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“Drinks in HEL”

Food tourism route across distilled beverage experiences in

Helsinki

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| <p>Food tourism can be called one of the oldest practices that paved the way for many current-day tourism trends and styles. It can even be said that one of the first encounters with most foreign cultures was most likely via food. This thesis takes a closer look into the variety of food culture tourism experiences in Helsinki, particularly in the sphere of beverage culture. Hence, the main objective of this thesis was to create a food tourism product concept that is a route with a focus around the distilled beverage experiences in Helsinki. The commissioning party for this thesis is the Hungry for Finland project of Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences that has been at the core of developing Finland’s food tourism strategy since 2012. The main objective was supported by the following sub-objectives: the locations located and identified showcase “Distilled beverage culture” experiences in Helsinki, the product matches the expectations of the commissioner, and, aligns with 2020-2028 Finland’s food tourism strategy of Hungry for Finland; lastly, the route showcases and highlights the variety of the distilled beverage experiences in Helsinki and the route concept’s visualization helps represent the image of Helsinki’s local distilled beverage culture. The resulting product is meant to be used as a usable concept that Hungry for Finland can propose to be developed into a full product.</p> <p>The target audience was identified to be the “Foodie” travellers, the profile that was identified by Visit Finland position, potential and segmentation study 2023. The “Foodie” travellers are determined to be a wider customer segment that can pose a challenge to be attracted to the experiences of Finland’s food tourism as this segment tends to have overall lower interest in sustainability practices. Nevertheless, “Foodies” appreciate quality and actively seek it out. The concepts of experience as a vital element of services are introduced via the theoretical discussion of the Experience Economy findings made by Pine and Gilmore as well as related concepts such as Experience realms. In addition, the concept of the distilled beverage experiences which by itself does not have a definition, is defined via a compound definition derived by analysing the definitions of the parts of the concept.</p> <p>For the development of the route the design thinking technique is applied for the structuring of the process. To identify fitting locations the non-participant observation data collection method was applied. By conducting thematic analysis of the data collected a total of 19 locations and 2 seasonal happenings were identified, located in Central Helsinki. The resulting product is a visualized concept of the distilled beverage route in Helsinki that can be integrated into the digital space of My Helsinki. The visualization of the route was created in Figma to simulate the digital appearance of the route in the intended digital space of My Helsinki. A complimentary route with a focus on non-alcoholic drinks or, alternatively, a country-wide route around the distillery productions of Finland could be seen as further developments with strong potential.</p> |
| <p>Key words</p> <p>Food tourism, Beverage tourism, Beverage culture, Distilled beverage experience, Food route, Helsinki</p> |

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Contents..... | 3 |
| 1 Introduction..... | 4 |
| 1.1 Objectives and purpose..... | 5 |
| 1.2 Hungry for Finland project..... | 5 |
| 2 Food and beverage tourism experiences..... | 7 |
| 2.1 Food tourism..... | 7 |
| 2.2 Customer segment..... | 7 |
| 2.3 Food tourism routes and their characteristics..... | 9 |
| 2.4 The significance of beverage culture as apart of food tourism..... | 11 |
| 2.5 Finland as a tourism destination..... | 11 |
| 2.6 Sustainability in Finland’s tourism products..... | 12 |
| 2.7 Experience, Experience Economy, and Experience realms..... | 13 |
| 2.8 Distilling, distilleries and distilling experience..... | 15 |
| 3 The creation of the route product..... | 16 |
| 3.1 Design process and tools..... | 17 |
| 3.2 Empathising stage, Observation and Netnography as a core data collection method..... | 18 |
| 3.3 Define: Data analysis and route planning..... | 21 |
| 3.4 Ideate and Prototype: Shaping the route..... | 24 |
| 4 Distilling and Eating experiences in Helsinki route: “Drinks in HEL”..... | 27 |
| 4.1 Route layout..... | 28 |
| 4.2 Technical elements of the route appearance..... | 32 |
| 5 Reflection, discussion, and personal takeaways..... | 33 |
| 5.1 Further development..... | 34 |
| 5.2 Personal takeaways..... | 35 |
| Sources..... | 37 |
| Attachments/Appendix..... | 41 |
| Appendix 1. Observation table..... | 41 |
| Appendix 2 “Drinks in HEL” A food tourism route across the distilled beverage experiences in Helsinki..... | 45 |

1 Introduction

Where there are people there is food, where there is food there are drinks, where there are drinks and food there are new people, conversations and new experiences. Food tourism is one of the most familiar practices to many a traveller and many would probably agree that one of their first encounters with a foreign culture was through food. Culinary culture and tradition tend to not only transcend the borders of their origin country but also attract tourists and visitors to meet the culture in its full authenticity. The World Food Travel Association describes Food Tourism as “The act of traveling for a taste of place in order to get a sense of place”. On top of that stating from year 2018 traveling for the very sake of experiencing the food culture of a location saw a rapid increase as a core motivation for a visit (World Food Travel Association 2023.)

The following thesis will explore a part of Food tourism that is easily recognisable although often overlooked unless it has a strong cultural presence, the beverage tourism. It is fair to say that beverage culture is seen as part of the culinary culture of a country, some countries are even more recognisable for their drink and beverage cultures. Hence, the topic of the following thesis work is the development of a food tourism route across the distilled beverage experiences in Helsinki. Thus, the main deliverable outcome is a food tourism route that showcases distilled beverage experience scene in Helsinki.

The topic of this thesis derives from the Research and Development course (YHT1PE006) that took place in Haaga-Helia UAS during the Autumn semester of 2022 (Adamsson, Willman 2022). The Research and Development course is carried out via collaboration with the Hungry for Finland project. During the said course author had a chance to be a part of the team that took on the topic of “Distilling and Eating in Helsinki region”, as per the instructions of the course the project work was done in a way that the research itself was done at a smaller scale, in much shorter time and in a concise manner. This meant that some potential had to be left out. During the course, however, the project team had a chance to assess the level of interest and relevancy of a “Distilling and Eating Experiences” route in Helsinki region, which ultimately showed quite a bit of potential available for developing further; this thesis aims to explore the said potential and to develop a full concept of a food tourism route around the distilled beverage experiences in Helsinki.

This thesis is a product-based thesis, that is an outcome is a prototype concept of a Beverage Tourism Experience route around Helsinki, represented on a form of a brochure in a relevant media of choice. Hence the main subject is the very process of identifying fitting locations and creating the route as well as visualising of the appearance of the product.

1.1 Objectives and purpose

The main objective of this thesis is **to create a food tourism route focused on Distilling experiences in Helsinki**. The main objective is supported by the subobjectives presented in the Table 1. While this thesis is a continuation previously initiated project, this thesis aims to accurately align itself with the objectives of the Hungry for Finland project as well as to create a finalized concept of a food tourism product that can be applied to develop the variety of food tourism products in Finland.

Table 1. Supporting sub-objectives of the thesis

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|--|
| - The locations located and identified showcase “Distilled beverage culture” experiences in Helsinki |
| - The product matches the expectations of the commissioner, is relevant to their demands and, aligns with 2020-2028 Marketing strategy of Hungry for Finland |
| - The route highlights and highlights the variety of the distilled beverage experiences in Helsinki |
| - The route concept’s visualization helps represent the image of Helsinki’s local distilled beverage culture |

For the sake of feasibility of this thesis the author established the following limitations; while the overall focus of this thesis can be qualified as alcoholic beverage tourism, the core focus is the products of the process of distillation. Hence products and experiences related to brewing shall be left out. The geographical border limitation for this route is the city of Helsinki, that is to limit the overall potential length of the route as well as to avoid confusion between different municipalities and their tourism product offers.

Given the thesis is done as part of the Hungry for Finland project, for the purpose of the project work as it stands that is also who is seen as the commissioner of the thesis; they are, however, not the only ones who can benefit from the outcome of this thesis. Those at the very core of the route, that are the business owners and entrepreneurs of the distilled beverage scene of Helsinki are the ones who can gather great gain from increased attention. In addition to that, the author themselves is involved in the hospitality sphere and this thesis is a vital opportunity for author to exercise their skills and apply their gathered knowledge to create a concept that can be offered for further development with either the commissioning party or one of the collaborating companies.

1.2 Hungry for Finland project

Food tourism has risen in popularity in recent years, and more and more tourists find themselves traveling to meet new cultures through their food. Beverages as an integral part of food tourism;

especially in Finland distilling has rich history and is tightly connected with local gastronomic culture. Lastly this thesis aims to contribute to the ongoing multi-company collaboration-project led by Haaga-Helia.

Hungry for Finland is an ongoing (collaboration) project led by Haaga-Helia, that focuses on development of Finland's Food Tourism on a national level since 2012. The following are the key marketing themes that have been developed as a part of the 2020-2028 Food tourism strategy of Finland: "1. Taste of place, 2. Pure & Natural, 3. Cool & Creative". This thesis particularly aims to align with the first and third message while also targeting a few of the strategical aims of the project, such as "encouraging the creation of combination products and food tourism routes and promotion of the competitiveness of tourism in Finland" (Adamsson, Havas & Hook 2020).

The development of the route has direct benefit to the purpose of the Hungry for Finland project, as it allows for the development of the cooperation between the entrepreneurs in Helsinki via food tourism in Finland, particularly through a relevant perspective of an aspect of Food tourism in Helsinki. From a personal and professional point of view this work has an immense potential in helping author to grow their familiarity with the scene, to lay grounds for potential further cooperation between the entrepreneurs that are involved in the scene.

2 Food and beverage tourism experiences

The following chapter will cover the core groundwork for this thesis; the core theoretical concepts behind food tourism, the beverage tourism, tourism trails and food routes, as well as the very concept of experiences and what can be described as the “Distilled beverage experience”. This chapter lays the base for the decision making that the author does in the process of observing the potential locations for the route as well as when making the route.

2.1 Food tourism

Food tourism is one of the primary guiding concepts for this thesis, the World Food Travel Association provides the following definition: “Food tourism is the act of travelling for a taste of place in order to get a sense of place” (World Food Travel Association 2023). Hence, food and culinary culture of a location is seen as the motivation behind the interest of visit as well as the inspiration behind learning about the new place. Given food cultures are often varied and diverse the range of experiences that they have a potential to provide is massive; on top of that food tourism plays an important role in moments of the interactions between a tourist and a host, it “significantly emphasizes a relationship between the insider and outsider created via food as culture” (Ellis, Park, Kim & Yeoman 2018, 253; Everett 2016).

2.2 Customer segment

Originally the customer segment for this project under the Research and Development course was set to be the people born between 1997 and 2003, this group consists of predominantly millennials with an addition of older Genz's. This customer segment is quite populated with avid city-breakers, interested in sights, safety, and culinary experiences are some of the main factors that these people consider (Hungry for Finland 2020). However, as stated by the “Potential, position and segmentation study for Finland” by Visit Finland 2023 it is quite hard to identify a uniform target group. (Visit Finland 2023).

Nevertheless, this work will heavily rely on the findings of the upper mentioned study by Visit Finland (2023) to maintain its relevance to the current trends in interest towards Finland and offer a product that can arouse further enthusiasm for visiting Finland. Visit Finland Identified culture as one of the three core factors of attraction for Finland; Food & Drink area of interest is placed to be under the Culture segment reflecting the previously mentioned formula of “tasting a place to get a sense of the place”. The Culture segment does also happen to be the most varied e.g., Figure 1, being divided into four subgroups with both more challenging groups such as “Foodie” travellers and the ones with stronger potential such as “Culture travellers” (Visit Finland 2023).

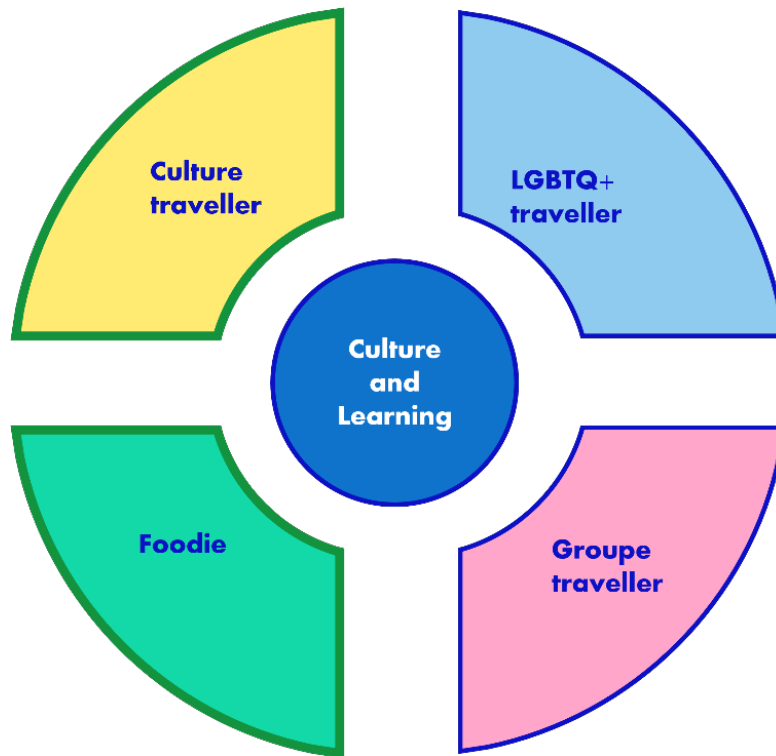


Figure 1. Culture and Learning customer subgroups (Visit Finland 2023)

On top of that, these customer attraction groups do not exist in a vacuum, very much co-exist and often have quite an overlap in the interest profile of a singular potential visitor. Hence, it is fair to suggest that for example a “lifestyle traveller” who is under the nature category, may also represent a “foodie” an/or “culture traveller” and vice versa (Visit Finland 2023).

For the purpose of this particular product, it is the “Culture and Learning” interest aspect that will be treated as the principal customer group, given “culture traveller” and “foodie” are both attributed to this category. While “Culture traveller” is seen as a group with a strong potential for getting interested in visiting Finland; a “Foodie”, on the other hand, is seen as a more challenging group to attract. Nevertheless, as mentioned earlier the closeness of these two segments in their overall “fields” of interest can be used as solid ground for developing a product that has potential to attract either (Visit Finland 2023). Foodie traveller, while a challenging group, still holds a respectable amount of potential, and given the focus of this thesis on food tourism, would provide the best match.

The Foodie traveller has an equal population of men and women, they are in a higher age group overall, with about 1 in 4 being over the age of 45, which still allows to attract some of the younger people too. They are quite tech savvy as they rely on digital sources to plan their travels and to make well-arranged itineraries. While Visit Finland does note that sustainability tends to not be at

the core of attraction for Foodies, Finland may allow for a new perspective towards sustainability; sustainable practices are not just a marketing ploy but a genuine effort and action that many Finnish businesses and restaurants do. Hence sustainability often translates into the character and quality, which in turn the Foodies appreciate. Lastly food production or related activities such as at brewery or distillery-like locations tends to be among high interest locations for Foodies. (Visit Finland 2023, 87-91).

This chapter will be used as a core reference point as it will be suggested in the further development to conduct further research into customer segment that will be attracted by the route. It may prove to be a bit different from the one assumed, given different locations can have different target audiences, hence increasing the overall variety of people within the customer segment of the route itself.

2.3 Food tourism routes and their characteristics

A definition for a “route”: “a particular way or direction between places”. One more element needs to still be defined is the “Tourism” descriptor. Tourism by itself is quite an old practice with methods and styles that developed together with time and advancements of technology that made the said travels possible. One of the most notoriously recognised practices is the ‘Grand Tour’, a widespread practice among aristocracy of the 18th century to travel “across Europe with the avowed aim of better understanding the roots of western civilization often accompanied by a knowledgeable guide” (Ward-Perkins, Beckmann & Ellis, 2020,4-7).

Modern tourism still preserves the characteristic parts of the grand Tour, is widely accepted that “voyage has more value if it includes a cultural component”, while also the routes once often frequented by the aristocracy are either preserved or developed into a more accessible and marketable ones. The World Food Travel Association (WFTA) considers the beginning of the Food Tourism industry to have started in 1999, then this term was first used by Lucy Long. WFTA since continuously operates as the oldest and largest authority in the world of Food and Beverage tourism.

Food trails often entail a collection of local and/or culturally relevant products, services, and experiences that are provided by a number of stakeholders present on the said route (Andersson, Mossberg & Therkelsen 2017, 6). The overall focus or theme of the route created often relies on the said products and in turn establishes a connection between the various experiences present on the trail. “For tourism providers and planners, a product focus on routes and trails aligns well with this general trend” (Ward-Perkins, Beckmann & Ellis, 2020, 8).

To elaborate further David Ward-Perkins states that when a route or trail is developed, it develops a stronger attraction when it is aligned with the stories that the local culture wants to share. Having an established story works as a communication channel to capture visitors' interest and entice their imagination; in addition, it helps process the value propositions that the marked experiences by allowing the potential visitors to develop their own expectations (Ward-Perkins, Beckmann & Ellis, 2020 7-9).

Ward-Perkins also brings up the fact that there is an overall shift from just destination-tourism to an experience focused tourism, which in turn is reflected in the growth of the various new "classifications" of the tourism by the mode/pace/subject. A very relevant and valuable takeaway is that they bring to the surface the characteristics of a territory that contribute to its identity and to the sensations perceived by the visitor." Hence David Ward-Perkins proposes that it can be a collaborative creation Figure 2; "The stakeholders defining the concept will open it up to those that have expert knowledge of the theme" (Ward-Perkins, Beckmann & Ellis, 2020).

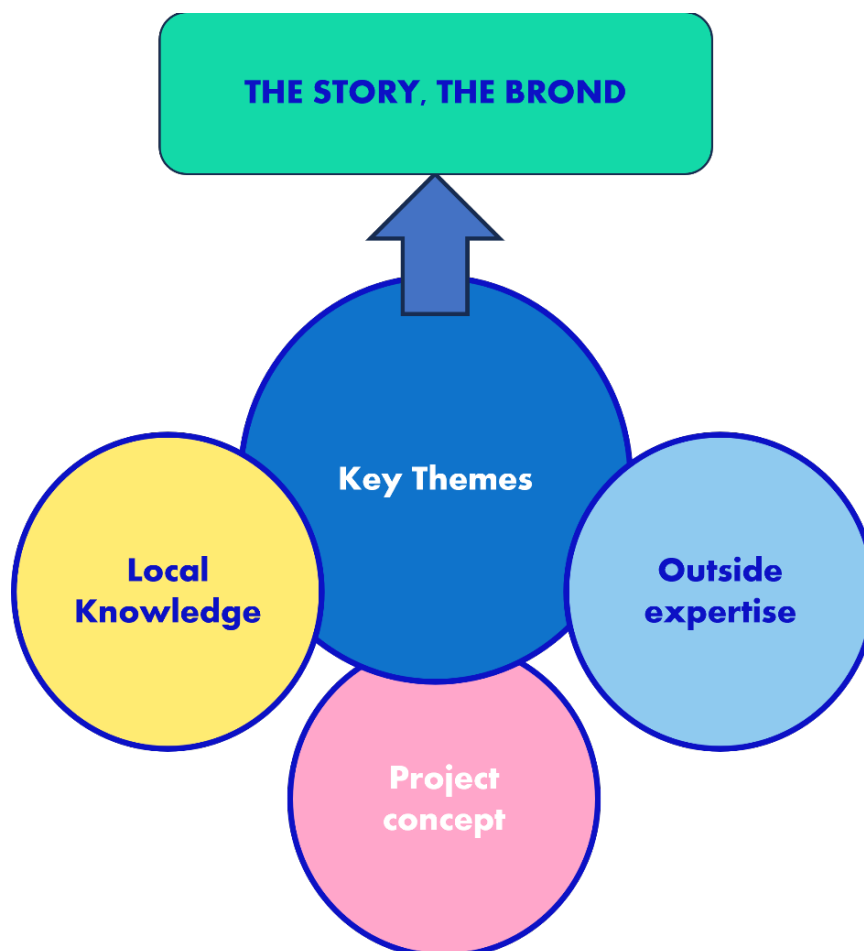


Figure 2. The process of defining a story for a route, (Ward-Perkins, Beckmann & Ellis, 2020)

2.4 The significance of beverage culture as apart of food tourism

Beverage tourism does not really exist as a sole section of tourism, it is however seen as a complementary part of Food tourism and is often included or even expected to be a part of gastronomical culture of a place. There is, however, such concept as “Drinking culture” often referred to the customs and behaviours tied to consumption of local and particularly alcoholic beverages, as per Social Issues Research Center (SIRC) “drinks are used to define the nature of the occasion”. Hence, as this behaviour repeats, a culture forms. (Social Issues Research Center 1998)

It is also quite vital to recognise the sensitivity of this particular topic, as usage of alcoholic beverage does have a direct and a well-recognised negative impact on one’s health if done irresponsibly. However, a wave of interest in alcohol as a cultural practice and responsible enjoyment of it has been on the rise “Since 2008, alcohol consumption started declining, and a slowly descending trend continued throughout the 2010s. From 2008 to 2019, consumption decreased by 21%, falling to pre-1995 levels.” (Karlsson, Mäkelä, Tigerstedt & Keskimäki 2020.)

The rise of interest in responsible consumption is followed by interest in the cultural significance and history behind drinking habits. It has been noticed how development of tourism products that highlight the cultural connection between an alcoholic beverage and the country, such as wine or whiskey, often reaps positive result in the overall numbers of tourist visitors (McBoyle & Mcboyle 2008). Thus, this thesis follows fit with these trends as it explores the profile and characteristics of the current distilling scene in Finland and the various experiences it can offer.

2.5 Finland as a tourism destination

Finland has several major sectors of tourism, with recognisably different characters and experiences that they offer. In 2019 Uusimaa enjoyed a much higher foreign demand than most of the country (40%) as reported by the Finnish Ministry of Economic Affairs. It is fair to conclude that Helsinki as a capital enjoys a significant level of attention from foreign visitors. This does, however, often also means that a change in behaviour of the foreign tourists is more recognisable and has a bigger effect “In the Uusimaa region, tourism demand decreased by 55% (EUR 4.5 billion) in 2020” (Finnish Ministry of Economic Affairs 2020). Figure 3 demonstrates the overall tourism demand trends within the recent years. At the moment Finland is still yet to enjoy the pre-pandemic numbers of visitors, although the overall trend in the increase of visitors is promising.

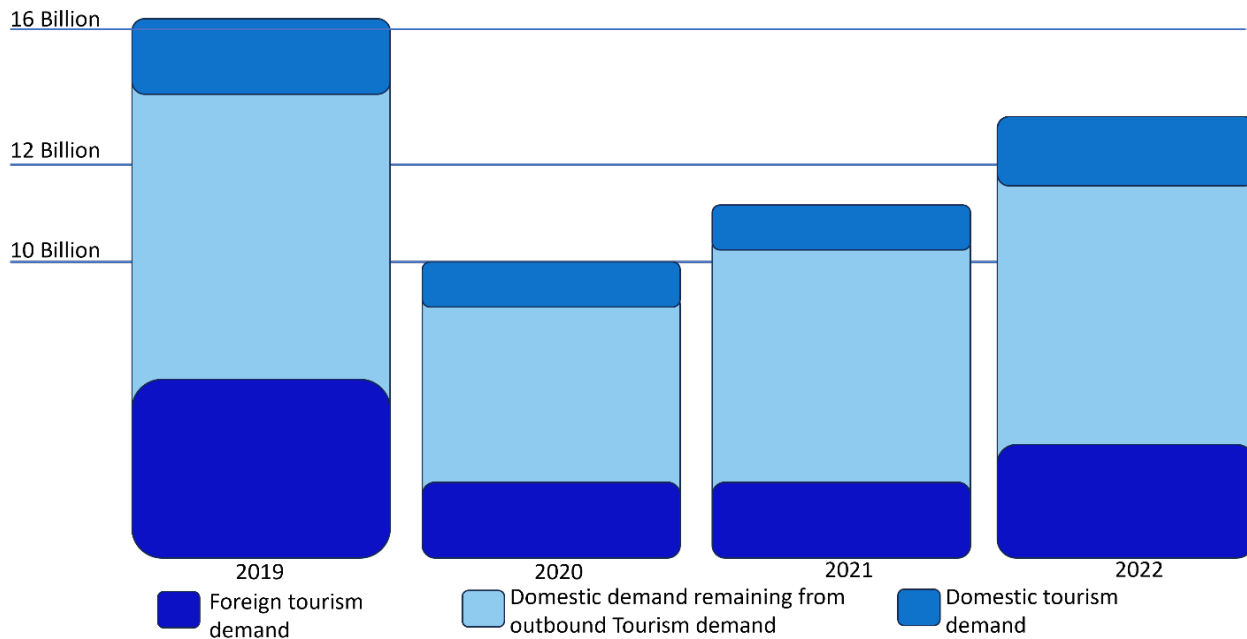


Figure 3. Tourism demand statistics (adapted from Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland)

The study conducted in February 2023 by Visit Finland on potential, position and segmentation did again confirm that Finland enjoys quite a tight competition from its Nordic neighbours, such as Sweden or Norway. (Visit Finland 2023, 42).

2.6 Sustainability in Finland's tourism products

The tourism recommendation report 2020 highlights sustainability as one of the core internationalization criteria, that is the actions of the service provider should correlate and reflect sustainable practices. They draw cross reference to Visti Finland's recommendation on sustainable practices and equal treatment of the employees and guests. (Hungry for Finland 2020, Visit Finland 2020).

Finland has one of the unique opportunities to display sustainability as part of the authentic image. Having most of the food and beverage supplied from near-by locations often following the seasonality of the products allows for shorter transportation and storage time (Boniface 2003, 31). In turn, often the very practice of using the seasonal products translates into the overall quality of the service as well as the very products that are offered.

2.7 Experience, Experience Economy, and Experience realms

The topic of this thesis is focused on “Distilling Experiences”; “Distilling Experience” does not have a direct definition as a singular concept. It is, however, possible to define “Distilling” and “Experience” as singular concepts and then derive a joint definition. The first concept to be defined is “Experience”, this chapter will also introduce the “Experience economy” as a vital existing context of the state of our modern world economy that the product will need to exist in as well as the “Multi-sensory experience” that will provide further definition for the upcoming criteria made for choosing the potential locations for the route.

The noun experience as well as the verb to experience both refer to the “process of getting knowledge or skill from doing, seeing, or feeling things”, there are several more definitions such as “If you experience something, it happens to you, or you feel it” and “If you experience something, it happens to you, or you feel it” (Cambridge University Press 2023a). One core element all these definitions have in common is that the action of experiencing something or the experience itself has an effect on the feelings and the senses of the individual. Hence for this project **“Experience” can be defined as “an event or happening that a visitor can perceive through one or more of their senses, that can have a lasting effect.”**

Experience economy defines the context within which the product exists as well as its relevancy in our current economy. Since the focus on the “Experience” has now been established, how does it relate to the current state of the economy? The way a service transforms into an experience through personalized customization was noted by Joseph Pine back in the 90s, that was the starting point to what now is expressed in several articles and books as Experience Economy. B. Joseph Pine II and James H. Gilmore introduce the Experience Economy as a new emerging state that followed the transformational progress of the world’s economy from agrarian, to industrial, to service economy (Pine II and Gilmore, 2007). The article mainly addressed the business owners so showcasing the increase in value of a service when it is transformed into or coupled with a personalized experience (Sunbo, Jon, Sørensen, Flemming, 2013).

Experience Pyramid (2006) as a conceptual framework summarises well how and experience can be broken down into various factors of the experience and what effect they have on a person as well as how are the said factors are being perceived by a person. It makes an effort to arrange and emphasise the value of the elements of effect that different senses, personal levels of perception, as well as have on the one living through an experience. It is fair to mention, however, that it may seem a bit simplistic or even not always accounting for the experiences that do not hit all of the

elements but still have a possibility to generate emotion from the visitor; it still has a valuable purpose in the design process. (Gordinier 2016.)

Lastly the Experience realms model by Pine and Gilmore (2011) offers a comprehensive interpretation of elements of experience and their interaction. The model created on an interaction between the scale of guest participation, that goes from active to passive, and the environmental relationship factor, that varies from immersive to one that is absorbing. Figure 4 represents the visual representation of the said Experience realms model (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 45-47).

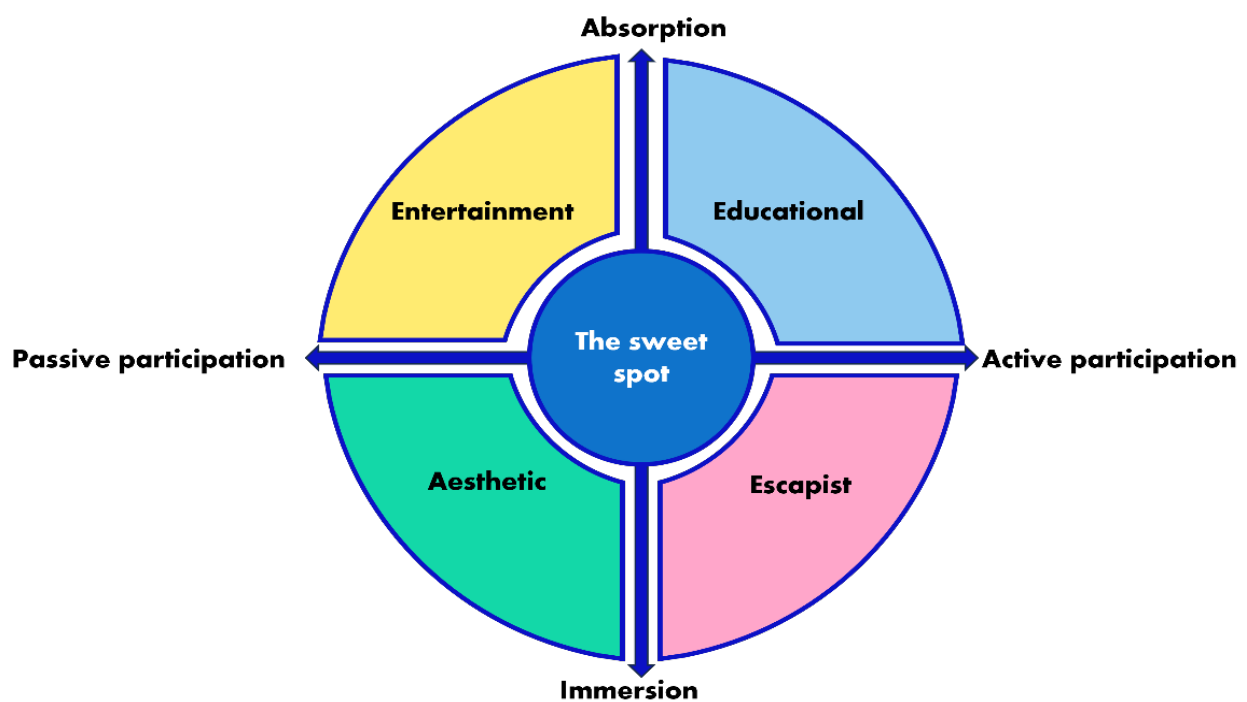


Figure 4. Experience realms (adapted from Pine & Gilmore 2011, 46)

Often the experience does not necessarily belong to exactly one realm, Pine and Gilmore in fact even encourage to produce experiences that cross into each other's boundaries and combine the elements from two or more realms. Pine and Gilmore even named the very spot in the middle the "sweet spot" as it represents the experience that manages to have the characteristics of all 4 realms with a perfect balance of customer participation to the environmental engagement (Pine & Gilmore 2011, 45-47).

Food tourism products have a unique possibility to offer products that often belong to more than one realm. The overall educational experience can always be present, while all of the surrounding

physical touchpoints can be adding the elements from other realms. Ultimately the resulting experience has potential to be of an overall highly positive effect (Polat & Özdemir 2021)

2.8 Distilling, distilleries and distilling experience

As established previously while such concept as “Drinking culture” does exist, there is not one that describes a “distilling experience” or a “distilled beverage experience”, so in this section the author will provide their suggested definition. The following definition will be derived from the meanings of the core concepts. In the following segment the focus will be placed on both “Distilled beverage” and “Experience”.

The “Distilled beverage” is a compound term on its own. At the core is the very process of “distilling” that stands for a process of making a liquid stronger or purer (Cambridge University Press b). At the same time the very product of distilling finds its way to be appreciated for its flavour and properties in mixed drinks. Often the distilled beverage is known by the name and hence the type of production and its history, that serves as a conversation point and often becomes a part of enjoying the said beverage.

The separate elements that are “distilled beverage” and “experience” have already been defined earlier, hence it is possible to string together a combined definition. **A “Distilled beverage Experience” is an experience that engages the visitor in the sensory exploration of the process of Distilling and/or of its product.**

All the upper mentioned concepts and statistics provide the base for the upcoming empirical research. The author has introduced the main objectives of this thesis as well as the theoretical background for this thesis. In the upcoming chapters the empirical research data collection will be covered as well as the very process of creating the route and its visualization.

3 The creation of the route product

In the following chapter the process of the creation of the route will be described. The steps taken will be following a similar structure to Service Design Process. The main data collection process as well as the processing of the said data will be aligned with the “Empathising” and “Defining” stages, “Ideation” stage would represent the very process of putting together the route while the “prototype” stage would cover the introduction of the final full concept. A separate chapter will be dedicated to the route itself.

Given the route concept is the final outcome of this thesis it was imperative to outline the overall course of action for this thesis first. Figure 5 represents the overall schedule that was planned out in the beginning of this thesis. As mentioned earlier the topic of this thesis follows fit to the topic of the Research and Development course that took place in Autumn 2022; in Spring 2023 it was brought to author’s attention that the topic is available to be developed further as a thesis work. Hence the decision was made to take on this challenge given the author had personal interest in the topic and quite a strong familiarity with it.

In April ‘23 the decision was made to pursue the topic of “Distilling and Eating in Helsinki” as that was the initial working title; in May ‘23 the primary thesis plan and schedule was written with the initial draft of the core theoretical concepts. In June ‘23 the theoretical part was finalized while at the same time the author began noting down first pieces of data. July and August 23’ were dedicated to data collection. In the initial stages of the thesis the author did have a plan to rather use Interviews as a data collection method but with further defining the target audience as well as the actual scope of the data needed to be collected the decision was made to stick with non-participant observation as the main data collection method. Lastly, September 23’ was dedicated to data analysis while in October 23’ the visualization on the route concept took place. It is of course important to note that the very process of carrying out this thesis was not linear and especially some of the development parts took place at times simultaneously.

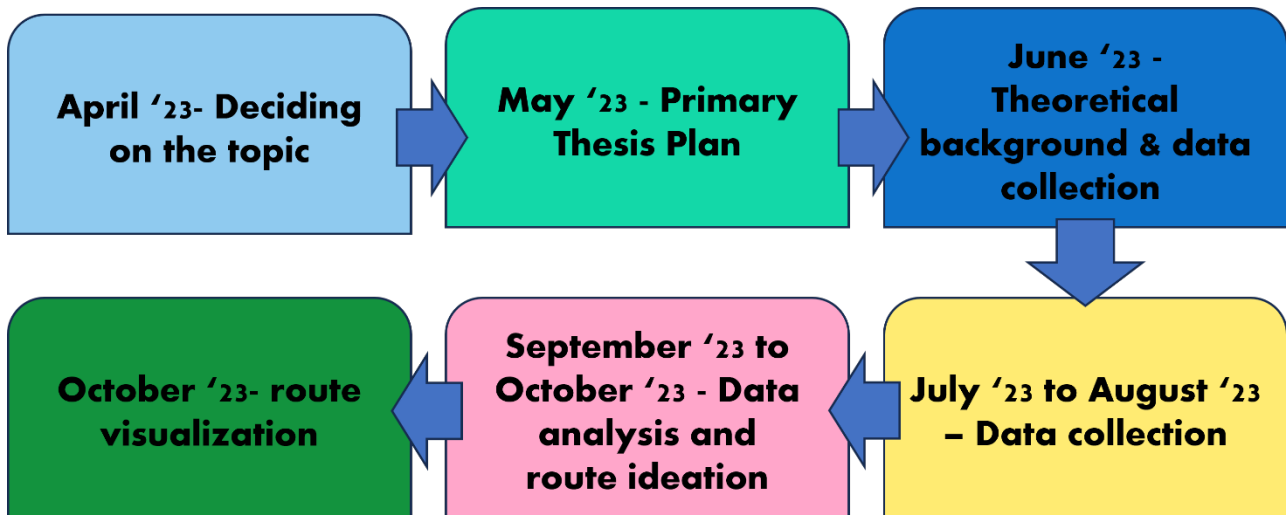


Figure 5. Overall timetable of the thesis work

3.1 Design process and tools

At its core design thinking has been described as planning and organisational process that applies a variety of tools to create or enhance experiences (Moilanen, Ojasalo & Ritalahti 2022, 94). Design thinking as a thinking process has a commonly referenced visualisation that was introduced by the Hasso-Plattner Institute of Design in Stanford (Figure 6.). On top of that developing a proper design process and so understanding the people involved at the centre of the intended product all contribute to the overall quality of the experience (Albein 1996).

For the purpose of developing the final product the author took up a familiar Design thinking process as well as a few tools and techniques from Service design framework. That is going through the stages on “Empathising, Understanding and Ideating, and if time allows then Prototyping” (Hasso-Plattner Institute of Design at Stanford 2010). In this section the author showcased how the said design thinking was applied and what that entailed in the context of this thesis work. At the time of writing the outline author’s the personal knowledge and experience with working with service design projects as well as the Experience design specialisation studies that laid out the core grounds for author’s approach to the route development process.

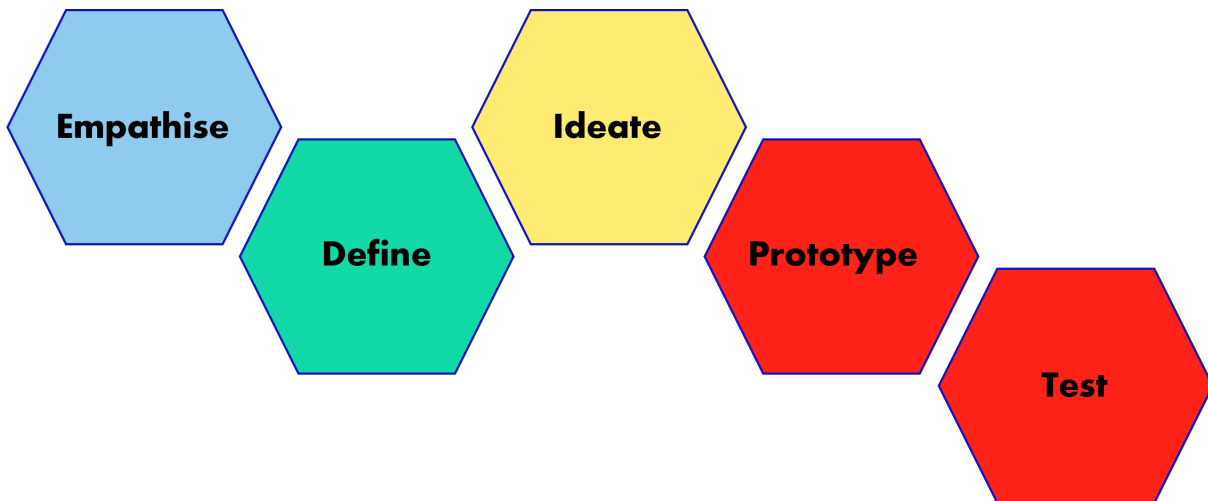


Figure 6. Design Thinking Process (adapted from Hasso-Plattner Institute of Design at Stanford 2010)

3.2 Empathising stage, Observation and Netnography as a core data collection method

The Empathising stage in the Design Thinking process reflects the initial steps of understanding the very elements of the challenge at hand (Gibbons 2017). The elements are the people involved as well as the various contexts and stories that they are involved in (Knight 2013). In the perspective of this thesis the author set out to understand the Distilled Beverage scene of Helsinki and what products it offers and how can they be presented to the target customer audience.

3.2.1 Observation

As a primary method of data collection, the author chose to conduct non-participant observation. The observations would be conducted via collecting information through the online presence and information provided by the companies on-line (main webpages/Instagram/Facebook/), the noted observations are then to be arranged in an observation table (appendix 1), which then will be benchmarked against the characteristic's observation table (the qualifications made on the basis of the theoretical part). Through the process of observation, it is possible to analyse a variety of media (Streefkerk 2019). Lastly conducting the observations in such a way allowed for simulating the process that a potential customer would be doing, as previously mentioned Foodies are fairly familiar with the usefulness of the online sources, and they do prefer to spend time researching best offers and highest recommendations. Hence the author placed themselves in the shoes of the very that get customer and was able to reflect on the quality of the information provided as well as its overall accessibility.

As per Marshall and Rossman (2011, 497-500) observation methods often call for using all five senses and creating a "written photograph" of the event or instance. This practice allows

First step in conducting the observations online was to identify the relevant key words and descriptors that would help find interesting and relevant locations Figure 7. One of the main sources of reference for the terms is the definitions that were established earlier in the theoretical part, such as Distilling, Distillery, and Distillery experience. From then on, the suggestions of similar locations were examined, that is most commonly a “Cocktail bar”, or a “Speakeasy” would be the locations’ whose webpages were examined next.

In the process of these observations the author was taking note to all noteworthy offerings that the business would claim they provide or mention either on their main page or their menu (if available). This was noted down on an overall observation list with some preliminary sorting by either the type of the location, the experience, or some other quality that made the location stand out Table 2.

As shown in Table 2. The separate sections for the observations correlated to particular characteristics of the locations observed. “Location” mainly referred to the name of the businesses, that came up while searching for distilled beverage experiences in Helsinki. Business type reflects whether the location has a sole focus on beverages, what type of beverages and whether they also provide food. “Distilled Beverage Product” section was used to specify notable qualities and experience of the distilled beverage products offered by the locations. “Notable Characteristics” allowed to note down any particularly interesting points that were present about the locations. “Sustainability” was made into a separate column to collect information about the overall presence of sustainable actions among the locations. Lastly “Other” section was mainly used to collect the web addresses of the locations or any points of information that were good to know but did not fit in any other section (appendix 1).

Table 2. The observation table

| Location | Business type | Distilled beverage product | Notable Characteristics | Sustainability | Other |
|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| | | | | | |

All together the process of data collection took up about 25 hours total with observations taking place from 20th of July up until 30th of August. Overall, the author spent most of their time actively observing or noting down leads about relevant locations that they would then look up online and conduct a thorough investigation of the online presence available. With the information flow being

much faster and more dynamic nowadays, observation is often seen as a straightforward and dependable method to get relevant results (Alenezi 2020, 40-41.)

3.2.2 Netnography

In addition to the observations netnography study was also applied to compile an adequate understanding of what do the visitors of the locations enjoy and recommend. This is a qualitative data collection method that focuses on the online presence of people that form various online communities, via this method one can gain insight and understanding of the said online communities (Heinonen and Medberg 2018).

That is especially when it comes to using the Google search engine it will often also provide the relevant reviews based on the search terms; while conducting online observations the author then had a chance to cross-reference the reviews and recommendations left by the visitors to do one of the following: to identify a point of interest that is not mentioned by the business on their webpages but that is attractive to their visitors or to confirm the points of interest observed on the main pages of the locations.

Lastly via observing the netnography that is to gain the understanding of the community of the people that frequent the locations, their opinions and feelings about different locations; the information observed was used as a filter for relevancy and quality control based on how highly the visitors rated the various locations (Heinonen and Medberg 2018).

For this method the author did spend an additional up to 5 hours of work; the time spent was significantly shorter due to a relevancy filtering of the reviews and feedback that the author was looking at. Most of the locations have seasonal offerings or at the very least frequently changing menus. Hence to gain most relevant insight the author set a cut-off limit of 1 year; the author then was able to access most up-to-date information that complimented the findings made via non-participant observation in a relevant way.

3.3 Define: Data analysis and route planning

The defining stage in the Design thinking process reflects the process of analysing the data collecting and often identifying a specific problem. In the context of this thesis the problem is rather represented by the challenge of identifying what is the Distilled beverage scene is like in Helsinki and how to represent it. To achieve that the author can identify the characteristics of the distilled beverage scene in Helsinki via analysing the collected data.

To conduct a proper analysis of the gathered data first step was to revisit the main objectives of this thesis. The main objective is to create a Food route focused on Distilling experiences in Helsinki, while the sub-objectives are as follows:

Table 2. Sub objectives of the thesis

| |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located and Identified locations represent the distilling beverage culture in Helsinki. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The locations chosen are coherent with one of the core themes of the 2020-2028 Marketing strategy of Hungry for Finland |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The route showcases and highlights the variety of the distilled beverage experiences in Helsinki |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The route concept's visualization helps represent the image of Helsinki's local distilled beverage experiences. |

An observation table was built (appendix 1) to make sure there is a cohesive thematic connection between the locations as well as to help identify core relevant experiences that are offered by the locations. The observation table was used as a preliminary sorting filter. The geographical limitation was the municipal borders of the central Helsinki region. The “Cool and creative” core marketing theme of Hungry for Finland allowed to observe the thematic consistency across the locations, lastly a noticeable variety in offered experiences was noted.

3.3.1 Data analysis

The method of qualitative data analysis that was applied by the author was the thematic content analyses (TCA). The main objective of the qualitative content analysis is to generate a precise written description of the researched topic. TCA entails observing the collected qualitative data, identifying common points or patterns and then summarising them as themes (Anderson 1997).

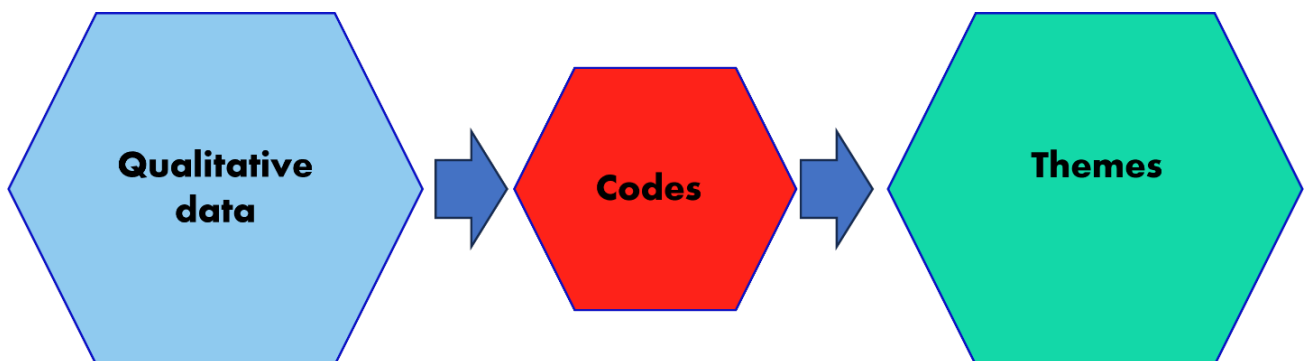


Figure 8. The process of Thematic Content Analyses (Anderson 1997)

The intermittent stage in the TCA that consists of identifying the codes or labels (Anderson 1997). As mentioned earlier some preliminary sorting of the data took place at the same time as it was getting collected, hence that stage reflected the process of identifying the very codes first. Then, the author was able to further group locations in a thematic connection to each other based on the experiences they provide. The total number of chosen locations is 19 with 2 seasonal pop-ups/festival experiences that may have a varying location. As per the variety of the experiences offered it is possible to sort out the data even further as follows:

The most convenient way of sorting out the route proved to be by capturing the location itself as well as the characteristics of the experience they provide. For this particular stage the author utilized the concepts of realms of experience, to help identify separate types of locations ways in which they engage their visitors.

Distillery (production) experiences, entails these are locations that either are connected to or somehow show the production side of the making of the distilled beverages. These activities are often engaging the visitors in the educational experiences, as they learn about the techniques and processes of distilling. They are often immersive as the very locations are specific to the practice of distilling and the visitors get to be fully surrounded by it. On top of that, to maintain engagement and overall positive experience of the visitors entertaining elements are blended in.

Tastings experiences, locations that offer the very experience of tasting particular distilled products. These experiences fall under the educational category quite directly. The action of engaging visitors' senses, often more than just their taste is by the very definition an act of active participation in the experience; combined with the environmental absorption of the visitors, tastings can be said to be a well-rounded educational experience.

Speakeasy (ambience and aesthetics) experience, locations that offer an escapist and heavily thematic aesthetic environment to enhance the very experience of the location and their products. These locations have immersive environments, that is the visitors often passively engage with it by observing and maybe taking a picture or two. Nevertheless, some location balance the aesthetic appeal with and escapist engagement. That is, they develop house rules such as "no phones" or "passwords" and small actions that allow the visitors to engage with the environments that they are in.

Specialty in a type of distilled product (often whiskey or gin), locations that have dedicated themselves to working with a particular type of distilled product. Especially popular are Rum, Whiskey or Gin. These locations again provide balanced Edutainment experiences. Their particular

appeal centres around their particular specialisation in a type of distilled product and what can be made with it.

Cocktail school experience; educational experiences that allow the visitors to develop their skill-set. Mixology in particular tends to have a dedicated following of casual enjoyers who appreciate the opportunities to learn from professionals. Hence these experiences are actively engaging for the attendees. On top of that different locations rely on their environments to enhance and personalise such experiences.

Bartenders' Choice Award winners or picks; such organisations as BCA are a result of tight collaboration as well as the interest in developing, finding and sharing high-quality experiences. Hence, they do provide a certain authority in this field and hearing their suggestions and thoughts would be relevant for many visitors.

Sustainability and Responsibility experiences; It was observed that many locations do already include sustainable practices in either business models or product development, this part is dedicated to locations that have a very direct and global dedication to sustainability. Hence allowing for the visitors to subtly engage in educational experiences, as often the locations are very proud to share about their practices as well as their skills.

Seasonal happenings; events that come and go, hence it is important that those potentially interested in them get to hear about these events early on. These happening often have varying locations or times of opening. It is fair to say that these are not often permanent visitation recommendations, they still have a potential to enrich the visitors' experience of the route.

3.3.2 Results overview

19 locations with 2 seasonal events. The alignment with the Cool & Creative theme carries through the variety of the offered experiences as well as the stories that are told by the people behind the distinct locations. Overall, the core characteristics of the locations can be described as follows: **Experimental passion projects that are built of friendship a mutual appreciation of the profession as well as the world of distilled beverages.**

3.4 Ideate and Prototype: Shaping the route

In the following chapter the very process of making the visual representation of the route will be discussed. The choice was made to create a mock-up of a website page that would house the

route as well as some examples of supporting pages on a social media platform. In the ideation stage the author considered viable options for the appearance of the route, the construction of the itinerary as well as the overall appearance of the final product.

From the very process of conducting the observations the author noticed that while the “My Helsinki” web page tends to be the core source of information about a variety of happenings in Helsinki, it does lack depth and character when it comes to Distilled beverage experiences. The website at the time of observation had minimal information available about locations, as well as the variety of the scene was not very visible. Thus, the author realised that this allows for a great opportunity to visually develop this route product as a part of the marketing presence of “My Helsinki”.

The route itself was decided to be “free form” that is rather than having a strict dictated path, it aims to give an opportunity to the visitor to construct a most appealing program. To allow for such freedom the author noted that a well-structured filtering system should be available on the website. Having a filtering system would also allow to introduce locations that happen to have experiences that fall under more than one thematic category, for example, when it comes to Sustainability it is consistently present throughout various locations. Nevertheless, there are locations that have their whole business processes and concepts created with a sole focus on sustainability, which, in turn is deserving of being represented under a separate category.

In addition to the prementioned ideas the author realised that Instagram has a “Guides” feature that could come in handy. Particularly the Bartenders ‘Choice Awards utilises the Guides feature quite effectively as it allows to stay on one platform yet still gather the interesting insights from BCA as well as their recommendations.

Lastly the observations made by the author solidified the visual appearance and location of the route as part of an existing online page, as often having separate pages or even pdf’s tends to complicate the overall flow of communication. Thus, a website of a reliable and respected body, “My Helsinki”, would provide the most favourable location. Having made that decision author proceeded to creating a visual prototype of the route.

The prototyping stage in Design thinking process often refers to the process of not only making the first functional draft of a product or a concept, but often also testing of it. In the context of this thesis the author put the main focus on the very visualisation of the final concept of the product. This decision was influenced by several factors, that is the time constraint as well as the overall level of the development work of the thesis, that is the bachelor level. Hence, the visualisation is intended

to communicate the very potential of the Distilled beverage route product and how it could be incorporated into an existing tourism service.

For building of the prototype the Figma program was chosen as it provides a variety of tools that can be used to create true-to-life mock-ups of digital spaces. The author referenced the “My Helsinki” website and colour scheme to allow for immersive understanding of the route concept as well as communication style.

4 Distilling and Eating experiences in Helsinki route: “Drinks in HEL”

In the following chapter the Distilled Beverage Experience route will be described. The core location for the route is intended to be the My Helsinki website, as it is the main reference location online that tends to represent recent and relevant information about tourism experiences in Helsinki. In addition to that governmental websites often are one of the initial platforms that the tourists refer to for trusted information. Hence, such websites play an important role in the shaping of an impression about the destination (Horng, Tsai 2010). The full visual of the route can be found in the attached appendix (appendix 2) or via accessing the digital visual via the QR-code in Figure 9. for the reader’s convenience they are welcome to choose how to view this route.

The author will discuss element by element the contents of the route as it is presented on the mock-up. The author chose to detail their choices in such manner due to the fact that often the webpages are quite minimal with the amount of information they provide, so that the visitors rather follow through to the main page of the location. Hence as presented on the mock-up accessible via a QR-code in Figure 9 or a link (appendix 2) the very webpage of the route is meant to provide a summary of the locations and variety of the experiences available.



Figure 9. QR code link to the mock-up of the prototype

The Distilled Beverage scene in Helsinki is young, unapologetically authentic, and highly experimental. It is driven by the variety of personal experiences and stories that are being shared through the very craft of Distilling, Bartending and the art off Mixology. While Finland does have an intriguing history with the very process of Distilling, the contemporary scene is more so focused on appreciation of flavours, colours and people that use their craft to express themselves and to create enjoyable moments for the strangers that so quickly become familiar.

4.1 Route layout

The route itself will not have a set direction or order in which the visitor would need to visit the locations. With the overall accessibility of the internet and with many visitors relying on accessible online information the route will be mainly digital. On top of that such delivery of the route is meant to encourage the visitors to discover the places at their own pace, ultimately following their own personal experience; such route also stays consistent with how Ward-Perkins highlights that “routes” are what gets discovered while the “trails” get followed. (Ward-Perkins, Beckmann, and Jackie Ellis, 2020).

So as not to let the visitor wonder about how long and far they would need to travel the route does include a map with the overall collection of the locations, Figure 10. The locations ultimately are dispersed across the Central Helsinki, having locations in Kluuvi, Punavuori, Ruohalahti, Katajanokka, and Vallila. Altogether the map should allow the visitor to access the services of of Helsinki’s public transportation as most of the locations are visibly within a walking distance of each other, or very close to a tram stop.

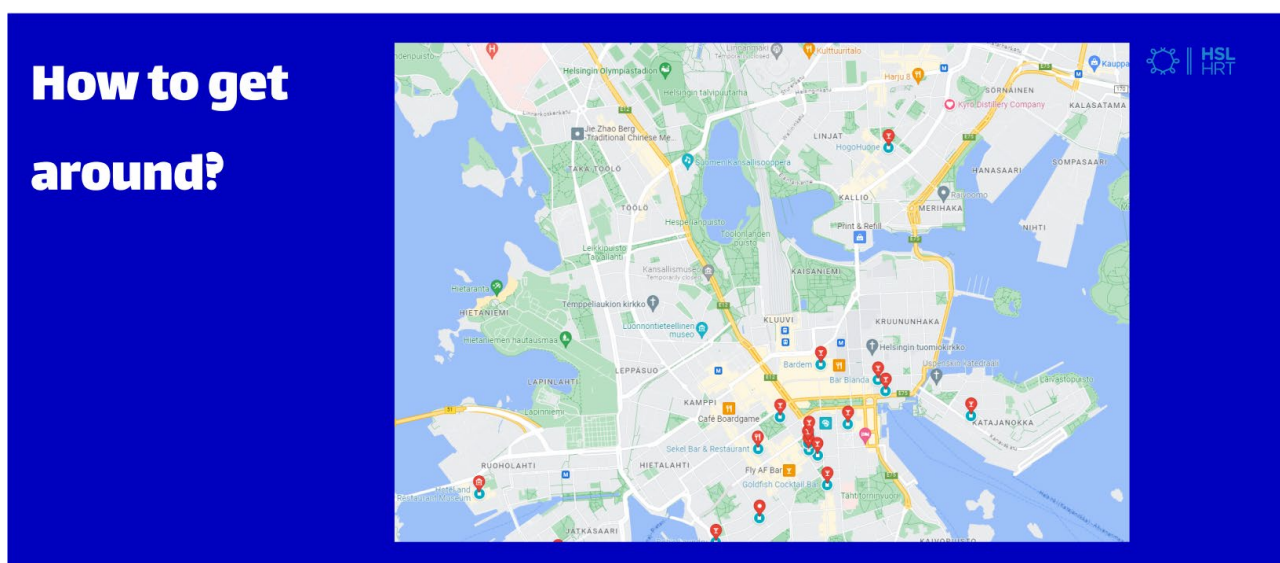


Figure 10. The geographical route visualisation

As mentioned earlier the route’s appearance takes on the form of a page that is a part of the “My Helsinki” website (Appendix 2). The very geographical locations of all of the locations can be found at the bottom of the page while throughout the page the locations are sorted in a form of thematised list with categories correlating to the most notable characteristics of the locations. Each section is a hyperlink to a separate page that has a comprehensive introduction of the section as well as descriptions of the locations that are within that category.

On the top of the page the seasonal event announcements are presented, this is done in such a way due to the overall time sensitivity of such events, it is worth capturing the attention of the potential visitor as early as possible to allow them to realise whether they will have time to visit the experience, or if they can plan ahead for potentially next year.

Seasonal happenings. These events would not be present on the website at all times, hence there is only one of these locations mentioned on the route (Appendix 1). The following is the breakdown of the locations at their descriptions in the respective tab Table 3.

Table 3. Seasonal happenings tab contents

| |
|--|
| Helsinki Drink festival: Yearly event with a vast variety of big and small companies displaying their best creations. Current iteration Helsinki drink Whiskey Festival |
| Oldman and the Si: Cocktail bar with a seasonal location on the water near the old market square. |

After the seasonal experiences tab the page is structured in the following order:

“Distilling: See and Taste.” The visitors are offered a chance to experience the very process of Distilling via a variety of senses. Table 4. Details the locations that would be fitting to be included in this section.

Table 4.” Distilling: See and Taste” tab contents

| |
|---|
| Helsinki Distilling Company Distillery. Located in the Teurastamo HDC always welcomes new visitors for some drinks from their Tislaamo bar and food from their restaurant or for a tour around their distillery, with some tastings of course. |
| Loilo Rooftop and Konepaja Distilling Co. Finland’s smallest distillery that supplies not only drinks, but also a view! |
| Teerenpeli, while their primary location in Lahti, they bring the essence of this distilling process with them to Kamppi. |

“(not so) Best Kept Secret: Ambiance and entourage” section recommendation is detailed in Table 5. These locations are often intended to be hidden hence the route itself may not need to mention the address of the locations. It is the excitement of the discovery that the route aims to preserve hence enticing the reader with the ambient descriptions of the locations.

Table 5. “(not so) Best Kept Secret: Ambiance and entourage” tab contents”

| |
|--|
| Trilly and Chadwick , this detective agency takes their job very seriously and with accurate passion. Those who want to find it and solve a case or two shall be rewarded with a remarkable personal investigation in the world of spirits. |
| Chihuahua Julep , with dimmed lights, quiet conversations, several best cocktail awards and not a phone in sight your evening is guaranteed to be pleasant at this classy cocktail bar that is hiding in plain sight. |
| Bob’s laundry , with this fun burst of colour it becomes apparent that sometimes not even trying to hide can make a surprise even more unexpected! |

“Specialties”: Locations with particular specialisation in a type of distilled product. While some locations can be repeated due to the specialty of their operation such as the Loiloi and Konepaja Distilling Co. Table 6. Shows the non repetitive locations mentioned in the section (appendix 2).

Table 6:” “Specialties” tab contents

| |
|---|
| Hogo Huone , they have everything rum. If you have a favourite, they can make it or get you to find one from their delicately crafted menu. |
| HDC Whiskey cellar , an experience of exercising visitors’ sense of taste and smell and well as engaging in educational exchange with professionals all about whiskey. |
| Beakey Basterd &Co , bringing a bit of the Mediterranean they are serving up some tasty food and a probably widest selection of vermouths and amaro’s. |

“High Praise” Bartenders’ Choice Award winners/picks are detailed in Table 7. The section is meant to attract the viewers’ attention towards the resources provided by the Bartenders Choice Awards, hence this tab could be cycling through a more limited amount of options than mentioned by BCA over all. On top of that this section may require to be updated regularly as it presents particularly the locations that have received an award or mentions in the current year (appendix 2).

Table 7. “High Praise” tab contents

| |
|---|
| Goldfish , high class cocktails from highly awarded professionals! |
|---|

| |
|---|
| Runar , often a hotel cocktail bar is known by the name of the Hotel. This one is known by their own name and a few appraisals from BCA. |
| Bar Mate , seasonal drinks on tap accompanied by small bites, that is the small things in life that make it that much better. |

The last section is a compilation of overall interesting, but miscellaneous offers that might not always be on visitors plans to visit right away; with a “This and that” section it is possible give exposure to experiences outside of the expectations of the visitors.

Cocktail school experience is a fairly direct section as shown in Table 8. Often these locations rather encourage the experience to be booked separately. Nevertheless, the social media pages of the locations can be references for a more accurate representation of the offer; occasionally the locations arrange “open doors” experiences fore those eager to learn.

Table 8. “Cocktail school experience” tab contents

| |
|---|
| Grotesk , an established classic of the scene in central Helsinki. They welcome you to share their knowledge and passion with you. |
| Liberty or death (Son of a punch locations), notoriously conceptual, fun, and entertaining locations are all available for cocktail class experiences. |

Sustainability and Responsibility (Ingredients/practises/low waste), while this section has been identified as a unique theme, with the consideration for the visitors’ points of interest the suggestion is rather to carry over the existing practice on the “My Helsinki” website, that is to have a “mark” (at the moment it is a green heart) that reflects the location’s sustainable practices Table 9.

Table 9. The locations to be marked with the “Sustainability and Responsibility” mark

| |
|--|
| Blanda , seasonality, sustainability and quality are the cornerstones of this restaurant and bar. Every item not only tells a story but radiates passion and dedication to the sustainable existence. |
| Badger & Co , sustainable practices, great pitas, and quality cocktails. |
| Wintergarden Hotel St. George , zero-waste cocktail menu shows off the creativity and dedication of the mixologists at St. George. |
| Kaska , casual spirits with lower alcohol percentage. Acting towards a more responsible future. |

Finally, a classic visit to a museum has never been out of place, especially when the specialization of the museum is so fitting Table 10. This particular section may contain more information about the current exhibition s and events happening particularly in the Hotel and Restaurant history museum.

Table 10. The “Museum experience” tab contents

Hotel and Restaurant history museum, for those wishing to get a glimpse of the past tradition.

4.2 Technical elements of the route appearance

Lastly about the technical elements of the website. While during the analysis phase the core themes were identified and then transformed into the sections of the route, it is important to note that the locations often can have products on offer that can fall under more than one category. Hence a filtering system such as shown in Figure 10. The filtering categories would reflect the products offered that are not necessarily obvious at the first glance at the locations; Food and drinks implies the availability of a food menu. BCA Awards have been given to several locations that currently were sorted into separate categories, hence, to acknowledge their achievement it is best to have a fitting label. Lastly the categories can refer to the distilled beverages the locations specialise in or have a wide range of.

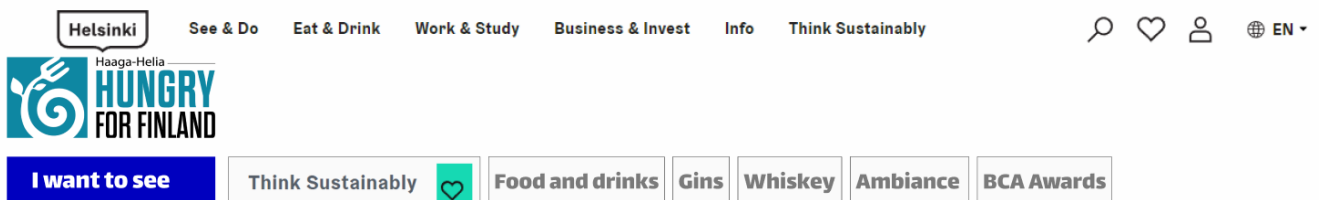


Figure 11. Filtering system

Lastly the locations geographical locations can be found at the very bottom of the page as a web plugin to Google Maps to provide a general understanding of where the locations are around Helsinki (appendix 1). Since the route does not intend to lead the visitor from location to location in a strict manner the map provided can help realise that most of the locations are located in the center within an easy reach of the Central Railway Station. In addition to that, in the right top corner of the map section a link to hsl app would be included to encourage the visitor to test out the well operating public transportation connections of Helsinki.

5 Reflection, discussion, and personal takeaways

The following chapter covers the points up for discussion that were raised in the process of this thesis as well as personal takeaways and conclusions made by the author. The author will provide their reflection and evaluation of the process of writhing this thesis starting from the initial beginning up until the very creation of the route product.

Throughout this thesis the main objective that has been followed was as follows: “create a food tourism route focused on Distilled beverages’ experiences in Helsinki”. The author believes to have successfully developed a product that meets the set objective. As clarified previously beverage Tourism belongs to the field of food tourism as a complementing component but has a possibility to exist on its own especially with prominent ties to the overall ties to the culture of a country. The resulting product includes a variety of locations that have garnered recognisable attention from the locals of Helsinki and on top of that often have food offering available, nevertheless it is the beverages that maintain the core popularity of the locations.

The main objective was supported by several sub objectives that can be summarised as follows: “to locate and identify locations that represent the distilled beverage culture in Helsinki”; the author has analysed the response of the community of the people that frequent the locations so as to determine the significance of the locations to the local culture. The author believes to be successful in achieving this objective since the decisions were made based on the very responses of the locals. Hence, the results reflect the very culture around distilled beverages in Helsinki specifically.

As per the sub-objective “to collect locations that are coherent with one of the core themes of the 2020-2028 marketing strategy of Hungry for Finland”, The author believes to have created a product that encapsulates well the “Cool and Creative” marketing theme of the Hungry for Finland’ “Summary of Food Finnish Food Tourism Strategy 2020–2028”. While the chosen theme “Cool and Creative” may be qualified as quite subjective, the author paid close attention to the character of the locations that were noticeably unique and with strong concepts behind their businesses.

Lastly, “to create a route that showcases and highlights the variety of the distilled beverage experiences in Helsinki”. Ultimately as per author’s personal opinion, the resulting food route product across the distilled beverage experiences is successful in capturing the essence of the distilled beverage culture of Helsinki and the varied experiences it offers. The experiences offered are all representative of the individuality of the locations that provide them, hence while some concepts may be similar the very products remain authentic and prominently individual.

On top of that it is fair to mention that while Finland has quite unique history with distilling as a practice; the very scene of distilled beverage businesses is quite young, hence it does not rely on strict tradition, hence each location gets to establish their own small culture and bring their creative visions to life. In addition to that, close attention was paid to the current state of main tourism information channels, that is the My Helsinki website as well as the Hungry for Finland resources so as to create a concept that would be visibly coherent with the tone and appearance of the said channels.

Already during the planning of the thesis, it was fairly noticeable that the target customer group may pose quite a challenge to identify since the food tourism product was being created from scratch. The Visit Finland potential, position, and segmentation study provided a comprehensive understanding of the unique position of Finland as the potential it holds for particularly tourists interested in food tourism.

5.1 Further development

One of the initial motivations behind taking up this thesis topic was the understanding that there are not many similar experience products being offered in Finland at the moment, or even overall in the Nordic sector. Brewing has a recognisable following and some known trail products such as running clubs or even cycle-routes. Distilling route experiences tend to, however, mainly exist in tourists' minds in strong connections with particular cultures that have an established and long history with distilled beverages. Hence the following section will contain some of the ideas author would like to share in regard to further developing this product.

With overall increase in the interest in responsible enjoyment of alcohol or even making the switch to non-alcoholic beverages, a counterpart route could be developed that rather focuses on mocktails and low alcohol distilled beverages. It would allow to invite a slightly different customer base while also highlighting the current innovation and creativity of Helsinki in the world of non-alcoholic drinks.

Another perspective that could be explored further is the historical one. Back during the stages of the Research and Development course the scope included Espoo and Vantaa with a few of the locations providing experiences centred around the history of Distilling as a practice in Finland and the times of Prohibition. A route with a historical focus could be highly thematised and have a prominent level of cohesion across the locations.

Lastly author noticed that there is a possibility to make a route across Finland with a focus on the very process of Distilling. This idea was among some of the initial ideas for this route, however,

they had to be left for the development recommendations due to the potential of becoming too broad geographically. Nevertheless, the author believes with a clear focus on Distilling as the very process of producing alcoholic beverages; Finland has a strong potential for an exciting and enticing route through Finland. There are several Distilling factories across Finland that offer visits and tours on their premise while also are quite evenly spread throughout the regions of Finland meaning a route that includes them all has a possibility to encourage cross-municipal collaboration and to introduce more tourism demand to regions that have not had the chance to enjoy that much of it yet.

Ultimately, of course, the author hopes to see the route to be used if not in its full concept, then at least as a recommendation or a pilot for enhancing the web pages of My Helsinki. It has potential to be utilised as a data collection tool about the interests of the visitors of the webpages and whether the interface choices as well as thematic sorting of the route could be supported by the real-life data.

5.2 Personal takeaways

Looking back at the plan that was created back in May '23 the author does want to admit that certain parts of the process were not, of course, as linear, or straight forward as they seemed during the planning stage. Nevertheless, with supportive feedback from the supervisor, who also was the representative of the commissioning party, it was always possible to find a solution to questions or setbacks that would arise.

Initially the author had set out to create a functional prototype that would be possible to put to test. It was, however, a fair reminder from the advisor that that would greatly increase the workload as well as go beyond the overall level of the thesis-type work. Hence adjustments were made to focus specifically on the city of Helsinki, which also established the geographical limitations.

In addition to that it was initially a bit hard to decide as to what could be a fitting data collection method. Interviews were considered to be the original source of the information, while the business owners would be the interviewees. While exciting and quite inspired idea it did become apparent that then the focus of the thesis would shift again and most likely the author would be faced with a lot of time related setbacks when it comes to organising interviews and analysing the data.

Ultimately this thesis work was a terrific opportunity for the author to exercise their personal management skills as they took care of planning and carrying out the data collection as well as the very design process of creating a concept and a prototype of the route. Throughout this work the author

exercised their knowledge and experience gathered throughout their studies at Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences.

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Attachments/Appendix

Appendix 1. Observation table

| Location | Business type | Distilled beverage product | Notable Characteristics | Sustainability | Other (or links) |
|---|--|--|--|---------------------------|---|
| Old man and the Si | Cocktail bar | Cocktails and liquor | Seasonal location in one of the wooden ships in Kruununhaka | Materials | https://www.instagram.com/old-man.helsinki/ |
| Helsinki Drinks Festival | Event | Many options depends on the participants | Happens in spring and now also in autumn as the Whiskey edition | | https://www.helsinkidrinkfestival.fi/en/home-en |
| Loiloi and Konepaja Distilling Co <i>Konepajankuja 5 6th Floor, 00510 Helsinki</i> | Restaurant and cocktail bar | Gin | Smallest commercial distillery in Northern Europe | Ingredients | Gin Distillery Konepaja Distilling Co. Helsinki |
| Helsinki Distilling Company <i>Työpajankatu 2a R3, 00580 Helsinki</i> | Varying: Production plant and F&B restaurant with a cocktail bar | Gin, Whiskey, Akvavit | One of the older distilleries to open in the industrial heart of Helsinki in '00 | Materials and Ingredients | Welcome to the The Helsinki Distilling Company hdco.fi |
| Teerenpeli | Restaurant and bar | Whiskey, gin, longdrinks | While main location is in Lahti they have a brewing production | | Teerenpeli > fi > Etusivu |

| | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|---|--|---|
| <i>Olavinkatu 2, 00100 Helsinki</i> | | | setup in the restaurant and serve their distilled products on the menu | | |
| Trillby & Chadwick <i>00170 Helsinki</i> | Speak-easy cocktail bar | Cocktails and liquor | Heavily thematised: Aesthetic and Escapist | | https://sonofapunch.com/fi/ravintolat/trillby-chadwick/ |
| Liberty or death <i>Erottajankatu 5, 00130 Helsinki</i> | Cocktail bar | Cocktail class | Aesthetic and Escapist appeal | ingredients | Belongs to Son of a punch |
| Grotesk <i>Ludviginkatu 10, 00130 Helsinki</i> | Restaurant, cocktail bar and events | Cocktail class | One of the older well established locations with a strong community following | | https://www.grotesk.fi/ |
| Chihuahua Julep <i>Erottajankatu 9, 00130 Helsinki</i> | Cocktail bar | BCA awarded Cocktails | Numerous BCA awards and aesthetic appeal | Ingredients | http://www.chihuahuajulep.fi/ |
| Bob's laundry <i>Merimiehenkatu 40</i> | Speak-easy Cocktail bar | Cocktails and liquor | Highly thematise (aesthetic and Escapist) | | Son of a punch location |
| Blanda <i>Aleksanterinkatu 22, 00170 Helsinki</i> | Restaurant and cocktail bar | Food and Beverages | Sustainability is at the forefront of all of the practices | Seasonal menu and climate conscious products | https://blanda.fi/#blanda-drinks |

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Badger & Co <i>Korkeavuorenkatu 25, 00130 Helsinki</i> | Restaurant and cocktail bar | Food and Beverages (pitas and drinks) | Sustainability is at the forefront of all of the practices, pet friendly | Sustainable operation practices | https://www.badgerbar.fi/ |
| Wintergarden <i>Yrjönkatu 13, 00120 Helsinki</i> | Hotel cocktail bar | Extensive 0-waste cocktail menu | High-class cocktail experiences | Sustainability as part of the product production | St George winter garden |
| Kaska <i>Albertinkatu 10, 00150 Helsinki</i> | Producer and distributor of low alcohol beverages | Low-alcohol spirits and drinks | They produce and distribute their own product | Responsible alcohol consumption as part of sustainability efforts | https://kaskadrinks.com/ |
| HDC whiskey cellar <i>Vanha talvitie 16 r21, 00580 Helsinki</i> | Whiskey focused experiences | Whiskey tastings/tours/events | Whiskey specialisation | | Helsinki distillery Co. owned |
| HogoHuone <i>Viides linja 7, 00530 Helsinki</i> | Cocktail bar | Rum cocktails | Rum as the focal point of all of the menu offerings | Small scale operation | https://linktr.ee/hogohuone |
| Goldfish <i>Korkeavuorenkatu 21, 00130 Helsinki</i> | Cocktail bar | Cocktails and Liqors | BCA Awards '23 | | https://www.goldfish.fi/ |
| Runar | Hotel Cocktail bar | Cocktails and Liqors | BCA Awards '23 | | https://www.runar.fi/#astory |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|---|
| <i>Fabianinkatu 6, 00130 Hel- sinki</i> | | | | | |
| Beakey Basterd <i>Ankkurikatu 5, 00160 Hel- sinki</i> | Restau- rant and Cocktail bar | Vermouths and Averno's (Med- iterranean foods) | BCA Awards '23 | | https://www.beakybasterd.fi/ruoka.html |
| Bar Mate <i>Pieni Roober- tinkatu 9, 00130 Hel- sinki</i> | Cocktail bar | Cocktails on tap | BCA Awards '23 Bears a lik- ing to a tap- roo but with cocktails on tap instead of beer | | https://barmate.fi/ |
| Hotelli & Ravintola museo <i>Kaapeliaukio 3, G-porras, 00180 Hel- sinki</i> | Museum | Educational perspective | Edutainment sphere of experience with a focus on distilled beverages | | http://www.hotelliaravintolamuseo.fi/ |

Appendix 2 “Drinks in HEL” A food tourism route across the distilled beverage experiences in Helsinki

The route is also accessible via a link: <https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:4bf5071b-7aba-3834-9eea-4d82f9c6746c>

Helsinki See & Do Eat & Drink Work & Study Business & Invest Info Think Sustainably

Haaga-Helia HUNGRY FOR FINLAND

I want to see Think Sustainably Food and drinks Gins Whiskey Ambiance BCA Awards

Drinks in HEL? there's plenty!

In Season

<https://www.helsinkiDrinkFestival.fi/>

HELSINKI DRINK FESTIVAL
WHISKEY EDITION
HELSINKI DRINK FESTIVAL

TAPAHTUMATALO
BANK 3.-4.11.2023
PE 16-23 ja LA 15-23

OSTA LIPUT

Distilling: See and Taste



Located in the Teurastamo HDC always welcomes new visitors for some drinks from their Tislaamo bar and food from their restaurant or for a tour around their distillery, with some tastings of course



Finland's smallest distillery that supplies not only drinks, but also a view! Their main specialty is Gin and New world Asian cuisine.



While their primary location in Lahti, they bring the essence of this distilling process with them to Kamppi.

(not so)Best Kept Secret: Ambiance and Entourage



<https://sonofapunch.com/en/ravintolat/trilby-chadwick-english/>

This detective agency takes their job very seriously and with accurate passion. Those who want to find it and solve a case or two shall be rewarded with a remarkable personal investigation in the world of spirits.



<https://www.chihuahuajulep.fi/>

With dimmed lights, quiet conversations, several best cocktail awards and not a phone in sight your evening is guaranteed to be pleasant at this classy cocktail bar that is hiding in plain sight.



<https://www.instagram.com/bobsiaundrybar/>

Looking this fun burst of color it becomes apparent that sometimes not even trying to hide can make a surprise even more unexpected!

Specialties



<https://www.hogohuone.com/>

Rum

Hogo Huone, they have everything rum. If you have a favourite, they can make it or get you to find one from their delicately crafted menu.



<https://hdco.fi/whiskey-cellar/>

Whiskey

HDC Whiskey cellar, an experience of exercising visitors sense of taste and smell and well as engaging in educational exchange with professionals all about whiskey.



<https://www.konepaja.stilling.>

Gin

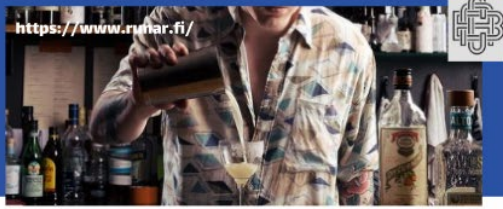
Loilo Gin is the center of the operations in Loilo Rooftop Restaurant



<https://www.beakeybasterd.fi/>

Missing the Mediterranean? **Beakey Basterd & Co**, bringing a bit of the Mediterranean they are serving up some tasty food and a probably widest selection of vermouths and amaro's.

High Praise (Bartenders' Choice Awards)



Sustainability at the forefront of Creativity



A bit of this and that



Cocktail class



How to get around?

