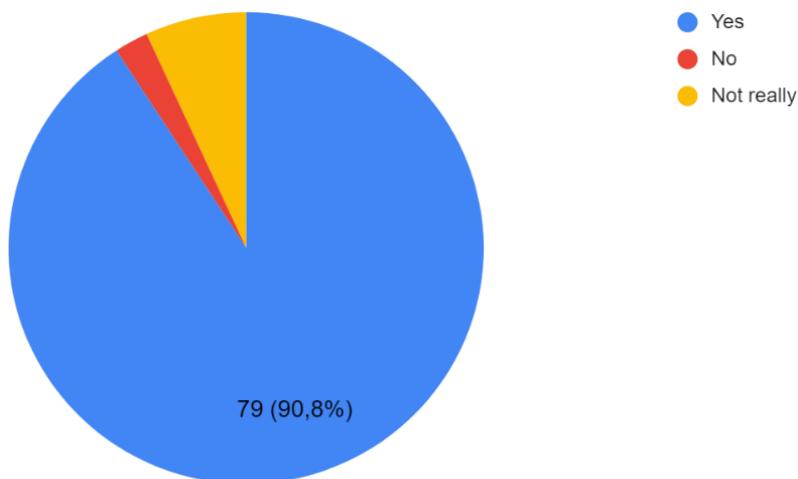
In question four "If yes, do you like Vietnamese cuisine", the author got nearly 88,1% result that customer liked Vietnamese food, and these participants continued till the end of the questionnaire. Those who had the answer "Not really" or "No" would finish the questionnaire at this question.



n = 67

Figure 5 Customer who had tasted Vietnamese food before and like it (n = 67)

More than a half of respondents had not tasted Vietnamese food before continued to answer question number five; however, about 90% of them were willing to try Vietnamese food if given a chance, and this group of customers continued to answer question number six. Those who answered "No" or "Not really" finished the questionnaire there.



n = 87

Figure 6 Customer who willing to try Vietnamese food if the customer had a chance, even customer had not tasted it before (n = 87)

The next survey questions were "Do you think Vietnamese food is tasty" and "Do you think Vietnamese food is healthy", those questions were only for the rest of the participants in the survey (n=138). Because the only customers who interested in Vietnamese food had valuable responses for the next part of the survey. In those questions, the author got impressive answers with over

84% of the result that customer thought it was delicious, and 76.1% out of 138 customers thought Vietnamese food was healthy as mentioned that Vietnamese food is low in overall fat and sugar during the cooking process (Thaker & Barton, 2012, 177). Besides, the author of the book "Multi-cultural Handbook of Food, Nutrition and Dietetics" synthetic the health benefit of traditional Vietnamese food on table 3.2.5 of his book (Appendix 6).

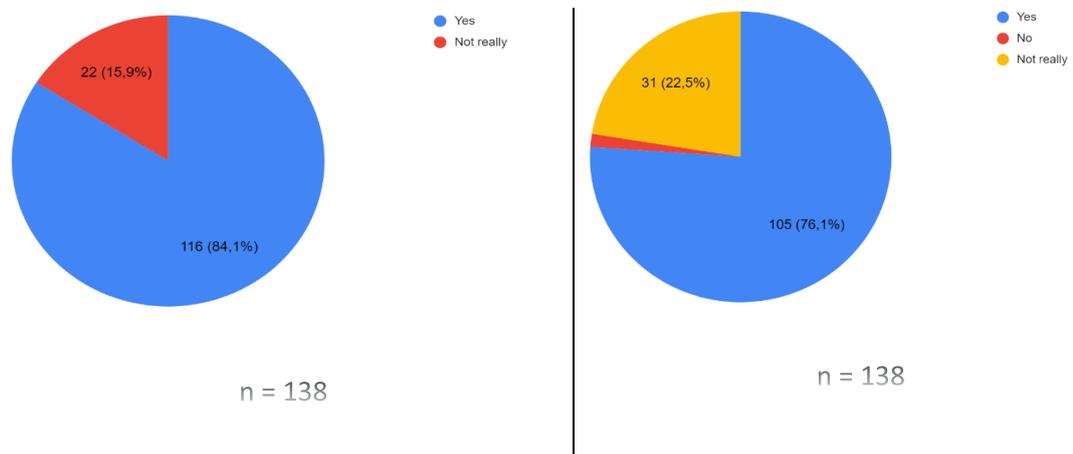


Figure 7 Customer response about the healthiness and tastiness of Vietnamese food (n = 138)

The most important part of the survey is questions number eight, nine, ten, and eleven because these questions gathered essential information from customers to plan a Vietnamese menu at Sulo Restaurant. The result of these questions regarding ingredients, flavours, cooking methods, and frequency used as menu information. In these questions, the author gave suggestions, and customers chose many options to relevant to their needs and eating preferences (n = 138), and each customer could choose more than one answer. The suggestions chosen by most customers would be considered when planning the menu.

Firstly, about the main ingredients for the dish, the author recommended vegetables, fish, chicken, beef, pork, and others base on the popular ingredients in the food culture of the two countries and the availability of food in Finland. Chicken, vegetables, fish and beef, were the top four ingredients with the rate of choice are 78%, 59%, 52%, and 39,9% - whereas chicken, vegetables, fish and beef would be the four main ingredients which consider when planning a Vietnamese buffet lunch menu for Sulo Restaurant. Next to the cooking method, the author gave suggestions on popular cooking methods such as frying, stir-frying, steaming, baking, boiling, and stewing in the oven - the answer was out of the author expectation that customers particularly those at Sulo prefer grilled, fried, and steamed food.

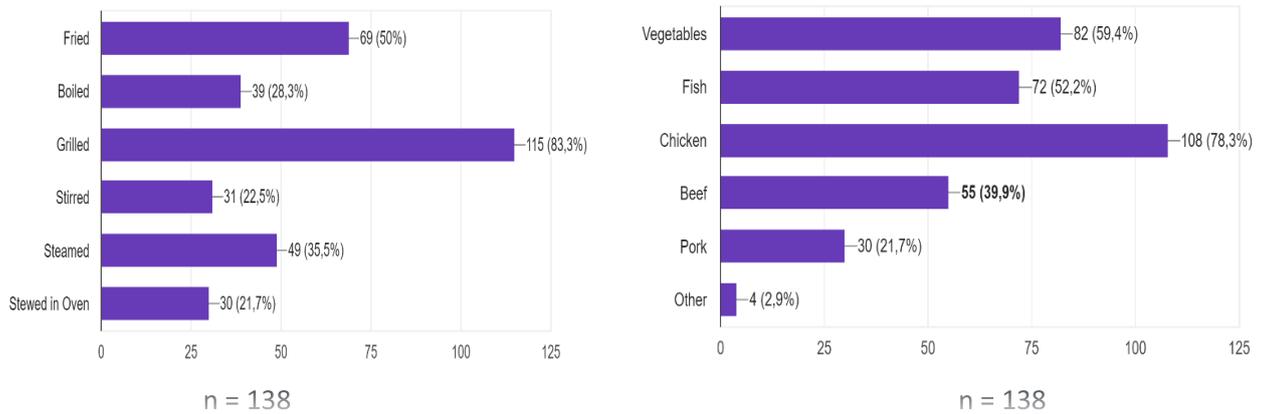


Figure 8 Cooking methods, ingredients that customers at Sulo Restaurant preferred (n = 138)

Lastly, for the main flavours of the dish, Sulo's customers were not picky about taste. Customer were satisfied with all the sour, spicy, salty, sweet palates - of which most people think of spicy in the dish would make them more satisfied.

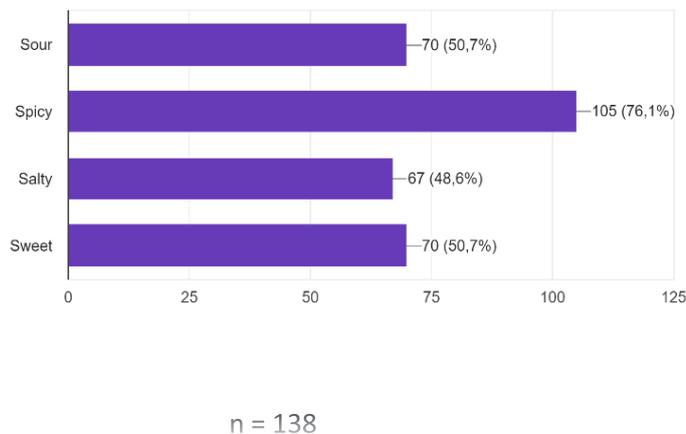


Figure 9 The main taste that customer at Sulo preferred (n=138)

Thanks to data from the survey, the author had a sufficient basis for making the suggestion menu for Sulo with a recommended frequency of once a month. Moreover, in the last question, there were fifteen responses that the food should be traditional, and it was a good idea. This was a big motivation for the author to complete the thesis.

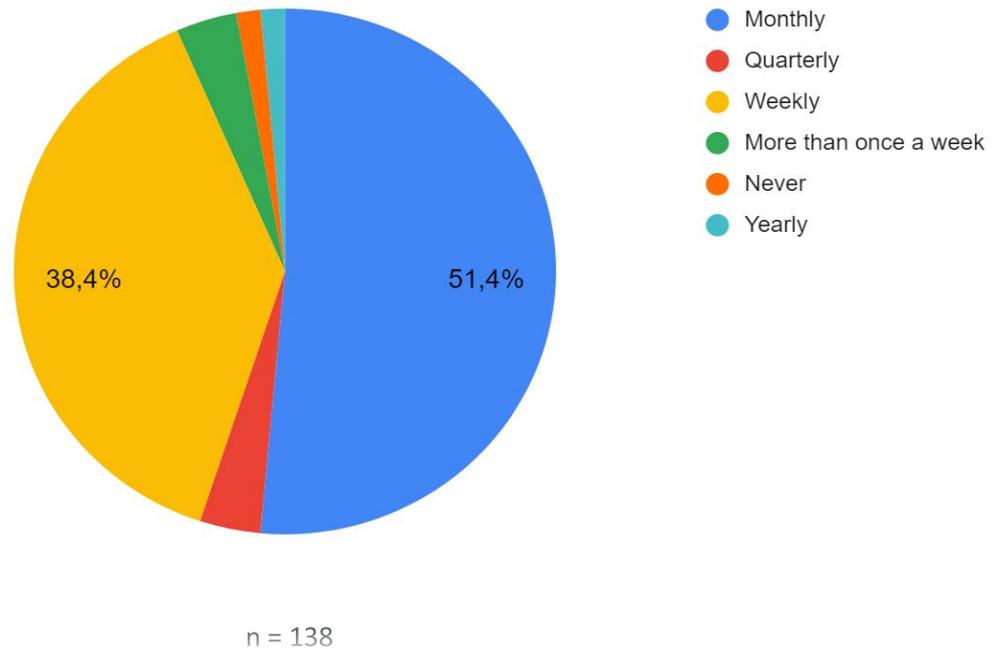


Figure 10 Frequently of Vietnamese menu should be at Sulo Restaurant (n = 138)

The survey collected crucial information for the development of the Vietnamese Menu at Sulo Restaurant. Based on the survey results as well as data analysis, the author would use it to plan suitable dishes for customers. In addition, the calculation of the cost of the dish would also be mentioned below.

7.3 Summary of the research results

In this section, based on information from the interview and data analysis above, the author summarizes the main results of the research. For customer background, customer were mainly office workers, and most of them were willing to try Vietnamese food if the customer had a chance. This is a good indication of the potential of diverse menus in Sulo with foreign menus. This solved the first research problem about the possibility of Vietnamese food at the restaurant as well as answered the first research question of why Sulo should apply Vietnamese food to their menu.

Regarding the second part of the survey related to customers' demand for ingredients and flavours in Vietnamese food in the future menu, the author was really surprised because many customers liked the spicy taste in the dish, followed by sweet, salty, and sour. In addition, grilled, fried, and steam on ingredients of chicken, vegetables, fish, and beef tended to be popular. The results in this part of the questionnaire supported for choosing suitable dishes for Sulo customers

and restaurants those were the answer for two sub-questions in research question number two: What kind of food should be suitable for the customers and What kind of food should be suitable for the Sulo Restaurant. Moreover, the answer to survey question number eleven had answered research question number three how often should Sulo have Vietnamese food on their menu with the majority of the customers chooses the "monthly".

In order to solve problem number two as well as the remaining sub-question of research question number two, elements should consider when diversifying new menus at Sulo restaurant. The author relied on the answers in the initial interview with the staff of the Sulo restaurant. Thanks to that, the author could choose suitable dishes to develop a new menu at Sulo.

8 VIETNAMESE LUNCH MENU SUGGESTIONS

Based on the survey results, the author has researched feasible Vietnamese dishes that can be applied at Sulo restaurant. In this chapter, the author will describe four menus to be considered.

8.1 The suggestions for the Vietnamese lunch menu at Sulo Restaurant

Based on the main information from the survey results such as ingredients, processing, and taste, the author proceeded to select some dishes that can meet the needs of customers and can be applied at Sulo Restaurant. Through the research and selection process, the author had selected four menus that Sulo Restaurant can apply for the lunch menu at the restaurant. The four menus below only included the main course, appetizer salad and dessert would be kept intact to ensure the costs and not creating additional work pressure on the new food for the kitchen department. In addition, according to the survey result, almost all customers at Sulo preferred spicy food. However, to assure that all customers could enjoy the food, the author recommended that customers could add chilli powder or chilli sauce in an allowed amount of themselves. As mentioned above in the analysis of the survey results, the main ingredients in the new menu were chicken, vegetables, fish, and beef with cooking methods were grilled, fried, and steamed. Moreover, a characteristic in Vietnamese culinary culture was rice, so it would also appear in the recommended Vietnamese buffet lunch menu.

The first suggested item was lemongrass chicken. This dish is made from the main ingredient of chicken marinated with basic spices such as salt, pepper, sugar, shallot, turmeric, and lemongrass. After the chicken has been seasoned, the chicken will be fried with a little oil and medium heat until all the spices are absorbed. Fried Chicken with lemongrass will be served with steamed rice and boiled vegetables. A special feature that brings a different taste to the dish is lemongrass which is the ingredient used mainly in Asian dishes, including Vietnam. Therefore, fried chicken with lemongrass can be considered an interesting choice to develop the menu for Sulo Restaurant.

The second suggested dish also uses the main ingredient of chicken, despite its simple taste, it will probably give customers an enjoyable experience by lemon leaf ingredients and the steaming method. Chicken is marinated with salt and black pepper until seasoned, then steamed. In addition, the lemon leaves provide a relaxing aroma that is suitable when eaten with chicken, and customers can enjoy it with a little lime juice, salt, and pepper sauce. Steamed Chicken in Vietnam is often served with sweet and sour cabbage salad. Steamed Chicken with lemon leaves adds

more flavour with lime juice, salt, and pepper sauce to add a bit of saltiness, sourness from lime, and hot from pepper together with sweet and sour cabbage salad. Although it seems simple, the dish brings many layers of flavour because it still retains the original sweetness found in the chicken, and salty, sweet, sour, spicy converging in the accompanying dishes to bring a variety of tastes to the dish. Similarly, steamed chicken with lemon leaves will be served with white rice.

In fish selection, the author could only give one suggestion because salmon is not the common fish in Vietnam because most salmon processing methods are imported from the West. Therefore, the author chose one special Vietnamese cooking method of fish that could bring a different taste from salmon to Finland. The third dish suggested would be salmon steamed with soy sauce served with steamed or oven-baked vegetables, white rice, or fried rice. Salmon is a nutrient-rich food which is usually the best choice in soup or grilled as a Finnish way of food preparation - however, in this suggestion menu, salmon gets flavours from soy sauce in a steamer. Steamed salmon with soy sauce is served with steamed rice and boiled vegetables. The author hopes that the steamed salmon with soy sauce will give the customers in Sulo a new experience when enjoying this nutritious fish dish.

The fourth dish suggested was the shaking beef dish. This dish is impressed with its strange name and is sauteed on a pan with a unique marinate include soy sauce, and then grill on flame from two to three minutes to get more flavour. It hopes to bring exciting experiences when enjoying the food. The dish is also served with steamed rice and boiled vegetables.

Overall, the menus suggested above satisfy the restaurant's first requirement, which is gluten-free and lactose-free. The author hoped that the above-mentioned menus would be tested one day in the near future to know the feasibility of the dishes. For the author, the variety of menus at Sulo with Vietnamese dishes gave a great meaning in introducing a part of Vietnamese culinary culture to Finnish, specifically in Kajaani. In addition, the diversified menu helped buffet lunch more unique, plentiful, somehow satisfying to customers who passionate about culinary culture. Applying the Vietnamese menu at a Finnish restaurant could help customers have a culinary experience from an Asian country that customer may never have visited.

8.2 Food cost calculation

The author calculated the cost of the suggested foods in the table below based on the recipe in the appendix. Raw material prices are based on retail prices at Prisma in December 2020. The

menu offered to adapt the cost that Sulo Restaurant offered in the price range from 5-6 euros.

The cost of the main does not include salad and drinks cost.

Ingredients	Price (euro/kg)	The amount for two portions	Price (euro)
Rice	1.90	200g	0.38
Frozen broccoli mix	2.11	400g	0.844
Chicken fillet	10.61	500g	5.305
Fish sauce	5.25	4 tsp = 18g	0.09
Sugar	0.79	1 tsp = 4g	0.03
Cornflour	3.36	½ tsp = 2g	0.006
Lemongrass	37.8	1 stalk= 2g	0.08
Garlic	4,69	5 cloves= 5g	0.02
Coconut water	4.79	1 cup = 130g	0.62
Canola oil	3.21	2 tsp = 10g	0.03
Onion	1.2	1 small onion = 100g	0.12
All together			7.525
Cost for one portion			3.7625

Table 3 Food cost calculation for chicken with lemongrass for two portions

Ingredient	Price (euro/kg)	The amount for five portions	Cost (euro)
Rice	1.19	500g	0.59
Chicken	10.61	1kg	10.61
Salt	0.7	3tsp = 15g	0.01
Ginger	1.53	50g	0.07
Lime leaves	633,33	2g	1.26
Lemon juice	3.95	4 tbsp = 30g	0.12
Black pepper	18.5	1 tsp = 5g	0.09
Green cabbage	0.89	2 ½ cup = 320g	0.28
Carrot	0.88	2 medium size = 200g	0.17
Scallions	27,69	3 scallions =10g	0.27
Sugar	0.79	5 tps = 25g	0.02
Vinegar	0.86	1 tbsp = 15g	0.01
Mint	1.49/psc	1 cup = 130g	1.49
All together			14.99
Cost for one portion			2.998

Table 4 Food cost calculation of steamed chicken and cabbage salad for five portion

Ingredient	Price (euro/kg)	The amount for five portions	Cost (euro)
Rice	1.19	500g	0.59
Frozen broccoli mix	2.11	1 kg	2.11
Salmon	9.98	800g	7.98
Scallions	27.9	4 scallions = 10g	0.27
Cilantro	57,69	4 sprigs = 5g	0.28
Ginger	1.53	2 inchs piece = 10g	0.01
Garlic	4.69	3 cloves = 3g	0.01
Oil	3.21	2 ½ tbsp = 35g	0.11
Soy sauce	4.78	2 tbsp = 30g	0.14
Oyster sauce	6,95	2 tbsp = 30g	0.21
Black pepper	18.5	¼ tsp = 2g	0.04
Sugar	0.79	1 ¼ tsp = 6g	0.001
All together			11,751
Cost for one portion			2.3502

Table 5 Steamed salmon with soy sauce for five portions

Ingredients	Price (euro/kg)	The amount for five portions	Price
Rice	1.19	500g	0.59
Frozen broccoli mix	2.11	1 kg	2.11
Beef sirloin	19.5	2 lbs = 1kg	19.5
Sugar	0.79	3tsp= 15g	0.01
Salt	0.7	1tsp= 5g	0.003
Black pepper	18.5	½ tsp= 2.5g	0.04
Garlic	4.69	3 cloves= 3g	0.01
Vegetable oil	3.21	2 tbsp = 30g	0.09
Butter	5.38	2 tbsp = 30g	0.16
Red onion	1.49	1 small onion = 20g	0.03
Soy Sauce	4.78	2 tbsp= 30g	0.14
Fish Sauce	5.25	1 tsp= 15g	0.08
Honey	7.58	2 tbsp= 30g	0.23
Vinegar	0.86	2 tbsp= 30g	0.03
All together			23.023
Cost for one portion			4.6046

Table 6 Grilled shaking beef for five portions

9 DISCUSSION

The research entered the final step, and the author received the survey results as well as gave menu recommendations for the restaurant. In addition, the author also finds new points from the survey as well as recognizes the limitations to give suggestions for the next research.

9.1 The outcome of the research

The whole thesis research process had taken place in the order as initially planned. The thesis has performed research purposes; however, during the implementation process, the author noticed the inaccuracy at the last process of giving suggestion menu. Due to the limitation of the documentary related to Menu Development, there were not many sources to compare and choose the best options. In addition, the lack of research skills about the food cost calculation of Sulo restaurant led to the feasibility of the pricing part was not guaranteed because all the expenses that need to be covered were not included.

In general, the research has answered the research questions, as mentioned in the summary of the research as well as solved the research problems through interviews and surveys. Regarding the first research problem "the possibility of Vietnamese food at Sulo Restaurant", the author found that customers at Sulo Restaurant are interested in Vietnamese food as illustrated in figure 5 and 6, which is similar to previous research in other areas in Finland is covered under section Studies of Vietnamese Food in Finland.

The data in the five last questions in the questionnaire regarding the second research problem "considerations in planning a menu for Sulo" - together with the answer in the interview question number three (Appendix 3) as well as the theory of Menu Development to solve the second research problem, however, as mention above in the practical part of the thesis, specifically giving the suggestion menu, the author did not apply all the factors mentioned in Menu Development because of the lack of information from the customer as well as in the research process. Especially for the product price calculation, the author could only calculate the theoretical price, but the reality would be more complicated because the product price may change according to the season or the loss of the ingredients.

Moreover, the research paper had discovered that the customers at Sulo Restaurant seem to be interested in spicy food. This was a new point compared to the traditional flavour that is salty or fatty. However, it seemed to coincide with a research paper by Kalsec Incorporated¹ in 2019 on the levels and trends of eating hot and spicy ingredients around the globe which is shown that a fifth of us are eating more spicy food than before - compare to the research of this company in 2017 (Kalsec, 2019).

Furthermore, the research paper contributed to the data on the feasibility of Vietnamese food in Finland. In addition, the study could help to diversify the restaurant's menu with the Vietnamese menu for Sulo Restaurant. In addition, the research had provided research data for Sulo Restaurant, which partly helped to understand customers and be able to develop other food products suitable for Sulo's diners. A new point discovered during the survey from question 1 to question 5 in the survey was that 16/154 customers participating in the survey were not interested in Vietnamese food. Even this group of customers were not much; it partly affects the sales of Sulo restaurant. Therefore, this target group of customer needs to be researched more about customer behaviour at the Sulo Restaurant.

9.2 Limitations

Although the topic brought the results as predicted by the author, the author realized there were five main limitations that led to many difficulties during the research. First is the author's lack of knowledge because of not enough experiences and no previous research and limited theory. It was difficult for the author to build a theoretical background for the thesis.

Secondly, it is about the language barrier because the respondents are Finns, and the survey was in English, so it is difficult to convey all the ideas although the majority of respondents understand English. In addition, the language barrier leads to some wrong responses. For example, some marked the number to answer question number eighth, ninth, tenth in the questionnaire instead ticked in the box. In addition, the language barrier also led to some limitations in communicating with the respondents.

¹ Kalsec Inc provides herbs and spices. The Company offers products such as antioxidants, colors, dry products, flavor extracts, hop extracts, and nutritional ingredients. Kalsec operates worldwide. Kalsec conducted online surveys in 2019 in Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Mexico, Thailand, the United Kingdom, and the United States with 500 consumers from each country ages 18 and up.

The third one was the survey has to be conducted at the restaurant, while the customer were having their meal causing interruptions. This affects the quality of the survey process because the sensitive situation made it difficult for the author to reach the customer.

The next one was due to the situation of the Covid-19 pandemic, the number of customers to Sulo Restaurant de-creased, so the author did not get much response as expected. In addition, the restaurant was closed for almost three months, and it was also scheduled to be surveyed. Therefore, the survey implementation time was extended to September instead of June as previously planned. Also, this was not the right time to try out the menu, so the testing plan was not executed. The topic had just done by giving suggestions menu.

The last limitation, the author, did not get the exact price from Sulo Restaurant to calculate the price of the dish because it is a business secret. The author relied on the price of the Prisma supermarket to calculate the estimated price, and it was only partially correct. The business must recalculate and adjust the number of ingredients to suit the cost of the restaurant.

9.3 Recommendations

Base on the positive result from the interview and the survey, Sulo Restaurant should have a Vietnamese menu on the lunch buffet menu once a month. The traditional food and spicy food should be considered, note that spicy food may not be suitable for customer who can not eat spicy so the chilli sauce or chilli powder should be aside. Moreover, the restaurant should plan a testing day in the near future to assess the accuracy of the idea.

The overall research is likely to be reliable. The research has applied qualitative and quantitative research methods suitable for each group of subjects surveyed at Sulo restaurant. In addition, the target population is the customers who regularly eat lunch at the Sulo restaurant, and the sample frame for the survey is the customers who have lunch at the restaurant. The sample frame selection is very close to the target population in order to increase the confidence level for the study. The majority of subjects invited to the survey were happy to answer the questionnaire, out of 162 respondents, the author got 154 quality answers, the rest had 8 responses that were not suitable for the purpose of research by the author. In general, the selection of the sample and the survey location is suitable for the purpose of the study.

10 CONCLUSION

The research results brought some success as expected. Typically, the author got the actual results from a survey from customer at Sulo Restaurant about Vietnamese food. The survey results showed the potential of Vietnamese food at Sulo Restaurant through the results that a large number of customers like and want to try Vietnamese food. In addition, the author had found dishes suitable for the needs of customers, available ingredients, and possible preparation to diversify the lunch buffet menu for Sulo Restaurant as the original purpose of the topic. The restaurant could choose one or more items in the suggested dishes to test at a suitable time.

At the end of the study, the author obtained more knowledge about the culinary of Vietnam and Finland through research on the food culture of the two countries. Based on the result of the research and the three main theoretical foundations: Food Culture Background. Product Development Process and Planning a Buffet Menu were used to complete the essay. Combination of the qualitative and quantitative method by interviewing the staff at Sulo Restaurant, and then got more specific by a survey was the foundation that the author designed the new product in detail by gave suggestions to food ideas. During the development of the food ideas, authors always followed the considerations mentioned in the book "The Restaurant: From Concept to Operation" as well as the answers in the interview. However, due to the time constraints, the scale of the topics, and the disadvantages of the covid-19 pandemic, the trials were not performed. The author hoped to have another author interested in the topic and continue the topic by test the feasibility of the suggestion menu.

In general, the topic had been successful because it correctly fulfilled the original purpose of answering the survey question. Thanks to the research, the author had a chance to find out the limited aspects of the project that need to be improved next time. The survey results are valuable because it was conducted at the restaurant based on the diners at Sulo Restaurant and their needs. Through the survey, the author had received remarkable experiences in developing a menu in the future as a personal career. The result of the thesis was that Sulo should diversify the lunch buffet menu with Vietnamese food, which can be impressive and appealing. The author believed that developing the Vietnamese menu at Sulo would bring a new intangible value to Sulo Restaurant as well as new experiences for the diners in Kajaani.

11 LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Figure 1 Product development process (Karl & Steven, 2004, 13)	12
Figure 2 Food cost percentage formula (Lundberg & Walker, 1993, 80)	15
Figure 3: Roadmap of the research.....	20
Figure 4 Gender and Age of customer at Sulo (n = 154).....	22
Figure 5 Customer who had tasted Vietnamese food before and like it (n = 67)	23
Figure 6 Customer who willing to try Vietnamese food if the customer had a chance, even customer had not tasted it before (n = 87).....	23
Figure 7 Customer response about the healthiness and tastiness of Vietnamese food (n = 138).....	24
Figure 8 Cooking methods, ingredients that customers at Sulo Restaurant preferred (n = 138)	25
Figure 9 The main taste that customer at Sulo preferred (n=138)	25
Figure 10 Frequently of Vietnamese menu should be at Sulo Restaurant (n = 138).....	26
Table 1 The" twofold - turned – fivefold" structure of the Hoianese daily meal (Avieli, 2012, 19)	8
Table 2 An example of food cost calculation for Seafood Newburg	15
Table 3 Food cost calculation for chicken with lemongrass for two portions.....	30
Table 4 Food cost calculation of steamed chicken and cabbage salad for five portion	30
Table 5 Steamed salmon with soy sauce for five portions	31
Table 6 Grilled shaking beef for five portions	31

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13 APPENDICES

Appendix 1: List of popular restaurants in Kajaani

No.	Restaurants	Style of food	Price (euro)
1	Rosso	Italy	11,9
2	Gastrobar3	Diversify style	11,5
3	Bistro Casa Bianca	Italian, American	11,5
4	Wanha Kerho	Finnish	12
5	Lori	Pizza buffet	10,99
6	Golden Dragon	Chinese	10,9
7	Jongrak Thai	Thai	11

Appendix 2: Recipes

The following recipes are from Marion Grasby's website name Marionskitchen.com. Marion Grasby is a Thai-Australian chef and an entrepreneur in the food industry. She is also joined to some television show, cookbook author, and food journalist. One of a participate in MasterChef Australia Season 2, although she was not a winner after the contest, she became famous and successful in the food industry.



WHITE RICE & STIRED RICE

INGREDIENTS

- 160 grams white rice
- 2 teaspoons coconut oil
- 420 ml water

PREP TIME

- Prep | 5 m
- Cook | 30 m
- Yield 2 servings
- Duration | 1 days

PROCEDURE

- 01** In a pot, bring water to a boil.
- 02** BAdd coconut oil to pot, followed by the rice.
- 03** Cover, lower heat, and cook for 25 to 30 minutes. White rice is ready
- 04** Stir rice in hot pan with 2tps oil, 1 tp salt, 2 gloves of garlic.



STEAMED/BOILED VEGETABLES

INGREDIENTS

- 1 kilograms broccoli mix
- 500ml water

PREP TIME

- Prep | 5 -15 m
- Cook | 5- 15 m
- Yield |5 servings

PROCEDURE

- 01** Cut the vegetables into uniform bite-sized pieces, the way you plan to serve them.
- 02** Add an inch or two of water to your saucepan. Insert the steamer basket. The surface of the water should be under the basket, Boiling over high heat.
- 03** Add the vegetables, cover and reduce the heat
- 04** Steam the vegetables: Start checking the vegetables after a few minutes. Tender vegetables, like broccoli and asparagus, will cook in just a few minutes. Harder vegetables, like carrots and potatoes, will take longer.



STIR-FRIED CHICKEN WITH LEMONGRASS

INGREDIENTS

- 500g chicken fillets, cut into roughly 3cm cubes
- 4 Tbsp fish sauce
- 1 Tbsp white sugar
- ½ tsp cornflour
- 1 lemongrass stalk, bruised and white part finely chopped
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 5 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 long red chilli, finely chopped
- 1 small onion, sliced
- 1 cup coconut water
- 1 long red chilli, finely sliced

PREP TIME

- Prep | 15 -20 m
- Cook | 30 m
- Yield |2 servings

PROCEDURE

- 01** Combine the chicken, fish sauce, sugar, cornflour and half the lemongrass in a large bowl. Leave to marinate for 10 minutes.
- 02** Heat 1 tablespoon of the vegetable oil in wok over high heat. Add remaining lemongrass, garlic, chilli and onion and stir-fry for a minute. Push all the ingredients to the side to make a space for the chicken. Add the remaining 1 tablespoon of oil and then add the chicken. Spread the chicken out and allow to cook for 2-3 minutes or until starting to brown. Then stir-fry and toss everything together. Add the coconut water and simmer for 5 minutes or until the chicken is cooked through and the sauce has thickened slightly.



STEAMED CHICKEN & CABBAGE SALAD

INGREDIENTS

- One chicken / breast(weighing about 1kg)
- 3 tsp Salt
- 50g Ginger
- 2g Lime leaves
- 1 tablespoon of lemon juice
- 1 tsp Black peppers

PREP TIME

- Prep | 15-20 m
- Cook | 40-50 m
- Yield |5 servings

PROCEDURE

- 01** Line the salt to the bottom of the pot. Next, spread the crushed lemongrass, crushed ginger and lime leaves on top of the salt and put the chicken on top.
- 02** Steam the chicken about 40 minute. After the first 20 minutes turn the chicken to ensure the chicken cooked evenly.
- 03** Mix 1tps of salt, 1/2 tp of black peppers and add lemon juice as a



INGREDIENTS

- 2 1/2 cups shredded green cabbage
- 3 scallions, sliced
- 2 medium carrots, grated
- 3 tablespoons freshly squeezed lime juice
- 5 tps white sugar
- 1 tps salt
- 1 tablespoon vinegar
- 1 cup roughly chopped mint leaves

PREP TIME

- Prep | 15-20 m
- Cook | 0 m
- Yield | 5 servings

PROCEDURE

- 01** Toss the cabbage, scallions, and carrots together in a large bowl.
- 02** In a small bowl, whisk together the lime juice, salt, sugar, and vinegar until the sugar is fully dissolved.
- 03** Pour the dressing over the top of the salad and toss well to coat. Fold in the mint. Serve at room temperature or slightly chilled.



STEAMED SALMON WITH SOY SAUCE

INGREDIENTS

For the Sauce:

- 1 1/4 teaspoons sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 tablespoons oyster sauce
- 2 tablespoons light soy sauce
- 2 1/2 tablespoons canola oil
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 2-inch piece fresh ginger, peeled and finely shredded
- 3 scallions, green part only, chopped
-

For the steamed salmon:

- 1 scallion, white part only, cut lengthwise into strips
- 800gm salmon fillet, cut crosswise into two pieces
- 4 sprigs cilantro

PREP TIME

- Prep | 5 -15 m
- Cook | 5- 15 m
- Yield |5 servings

PROCEDURE

- 01** For the sauce: In a small bowl, combine the sugar, pepper, oyster sauce, and soy sauce. Stir until the sugar is dissolved. Pour the oil into a small saucepan, and turn the heat to medium. Add the garlic and cook until fragrant, about 15 seconds. Add the ginger and cook until it is also fragrant about one minute. Pour in the sauce, stir well. Then add the scallions, turn off the heat, and stir to combine. Set aside.
- 02** For the steamed salmon: Fill a large pot with a steamer tray halfway up with water, and bring to a boil.
- 03** Toss half of the white scallion strips into the plate and then place the salmon fillets on top. Pour the sauce on top of the salmon.
- 04** Transfer the plate to the steamer tray. Cover the pot, and cook until fish is cooked, ten to fifteen minutes.



GRILLED SHAKING BEEF

INGREDIENTS

- 2 lbs sirloin (trim off excess fat and cut into 1-inch cubes)
- 1 teaspoon granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 garlic cloves (mince)
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 small red onion

Sauce

- 1 garlic clove (mince)
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon fish sauce
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 2 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 2 teaspoons sugar

PREP TIME

- Prep | 15-20 m
- Cook | 40-50 m
- Yield | 5 servings

PROCEDURE

- 01** In large bowl, marinate beef with sugar, salt, black pepper, and minced garlic for at least one hour at room temperature or overnight in fridge for best results.
- 02** In a large skillet, heat up vegetable oil on medium high. Add half of the beef cubes and sear on all sides by shaking beef until medium rare. No more than 2-3 minutes total. Transfer to a bowl and repeat with other half.
- 03** To the now empty skillet, add butter. Once melted, add onions and garlic. Add soy sauce, fish sauce, honey, rice vinegar and sugar. Cook the mixture for about 2-3 minutes. Toss in seared beef cubes until nicely coated. Grill on the flame for 2,3 minutes to get more flavour.

Today's Lunch
VIETNAMESE STYLE

LUNCH MEALS

SALAD
Lettuce, tomatos,
cucumber, carrot with
cheese and dressing

MAIN
Fried chicken with
lemongrass
Steamed salmom with soy
sauce

DRINKS
Coffee, tea, and juice

Appendix 4: Interview transcript

Interviewer: Vi Pham – ATA17W

Interviewee: Anna Turunen and Hana-Mari

Time: 18/12/2020

1. How many different foods should every lunch have (starter, appetizer, main, dessert)?

Answer: Starter with salad (6 different ingredients), two main dishes, dessert with tea and coffee

2. Who planning the menu at this moment?

Answer: Anna Turunen – head chef

3. Which elements could you consider when planning a menu?

Answer: First, the dish must be possible in the restaurant's preparation, including the equipment, the ingredients, the cooking method, and the chef's skills. In addition, an important part is that the cost of forming the dish must match the standard cost of the restaurant - around 5-6 euros per customer.

4. How much for a cost every lunch day?

Answer: Sale price 11,9 euro (variable cost of ingredient about 5 -6 euros)

5. What kind of ingredients usually be preferred by the customer?

Answer: Local food, vegan food, vegetables, meat
Prefer gluten-free and lactose-free

6. What kind of cooking method usually preferred by the customer?

Answer: Grilled, oven cooked, stewed

7. How many customers have a lunch buffet every day on average?

Answer: About 120-150 customer

8. Does the lunch buffet at Sulo have target customer? who?

Answer: Almost of our customer are Office workers

9. How long has Sulo been working? How long has the lunch buffet been launched?

Answer: About six years

10. Who can I contact to ask question/price table or send the result of the research?

Answer: Hana-Mari and Anna Turunen

11. When is it possible to do a tasting day?

Answer: Week 20 or late of March/ April

Thank you!

Appendix 5: Questionnaire

CUSTOMERS RESEARCH ABOUT VIETNAMESE CUISINE AT SULO RESTAURANT

Hello, I am Vi Pham, a Tourism Management undergraduate. I am doing this survey as a part of my Bachelor thesis to research the feasibility of Vietnamese cuisine at Sulo restaurant. Please spend 2-3 minutes to complete 11 questions to contribute to the success of the research. The responses will be kept anonymous and used for the research purpose only. After analyzing the answers, they will be deleted with proper measurements. Thank you very much for your time and support.

1. What is your gender?

- Male Female Other

2. How old are you?

- Under 30 30-50 Above 50

3. Have you ever tasted Vietnamese cuisine before?

- Yes (Please continue with question 4)
 No (Please continue with question 5)

4. If yes, do you like Vietnamese cuisine

- Yes (Please continue with question 6) Not really* No*

* If your answer is Not really or No: You can finish the questionnaire here. Thank you!

5. If no, do you want to taste Vietnamese food if you have a chance

- Yes (Please continue with question 6) Not really* No*

* If your answer is Not really or No: You can finish the questionnaire here. Thank you!

6. Do you think Vietnamese food is tasty?

- Yes Not really No

7. Do you think Vietnamese food is healthy?

- Yes Not really No

8. If Sulo develops more in Vietnamese cuisine for the lunch menu, what kind of cooking methods are you prefer? (You can choose more than one option)

- Fried Boiled Grilled Stirred Steamed Stewed in oven

Other:

9. What kind of ingredients would you prefer? (You can choose more than one option)

- Vegetables Fish Chicken Beef Pork

Other:

10. What kind of tastes are you prefer? (You can choose more than one option)

- Sour
- Spicy
- Salty
- Sweet

11. How often of Vietnamese cuisine should Sulo restaurants have in their lunch menu?

- More than once a week
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Quarterly
- Yearly
- Never

12. If Sulo would develop a Vietnamese lunch buffet menu, what kind of suggestions have for it?

.....

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Thank you for completing the questionnaire!!!

Appendix 6: Health benefits of traditional Vietnamese foods

Table 3.2.5 Health benefits of traditional Vietnamese foods

Foods	Health benefits
Noodle soups	Nutritionally balanced meal containing carbohydrate, protein and vegetables. Low in fat, moderate in calories and good source of fluid
Encourage consumption of raw vegetables/salads and fresh herbs or lightly cooked Liquid used to boil vegetables made into soup (<i>canh</i>)	Helps to increase fibre intake Increases micronutrients, antioxidants and phytochemicals No wastage of nutrients that may be leached out during the boiling process
Encourage soya milk (unsweetened) and tofu/bean curd in dishes and desserts	Helps to increase soya protein which may help control cholesterol levels and aid heart health. Soya isoflavones may help with menopausal symptoms and bone health
Encourage fresh fruit/fruit smoothies eaten as snacks and after meals	Helps to increase fibre intake Increase micronutrients and antioxidants
Encourage use of beans/lentils/nuts in drinks or desserts made with less sugar or on sticky rice	Helps to increase soluble fibre intake to aid bowel regulation and help to lower cholesterol levels and regulate blood sugar levels
Encourage low-fat cooking methods for grilling, stir-frying, braising, roasting, more noodle soup dishes	Helps to lower total fat intake and aid with weight maintenance