

Vegan travel- The ways how vegan diet influences travel experience.

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<p>Following a certain diet may create challenges when dining out, let alone when travelling to another country, where language barriers and cultural differences can set certain difficulties. Veganism is ideology based diet in which a person excludes all the animalia based products from the diet. The most common reason for veganism is animal rights, however also health, nature and other reasons are likely.</p> <p>This thesis has been commissioned by Vegaaniliitto ry (Finnish Vegan Society) and is aiming to gather information on the possible limitations that vegan diet sets for the traveller. Furthermore the aim of this thesis is to gain better understanding on which aspects vegan diet influences on individual's personal travel experiences.</p> <p>The chosen research method in this reseach based thesis is qualitative research and was conducted in a form of an interview. During April 2013 ten vegans were interviewed about their personal views and experiences on how veganism has influenced on their personal travel experience.</p> <p>The theoretical framework opens up the concepts of veganism and vegetarianism and introduces the history of these diets. Furthermore the theoretical framework represents the factors that have an effect on one's dietary habits and takes a look into the dietary habits in different cultures.</p> <p>The results represents the information section by section, according to the interview form. According to the results the travel motivators and the type of the travel impacts the attitudes towards the food habits while traveling. For vegan culinary tourists the quality of the food has bigger impact on the travel experience than for those with other travel motivators. Amongst all the respondents the impact on travel experience was mostly seen more as an positive issue rather than negative. Majority of the respondents did not feel that their diet influences on getting to know a culture of the destination.</p>	
<p>Keywords veganism, vegetarianism, diet, tourism, culture</p>	

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1 Introduction

Vegan tourists often come across difficulties during their travels. This is an issue that may not occur to people whose diet does not have many limitations. Furthermore when certain food products have been taken out from person's diet it can cause challenges in finding proper food while travelling. Meat, milk and eggs are products that vegans avoid. These can be difficult to replace in cultures where they are acting a big role in the cooking. This thesis aims to gain a deeper understanding on how veganism influences travel experience.

In Finland warm summer offers a possibility to harvest variety of different vegetables and international trade allows stores to offer consumers fresh products during the cold winters. Many well-equipped grocery stores and organic shops have various beans, which for person following meatless diet, are important sources of protein (Heinänen 2003, 80-81.) These factors make following vegan diet rather easy in Finland, but whether this is, from Finnish vegan tourists' perspective, the case in other cultures is still a question mark.

There is no specific data to be found on amount of vegans in Finland. According to Vegaaniliitto in the beginning of 2013 there were 761 registered members, from which 8 members were living abroad in the beginning of year 2013 (Vegaaniliitto). It cannot be assumed that all of the Finnish vegans are registered members of Vegaaniliitto, however it is the only existing source of any estimation on the amount of vegans in Finland.

When taking a look at the activity on travelling abroad among the Finns it is noted that the number of the trips has increased in last years. In year 2010 Finnish residents made over 3 million overnight trips abroad. Whereas the majority of the trips are leisure trips, also over 1 million business trips were made in 2010 (Mek 13.3.2013.) When looking at these numbers it can be assumed there is high possibility in the growth of different tourist groups, including vegan tourists.

Estonia continuing to stay in the lead as the most popular destination, also the long distance destinations has started to raise their popularity. For example Thailand is number 9 on the list (Mek 29.4.2013.) Therefore it can be assumed that the interest for the long distance destinations is increasing and people tend also to visit destinations that are further from their own culture. This adduces the cultural differences, including food culture.

This thesis has been commissioned by Vegaaniliitto ry (Finnish Vegan Society) and is aiming to gather more information on the limitations that the vegan diet sets for the traveller. Furthermore the aim of this thesis is to gain a better understanding on which aspects vegan diet influences on individual's personal travel experiences.

The Finnish Vegan Society is hereby referred as Vegaaniliitto throughout this thesis.

There has been lots of research conducted in order to clarify the health issues of veganism but the issue of the vegan diet impacting on the cultural aspects of an experience is not widely studied and therefore makes this research justifiable.

The research includes several research questions, aiming to be answered by collection of primary data, in this case interview, and the secondary data, that has been collected by studying existing literature in the field of nutrition and the cultural influence of the food and diets. The first research question is "In which ways does following a vegan diet influence on travel experience". In order to answer the question it is important to open up the concepts that it connotes. Subchapter 2.1.2 takes a deeper insight on terms "veganism" and "vegetarianism" and endeavours to comprehend the reasons and principles behind the diets. In order to collect the needed background a variety of literature has been studied. To deepen the understanding of the problem and to increase knowledge in the area of the 'vegan tourism' interview is used for the primary data collection. The first question includes the different limitations and challenges that following a certain diet abroad initiates.

The additional questions "In what extent is person willing to sacrifice ones ideological beliefs when it comes to the food selection" and "What solutions have vegans come up

with in order to deal with a situation where suitable food isn't available" are aiming to resolve the ethical perspective of the food and the travel. The third question comprises furthermore the difference between various countries and continents and aims to gather information on the level of the easiness in finding vegan options in different parts of the world.

The research concentrates on experiences from the perspective of Finnish vegan travellers and their personal travel experiences in different countries and continents.

The research was executed by using a qualitative research method. By using this method the author was able to collect the experiences of individual respondents. The research is made by interviewing vegans who have been travelling in different parts of the world and the form that has been used in the interviews is semi-structured (see attachment 1).

2 Veganism

This chapter represents the history of veganism and vegetarianism, in the perspective of the whole world as well as Finland's point of view (subchapters 2.1 and 2.1.1). By studying the motivators behind vegan diet it is easier to recognize different types of vegan travellers. Although that is not the foremost purpose of this study it is an essential factor when defining a Finnish vegan traveller and therefore needs to be specified.

Furthermore this research aims to find out whether the Finnish vegan travellers find certain countries or continents easier or more challenging travel destinations from the dietary perspective. For this reason it is crucial to take a look at the dining customs in different parts of the world. Three examples have been chosen for this purpose. Those are; Asia, Europe and the USA as the cultures in these areas vary from each other significantly, and it is likely that the respondents have visited some of these areas. Cultural differences in these three chosen examples are discussed in chapters 2.3, 2.3.1, 2.3.2 and 2.3.3.

2.1 Roots of veganism

Vegetarianism may sound like a modern term but it has roots that lead thousands of years back when the idea was formed in the minds of great thinkers such as Plato and Pythagoras. But it was only at the 1800-century when the idea of meatless diet started to form in the western culture. 30rd of September 1847 in England a group of 140 people gathered together to discuss the issues of animal well-being and unwillingness to eat animal meat. This was the first meeting of a Vegetarian Society (Davis & Vesanto 2000, 1.) It was almost a hundred years later in 1944 when the Vegan society was officially established and society still continues to operate in order to promote vegan products and services.

When going back in the history to seek further information on vegetarianism and veganism there are several allegations in literature that argue where and when the vegan diet has formed. The starting point for the reflection of the issue can be set in a form of a question: "Whether man was originally herbivore or a carnivore?" - a question with

no specific answer to be found. Most likely people in the tropical areas, where a variety of fruits and vegetables were available, have been pursuing a vegetable-oriented diet and once human has colonized to the northern parts of the world it has been necessary to add meat in their diet, in order to survive the barren conditions (Streng 1994.)

According to Heinänen (2003, 9) the physiological factors support the allegation of man being an herbivore. Heinänen supports his view by bringing up the fact that human has teeth that are suitable for chopping and crushing the food. Furthermore the bowel is longer than carnivores' and the human saliva is high in alkaline when a carnivore's saliva is generally acid. All these three characteristics are typical for herbivores (Heinänen 2003, 9.)

Various authors have asserted that the roots of the veganism are in the Asia. Johansson (in Streng 1994) is one of the supporters of this perspective. Johansson has propounded that already thousands years ago in China the vegetarian products and herbs were used in the medicine. Moreover the religion has highly significant role when it comes to the discussion of vegetarianism in Asia. In Hinduism vegetarian diet is not compulsion and not all of the Hindus are vegetarians, however even the oldest writings in Hinduism prove that following a vegetarian diet has been seen as a positive matter. The oldest writings on Hinduism to be found are from four thousand years back, yet the writings that clearly support vegetarian diet appeared five hundred BC (Streng 1994.) The other main religion in the area is Buddhism, a religion that was formed in the sixth century BC and is often connected with vegetarian diet. Buddha himself was a vegetarian; however it is not certain whether vegetarianism was originally part of Buddhism. Latterly Buddhism has been distributed in to two schools of thoughts and only the Mahayana Buddhism emphasizes the importance of vegetarianism (Streng 1994.) Jainism is also an Asian religion and includes an absolute refusal of meat and also the philosophy of yoga sees eating meat ethically improper and bad for one's health (Streng 1994.)

1870-1890 when imperialism flourished in the western societies it resulted in overproduction of meat. In USA new ranchers entered into the business and the amount of

American and foreign investors increased significantly. The cattle became fatter and finer and there were 9 million head alone in Wyoming in 1886. Anyhow the success did not last for long. In 1885 and 1887 climate disasters occurred in the area, resulting many ranchers to lose their livelihood. Even though a large amount of ranchers were driven out of the business there still remained some who were able to cope regardless to the adversity (Tannahill 1988, 316- 318.) By moving in to the politics the position of farming as a growing business was able to continue. This was not only the case in the USA, but also in other countries such as Australia and New Zealand where various Farmer's Unions were formed to protect their rights. (Tannahill 1988, 316- 318). It is controversial whether these events have had an impact on formation of the vegetarian movement. Then again since the prosperous era of meat has influenced the history of food significantly it can't be entirely ignored.

In the beginning of the 20th century the vegetarianism was mainly present in the middle class. The reason for vegetarianism not spreading in the working class was mainly the income. In order to sacrifice some of the ingredients a proper income was needed; at that time the working class was suffering from extreme poverty. Those who decided to be congruent to the vegetarianism had often read oeuvre by Tolstoy and Shaw; writers who pursued the ideas of changing the world (Spencer 2000, 276.)

In the 1914 started the World War, which led to the shortage of various products. The war forced vegetarians to cope with what they had. After the war there was still no vegetarianism to be seen in the working class. However there was a rationing in the meat and increase on production of dark bread, which was seen as an important improvement among the Vegetarian Society (Spencer 2000, 278.) There had been various peace groups forming already before the war. Between the wars pacifism and vegetarianism often merged together. During the General Strike the Vegetarian Society sent out food packages to the poor, unemployed citizens. This was done without bluntly advertising the vegetarianism, but then again the packages were highly appreciated and the society knew it was the best advertisement for them (Spencer 2000, 287-288.)

During the Second World War the rationing continued in Europe, as well as in other parts of the world, and all of the society classes were forced to eat the same amount of similar food. Due to the rationing of meat many became a vegetarian and during the rationing there existed many vegetarian restaurants. Moreover many of the Government inspired restaurants offered vegetarian dishes (Spencer 2000, 291-293.) As mentioned earlier, the Vegan Society was established in 1944. According to the Chairman of Vegan Society, at the time, Donald Watson (in Spencer 2000, 293) the word 'vegan' was formed by taking the first three and the last two letters from a word vegetarian (Spencer 2000, 293.)

After the rationing, meat production increased and meat and dairy products became part of most people's everyday diet. Furthermore the increased demand led to the questionable methods in the modern farming, such as usage of hormones. In recent decades the methods have attained a wide publicity and caused the public audience to impugn the ethicality of the mass meat-production (Spencer 2000, 296-297.) Even though the ethicality of the meat production is questionable, the leading reason to become a vegetarian still seems to be health (Spencer, 2000, 303.) However these are likely to be entwined as the methods used in the farming are believed to effect on the quality of the meat (hormones, supplements, stress).

Even though the meat production seems to stand bigger than ever, it has been forecasted that the demand for the meat will deteriorate (Spencer 2000, 329.) Whether this is the case, is to be seen, anyhow vegetarianism and veganism seems to be in the state of transition.

2.1.1 Veganism in Finland

In 19th century, when the livestock was flourishing, the food in Finland tended to be heavy and greasy. At that time a lot of meat was consumed. Many of the traditional foods included fat, cheese and other animal based products. These days people in Finland do not do as much physical work as in the past and the nature of the food has changed; there is no need to consume food that is so high in energy when sitting in front of the computer during the days (Heinänen 2003, 40-41.)

Even though Finns do not need as heavy food as in the past, the old traditions seem to be rooted in the deep. The consumption of vegetables and fruits still does not meet the recommendations set by World's Health Organization WHO. The current recommendation is 400g per day, when in Finland the average is still under 200g (Heinänen 2003, 40-41.)

Vegetarianism spread to Finland in 1930 by Are Wearland, albeit there were signs of vegetarianism already in the late 19th century. Wearland was the founder of ¹Nordic Health Movement and his reasons for the vegetarian diet were primarily health related (Streng 1994.) As in in 1930's vegetarianism was predominantly seen as health based diet, in the 1960-1970 the vegetarianism experienced a new flourishing, this time generally motivated by the ethical reasons. At the end of 1970's the first vegetarian restaurant "Kasvi" was opened in Finland, politician Heidi Hautala was one of the founders of the restaurant (Streng 1994.) These days Finland has several vegetarian restaurants and even though the majority still remain in Helsinki area, also other major cities have their own restaurants such as; Kasviskeidas, KASVIS- ravintola and Kirjakahvila in Turku, Gopal and Ravintola Kahvilla in Tampere, Fredrikan Lähde in Porvoo and WoimaTila in Pori (Vegaaniliitto, www.vegaaniliitto.fi.)

Vegaaniliitto was established in 1993 and the purpose of the society is to support the ethical veganism. The society aims to raise awareness by organizing different events and campaigns and by providing information on veganism. Vegaaniliitto publishes its own magazine, "Vegaia" four times a year (Vegaaniliitto, www.vegaaniliitto.fi.)

¹ Translated from Pohjoismainen Terveysliike

2.1.2 Veganism vs. Vegetarianism

Vegan is a person who for ideological reasons does not eat anything that originates from the animalia. The reasons for the diet are; ethical, ecological and/or sanitary (Vegaaniliitto.fi.)

Veganism and vegetarianism are concepts that can easily be confounded. As defined by Davis and Vesanto (2000, 1) a vegetarian is

... a person who abstains from the use of flesh, fish, and fowl as food with or without the use of eggs and dairy products (Davis and Vesanto 2000, 1).

Meaning that while vegan tends to avoid all of the products that originate from the animalia, vegetarian mainly concentrates leaving the meat out of one's diet. It can be alleged that the vegan diet has more restrictions than the vegetarian diet.

There are different variations of vegetarianism. 90 to 95% of vegetarians tend to follow a lacto-ovo vegetarian diet, which means that meat and fish are excluded from the diet but dairy products and eggs are included (Vegaaniliitty Ry Luentopaketti 3, 2008). Other forms of vegetarianism (and veganism) are; lacto vegetarianism, fennoveganism (term that exists in Finland), freeganism, raw foodism, fruitarianism and macrobiotic diet. Lactovegetarianism is very similar to lacto-ovo vegetarianism, however lactovegetarist excludes also the eggs from the diet. Fennoveganism (fennoveganismi) is a term used in Finland to describe a diet that tries to adapt the veganism that has evolved in other parts of Europe or USA to the Finnish environment by making use of the products that are produced nearby. Freegan is not necessarily a vegetarian but avoids eating animal based products. For freegan the importance is in the origin of a product and the ecological impacts of using the product. Freegan may for example consume meat products in case they would otherwise be wasted (Vegaaniliitty Ry Luentopaketti 3, 2008.)

When freeganism is followed mainly due to ethical motivators, the raw foodism is primarily a health based diet. The main idea of the raw foodism is to consume products that are not heated over 40 C degrees, in order to preserve all the important nutrients. Raw food diet is otherwise vegan but often includes honey.

Fruitarian is a person who respects all of the living things and therefore excludes all the living plants and vegetables. Anyhow fruitarian eats crops of plants such as fruits and berries because this won't harm the plant itself (Vegaaniliitty Ry Luentopaketti 3, 2008.)

The last form of vegetarianism that is currently known is a macrobiotic. Specifically it is form that is not necessarily vegetarian, because macrobiotics may include for example fish on their diet. Macrobiotic diet is based on the idea of Jin and Jan and macrobiotics emphasizes the idea of everyone finding a lifestyle that is most suitable for them personally. Foods have been categorized in two groups of Jin and Jan and it is important in macrobiotic diet to achieve a balance between the food types. The boiled grain is often used as a base for the diet since it is seen as a balancing ingredient (Vegaaniliitto Ry Luentopaketti 3, 2008.)

The forms that have been listed above are those noticed by Vegaaniliitto and there is a possibility in the existence of many more different formations of diets that has not yet been officially named or recognized.

According to Peltokoski (in Puuronen 2008) vegan is a person who refuses products from the animalia and tries to avoid for example clothes that are made in a way that is harmful for the animals. The products that are tested by animals are similarly avoided (Peltokoski in Puuronen 2008, 200.) Puuronen (2008) has stated that the animal rights are the core of the veganism. The main difference to the motivators in vegetarianism and veganism seem to be that in vegetarianism there appears to exist more variety in the motivators (e.g. health, ecological reasons) when in the veganism the main motivator is animal rights.

Puuronen (2008, 200) has brought up an assumption that it's more important for the vegans to sustain a vegan line in the everyday life rather than concentrate on the small details. It is possible to make discretionary compromises in the situations where following a tight vegan diet seems to be difficult. This of course is a personal matter and the more absolute one is with one's diet is a prominent issue in mentioned situations (Puuronen 2008, 200.)

2.2 Dietary habits

There are several factors that have an impact on one's eating habits. The presented model of dietary habits by Peltó (in Kittler & Sucher 1989, 6) proposes some of the factors that have an effect on a person's dietary habits.

From the point of view of a vegan, diet lifestyle factors and social factors can be seen as major motives in the formation of a diet. For this reason these two factors are looked into in more detail. The figure 1 shows the lifestyle factors that are described later in 2.2.1. A deeper insight to the social factors have been taken in 2.2.2.

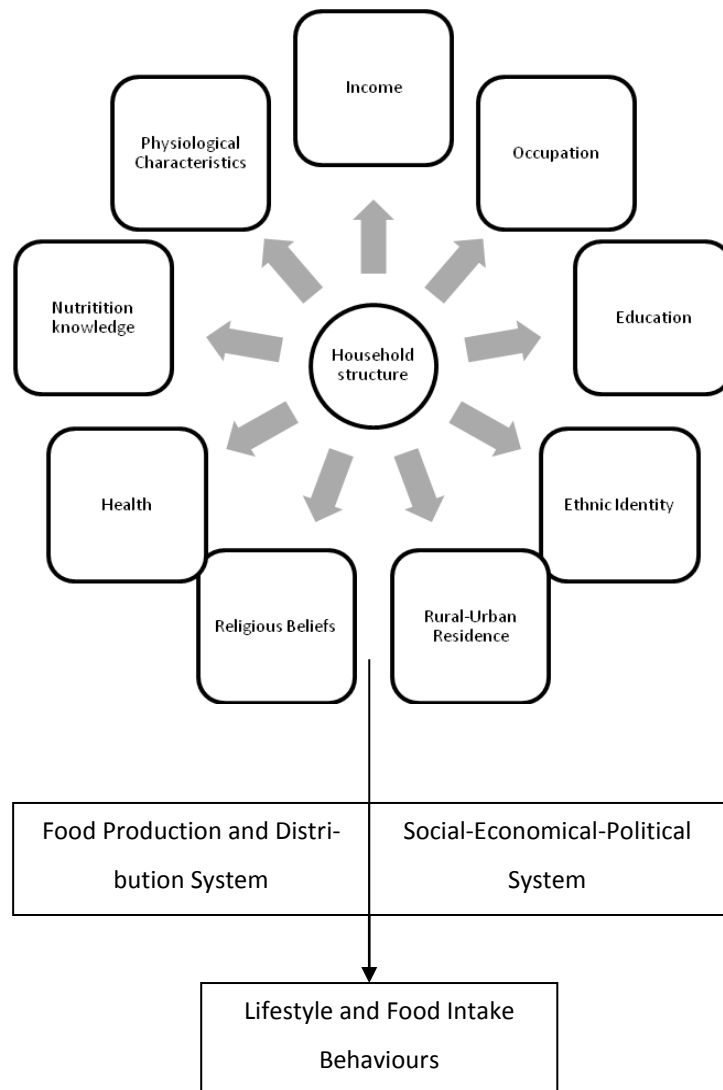


Figure 1. The Model of Dietary habits (adapted from Pelto in Kittler & Sucher 1989, 6). Income, Occupation, Education, Ethnic Identity, Rural-Urban Residence, Religious Beliefs, Health, Nutrition Knowledge and Physiological Characteristics can be seen as lifestyle factors when Food production and Distribution System and Social-Economic- Political System are Societal factors. Both of the factors influence on person's eating habits.

2.2.1 Lifestyle factors

As the model of dietary habits by Peltó (in Kittler & Sucher 1989, 6) shows there are certain features that have an effect on an individual's diet. It is noticeable that the dominating factors are connected to person's lifestyle.

The structure of society and cultural differences determine which lifestyle factors remain the dominant ones. Peltó (in Kittler & Sucher 1989) has pointed out that lifestyle factors include Income, Occupation, Education, Ethnic Identity, Rural-Urban Residence, Religious Beliefs, Health, Nutrition Knowledge and Physiological Characteristics. Some of these nine aspects can be considered to have a higher impact in a process of choosing to follow vegan diet than the others. Income is one of the key issues that determinate individual's dietary choices. Low income creates limitations to the possibility of purchasing food supplies whereas high income caters for more options (Kittler & Sucher 1989, 7.) In Finland vegan products often tend to be moderately expensive, which may influence on one's decision to start a vegan diet.

When looked from the occupational perspective the amount of physical activity required by one's profession, is related to the amount of required calorie intake per day. Furthermore the amount of leisure time has an impact on a person's dietary preferences. A person with an excessive amount of leisure time is more likely to pay more attention to one's nutritional needs and choices. A person with a low amount of a leisure time on the other hand is more likely to focus on the easiness and convenience aspects of the food (Kittler & Sucher 1989, 7.)

Tajfel (1986) defined ethnic identity as

...that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel 1986.)

Food can be used as a tool to reinforce the cultural identity. Additionally certain dining habits are often connected to a particular cultural group. Anyhow this is not at all times the reality, but an image that for some reason has formed in a heads of people external to the culture in question. These days in many cultures different ethnical groups have been intermingled and new fusions of food have been formed (Chan Ing 2011, 87.)

The place of residence can be seen as one of the factors that influence on the eating habits. Kittler and Sucher (1989, 8) have suggested that there might be a difference in dietary habits between people living in the countryside and city, even though they have a same income. A farmer in the countryside may have the possibility to use fresh products from the nature when a person living in the city does not have the similar access to the “quality” food (Kittler and Sucher 1989,8.) Correspondingly in societies where majority of the people live in cities it is common that the family members do not work near home, and long times are spend to commute to the work place. This reduces the time to prepare food and can lead to higher consumption of fast food (Kittler and Sucher 2008, 15.)

As discussed in chapter 2.1 there are different food restrictions in different religions. Chapter 2.1 brought up some of the Asian cultures where vegetarian food is often present; furthermore many other religions have norms for certain food; Roman Catholics have obligations for abstinence when eating of meat is prohibited, Muslims refuse swine and improperly slaughtered animals and Mormons do not consume caffeine, tobacco and strong or hot drinks (Kittler and Sucher 1989, 30-39.) According to Spencer (2000, 125) it is likely that the early Christian church has been vegetarian and the animals have merely been slaughtered for the ritual purposes. Spencer (200, 125) as well as Heinänen (2003, 13) present that it is to be found in the Bible that God meant humans to be vegetarians and the meat was only a food of God. Anyhow this has not been emphasized in the Christianity and in fact cultures where Christianity is the dominating religion the meat consumption is the highest in the world (Heinänen 2003, 13).

Health can be seen as one of the important factors when it comes to starting a vegetarian or vegan diet. There are many different diets that are considered as healthy diets,

and by observation of media it can be seen that it has lately been a widely argued matter. Kittler and Sucher (1989, 8) present that especially during the pregnancy the health reasons are acting a big role in the dietary choices. Moreover one's state of health does affect on food choices that one is making. For example a person with lactose intolerance or diabetes has to pay more attention to the food choices, and the avoidance of certain products is necessity. Furthermore in many cultures there are certain foods or drinks that are consumed when one is ill. For example tea or other hot drinks are seen as recuperative drinks when one is having a cold (Kittler and Sucher 2008, 17.)

In addition to getting the needed energy, one of the main reasons for the humans to eat is to make sure that the body gets all the important nutrients that are needed for the body to function properly (Conner and Armitage 2002, 15). Conner and Armitage (2002, 15) have stated that

The body must carefully balance the correct intake of calories and different types of nutrients (Conner and Armitage 2002, 15.)

A person with a wider nutritional knowledge may end up choosing foods that consists the needed nutrients, but this is not always a definite (Kittler and Sucher 1989, 7). According to Kittler and Sucher (1989, 7) the nutritional knowledge does not necessarily induce to knowledgeable behaviour (Kittler & Sucher 1989, 7.)

Age, gender and state of health can be seen as physiological characteristic. One's food habits tend to change during one's lifecycle. As an infant the only needed food is milk. When reaching the puberty the needed amount of calories increases and then again decreases when getting older. For elderly a difficulty to chew or changes in health can cause changes in eating habits. Some of the foods are also considered to be more feminine and others more masculine, for example a stake can be seen as a masculine food and salad as feminine food. Similarly the amount of calorie and nutrient intake varies between women and men (Kittler and Sucher 2008, 17.)

All of the factors mentioned above; income, occupation, education, ethnic identity, rural-urban residence, health, nutrition knowledge and physiological characteristics form entirety that determinates one's lifestyle and food intake behaviour. It varies whether the lifestyle determinates by all of the factors or only some of them. Nonetheless the formation is not unambiguous.

2.2.2 Social factors

Foster and Anderson (in Chan Ing 2011, 86) have stated that food can be both

...the substance and the symbol of social life, a means by which people communicate with each other, and an embodiment of that communication itself (Anderson 1978 in Chang Ing 2011, 86).

This statement displays that food has a significant role in human interaction and is often used as a tool to gather people together to communicate and socialize with each other.

Douglas (in Chan Ing 2011, 87) suggested that food can be divided into two categories; snacks and formal meals. Snacks can be consumed individually and do not require a social interaction. The purpose of a snack can be either energy intake or pleasure; person may have a snack anywhere and anytime when person desires to. The formal meal is stricter event and includes norms and rules that need to be followed. It is an event that occurs in a certain place, in a certain time and has been decided in advance (Douglas in Chan Ing 2011, 87.)

There are certain norms and rules in the societies. This can be seen also in the food selection. Some of the foods, such as banana skins, can be seen as nonedible by the society in whole even if the food product is not necessarily dangerous for the health. Additionally the food advertisement can influence on one's food choices. There are products in the market that are advertised to be healthy or ethical choices. Terms such as "low-fat", "sugar-free", "healthy-choice" and "natural" are used to attract consumers and to affect on their consumption habits (Connor & Armitage 2002, 20, 119.)

These can be seen as social factors as the cultural norms tend to determine our behaviour in many levels, food selection being one.

Food is not only a tool of communication, but a way to preconceive of others. According to Connor and Armitage (2002, 124-125) the food can be seen as a status symbol. People have a habit of using food as a tool to enhance their status in a certain social group or to show their superiority compared to the others. Additionally people have a tendency to judge others according to their food choices. It has been studied that people who are disposed to eat food that is seen unhealthy are often connected to the characteristics such as lazy or sloppy and people who have a tendency to eat healthier food are described with terms such as brave or good-looking (Connor & Armitage 2002, 124-125.) tend

According to Wilson (2006, 12) the food implicates the group culture. The food and drinking habits give certain messages about a group in question, whether it is ethnic, gender or otherly formed (Wilson 2006, 12.) Vegans can be seen as a group of people that are highly determined by their food habits. This can have an effect on how other people perceive them and even make assumptions of their personality.

2.2.3 Traditions

According to Aro (1999, 179) traditions are tangible and intangible cultural artifacts that generations throughout the time have been creating. Traditions pass from generation to generation and they are matters that the community has accepted as part of their norms and behavioural customs. It has been studied that traditions are often identified as non-permanent processes, meaning that the traditions transform over the time and from time to time old traditions die and new ones are born (Aro 1999, 179.)

The roots are highly connected to the concept of traditions. The roots and the feeling of belonging are natural parts of human kind. It has been noted that the importance of one's roots become more important when being away from one's home. Especially in the crises the feeling of rootlessness can occur (Aro, 1999, 181.)

As Long (2010, 35) has represented the food traditions are not necessarily related to the place where one has been raised. For example one can be born and raised in the USA, with roots from a different country, and most probably the person sees traditional dishes from that other country as “normal food” even though for the others who are living in the same area those dishes may be unfamiliar and are not to be seen as “traditional” food (Long 2010, 35.)

Kittler and Sucher (2008, 11-12) have listed factors that affect on the decrease of variety in food cultures and therefore on the traditions. These factors are;

globalization, modernization, commoditization, urbanization,
delocalization, migration and acculturation (Kittler & Sucher 2008, 11-12.)

For example commoditization leads to the decrease in consumption of home-made food and increase of ready-made meals and the migration by absorption of different food cultures together. Acculturation allows new food traditions to develop by emerging different food cultures and allows certain foods become as part of the main cuisine (Kittler & Sucher 2008, 11-12.)

All in all it can be stated that the food is a major part of the traditions both in individual level as in society level, which then can be divided into various subgroups. For instance there is diverse in traditions, in different parts of Finland; the traditional dishes vary in Savo and in Ostrobothnia.

2.3 Cultural differences

Even though globalization is a rather fresh term, Smith (1995 in Lang 1998, 338) presents that the concept of globalization in the food market leads far in the history of the human kind. The trade of food has occurred around the world for hundreds of years and the similar ingredients are used in different parts of the globe, even if it is not naturally grown in the area of usage. The trade also enables exchanging different diets between the nations (Tansey & Worsley 1995 in Lang 1998, 338.) For example bananas are not grown in Finland but are still everyday products for most Finns; likewise many

of the diets that have raised popularity among Finns, such as low carb diet, are originally developed in other countries.

The trade was enabled by mechanisation; ice machines and better and faster means of conveyance gave the opportunity in the 19th century to transport the food items for longer distances. It was possible to ship meat from Australia to Europe and to lengthen the serving period of certain products in order to gain higher economical benefits (Goody 2013, 72-79.)

Counihan and Van Esterik (2013, 7) have raised the question whether the globalization in a long term affects on the food systems by fading the food identities and authenticity of the food (Counihan & Van Esterik 2013, 7). That is a question yet not to be answered. Whether the development goes towards the “world cuisine”, fading the food cultures of the individual countries is uncertain.

In this chapter there are examples taken from different parts of the world to give examples on how the culture can shape one’s eating habits. The examples were chosen in order to gain diverse perspectives from different parts of the world. Furthermore the presented examples are popular tourism destinations and for that reason are relevant to the research conducted. The social aspect of food has been taken into account in order to reach a deeper understanding on the basis of the food culture of the continent in question.

2.3.1 Europe

Europe includes many countries with variety of different food cultures. The term Europeanization has been used to describe the new identity form of citizens in European Union (hereby referred as EU). Europeanization does not over rule the already existing identities; it is more of a supplement to those identities that are formed when living in a certain country or area in EU (Wilson 2006, 16-17.) Anyhow it has been suggested by Wilson (2006, 17) that the European identity can be put on and off in different situations. The Europeanization can be seen in many areas of life. According to Delanty

and Rumford (in Wilson 2006, 18) there are four dimensions in Europeanization, which are;

form of cross-border and transnational societal interpenetration, a force in the transformation of the state, a discursive and social-cognitive transformation in almost all levels of European societies, and an overall force in the transformation of modernity in Europe (Delanty and Rumford in Wilson 2006, 18.)

Food and drinking culture can be viewed as one part of Europeanization, since the food and drinking habits and certain traditions are transmitted within the European countries. Gillespie (2001, 16- 18) has introduced two of the main influences on the gastronomy; *Gastro-geography* and *Gastro-history*. In Europe the location of the country and the history of the food determinates the modern food culture of the country in question. For example in the south of France the climate is favourable to grow fruit and vegetables, in Norway the sea offers good fishing possibilities and in central Europe the easy access allows importing and exporting between the countries, enabling wide variety of products in the food market (Gillespie 2001, 16-18.)

The Greeks and the Romans have had a significant role in the formation of European gastronomy. The Greeks favoured seafood and fish and also produced wide range of different bread products. According to Gillespie (2001, 38) there were even seventy different types of bread produced and consumed in the Ancient Greece (Gillespie 2001, 38). Among the Romans meat was consumed in large amounts, as it was seen as a status symbol; therefore beef, pork and game were popular dishes. The Greeks and the Romans are undeniably a part of the birth of European gastronomy. There are various other causes such as the rise of France, various influential cooks and rules and the so called golden age of gastronomy (19th century) that has had an significant role in how the modern European gastronomy has formed into its current state (Gillespie 2001, 38-57.)

There seems to be increasing specialization in the health food in the Europe as well as in the vegetarian cuisine. Europe has a long history in restaurant, hotel and bistro culture, especially in the big cities, such as Paris, London, Barcelona and Copenhagen.

This is mainly due to the travel and tourism in Europe (Gillespie 2001, 69, 99.) Europe is the biggest tourism region at the moment; between January and August 2013 there were 20 million arrivals more in the European region than in previous year. This made European tourism rate to grow by 5% (UNWTO 2013, <http://www2.unwto.org/en/press-release/2013-10-17/international-tourism-rise-boosted-strong-performance-europe-0>.) The popularity of Europe as a tourism attraction may lead to the competition between the major city, which then forces the cities to evolve and keep up to date. Offering a wide variety of different restaurants and attracting different types of tourists will become crucial in order to stay competitive. Additionally this allows the possibility for the vegetarian restaurants to flourish.

In England the mad cow disease scare induced a raise in the amount of vegetarians. There are no specific data to be found on the vegans and vegetarians in UK and Europe. According to rawfoodhealth.net the Mintel Survey in 2006 suggests that there are about 3,6 million vegetarians in UK, and the country has the largest amount of vegetarians in Europe (Raw Food Health <http://www.raw-food-health.net/NumberOfVegetarians.html>.) This is not a surprise when taking a look at the history of vegetarianism and veganism. The Vegan Society estimates that in UK there are approximately 150,000 vegans. It has to be taken into account that due to the lack of research there is no specific data available and the number is not definite (The Vegan Society <http://www.vegansociety.com>.)

From rest of the Europe there is no reliable data available on the amount of vegetarians and vegans. Anyhow most of the European countries have their own branch of Vegan Society (Raw Food Health <http://www.raw-food-health.net/NumberOfVegetarians.html>.)

2.3.2 Asia

For a long time vegetarian based food has been dominating the food culture of the Eastern countries. For example in India, China and Japan the livestock production has been rarer than in the Western cultures. The main reason for this is religion. In Hinduism and Buddhism, which are the major religions in aforementioned countries, the an-

imals are believed to have souls and a meaning in the life circle. In Asia the animals are treated more equal to human than in Western cultures; in western countries animals are considered as soulless beings that serve the purpose of being food for the ones upper in the food chain (Heinänen 2003, 32.)

In some Asian cultures the vegetarian diet is postulated to be a better and higher worth than a diet including meat. For example in India vegetarian food can be seen as way to assert the superiority among other castes (White in Chan Ing 2011, 88.) Furthermore in many Asian cultures, such as in China the food is the most important part of the dinner and the social aspect is not seen as significant. Time has been consumed to cook the dinner and it is conventional for the family to stay quiet while eating; all the attention is given to the dish itself. It is not rare this to happen also in the business dinners, generally the conversations take place before and after the dining (Rapaille 2006, 108.)

When it comes to different food products in Asia, especially in China and Japan, soya has for long been a common ingredient in many traditional dishes. As these countries have been influenced by the west more and more in recent decades, also the meat consumption has increased. This is the case especially in the big cities (Heinänen 2003, 45.) Although there is an increase in meat consumption, India itself has more vegetarians than the rest of the world together. 40% of the Indians follow vegetarian diet (Raw Food Health <http://www.raw-food-health.net/NumberOfVegetarians.html>.)

Although vegetarianism is better known concept in Asia than in western cultures there are still various vegan societies and associations all around the Asia to promote veganism and vegetarianism, such as Vegetarian Society in Bangladesh, Nepal Vegetarian Society, Animal Save Movement Pakistan, Chong Hwa (Taiwan), Sri Lanka Vegetarian Society and Korea Vegan Society.

As mentioned earlier the main reason for vegetarianism and veganism in Asia is religion, however the veganism that is based on environmental reasons and animal rights is spreading as well, especially among the younger generation (Vegan Society http://www.vegansociety.com/uploadedFiles/About_Us/Vegans%20Around%20the%20World%20Asia.pdf)

2.3.3 USA

Kittler and Sucher (1989, 17) refers to America with a term “melting pot”, meaning that America is a country with a large number of inhabitants representing different cultures and ethnical and religious groups. Due to this diversity of different traditions as well as foods and eating habits varies considerably inside the country, which makes it hard to identify “American diet” (Kittler & Sucher 1989, 17.) It can be stated that in certain parts of the USA acculturation has occurred.

Even though USA seems to be the land of the fast food, the concept of home is very important. This includes the importance of the meals enjoyed together. Thanksgiving and other holidays gather the Americans together around their tables to enjoy, often a homemade, dinner. The first people arriving to USA were there to build a new home and as there was nothing, everything needed to be built from the scratch. This can explain the warm relationship between the Americans and their homes (Rapaille 2006, 94-96.)

The dinners at home also have a social aspect; they are situations where families often share stories from their day or week (depending on the frequency of the dinners). In American homes kitchen is often the centre of the home and the place for the family to gather. In many homes the kitchen is equipped in a way that it is pleasant to spent long times in the room, for example TV is a normal gadget in the American kitchen. This is something that varies in the different cultures, for example in Japan where the space is often more limited, every part of the house are seen as important and sacred (Rapaille 2006, 97-100.)

Even though dinner acts an important role in the relations between the people, the food itself is not necessarily perceived as essential as the occasion. Even though homemade meals are still the most popular, the food can also be take-out or easy-made (easy-made food is often seen as homemade food). The most important part seems to be the sitting around the table and having a conversation. Correspondingly it is not a necessity to have a dinner at home all the times; eating in a restaurant is also a popular

activity in the USA. All in all the dinner culture circles around the social aspect and is not generally as formal event as in many other cultures (Rapaille 2006, 107-110.)

By Rapaille's description of dinner habits in the USA it can be assumed that it is likely to be invited for a dinner when travelling to the USA, if one happens to meet with locals. Although the offered food can widely vary in different parts of the country and for that reason it is not easy to state whether vegan food is available. As the food is not in the main role, it is likely to be easier to refuse the food, than in the cultures where the food is seen as more important part of the culture.

Various food related environmental projects have been launched in the USA in recent years. One of the projects is the "Eat View" campaign, which started in 2008. The idea was for the next president to be in White House to plant a vegetable garden in the lawn of the White House. The campaign was a success and in March 2009 Michelle Obama planted the garden in the White House lawn. This has led to the discussion of widening the campaign and having vegetable gardens also in other high-profile places (Todd 2011, 297-299.) These types of projects indicate that the land that often is referred as "fast food nation" has been taken steps towards healthier and more vegetable oriented dietary lifestyle. The USA has previously held the title of being the most overweight nation in the world until in 2013 Mexico surpasses the USA (Huffington post 2013 http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/07/09/mexico-obesity_n_3567772.html.) Regardless to the fact that USA is no longer the most obese country, it still holds the second place on the list and the obesity problem results in high costs to the government. According to Tsai, Williamson and Glick the combined costs in 2008 were \$113,9 billion (Tsai, Williamson, Glick 2011, 50).

There is no specific data available in the amount of vegans in the USA but the number has been estimated to be around 1,7 million. Various vegan organizations in the USA report that they have tens of thousands members, but there is no reason to presume that all of the vegans are members of a certain organization (Cherry 2006, 156.) According to the Vegetarian Times Magazine, in 2008 there were even 7,3 vegetarians in the USA from which 0,5% were vegans. These statistics were based on the "Vege-

tarianism in America” survey, which comprehended 5050 respondents all around the country (Raw Food Health, <http://www.raw-food-health.net/NumberOfVegetarians.html>)

3 Culinary tourism

Culinary tourism, sometimes referred as gastronomy tourism, is currently little known market segment, which cannot be neglected in a discussion of importance in the development of niche travel (Kivela & Crofts 2006, 354). Kivela and Crofts (2006) define gastronomy simply as

...a study of the relationship between culture and food (Kivela & Crofts 2006,354).

According to this definition there is a possibility that for some tourists, food is an important factor in the process of exploring new cultures. Anyhow the area is not yet widely enough studied and therefore it is not definite.

The term “culinary tourism” was first introduced in 1998 by Long, who by using the term was referring to the activity where people seek to experience foreign cultures by trying the food and wines of the country (Long in Kivela & Crofts 2006, 355.) Long has stated the culinary experience to be deeper than many other tourist activities, in a manner that it includes using several senses and allows the person physically to attend the experience (Long 2010, 21). Since eating is a necessity, it is natural for the human to want to make the process of eating as a satisfactory experience. As tourism is a voluntary activity that serves the purpose of gaining new experiences, its natural result is to convert all the areas of the tourism into experiences, including the process of eating (Long & Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2010, 22.) As Fields, Richards and Scarpato have stated

...gastronomy is an inextricable part of the holiday experience (Fields, Richards & Scarpio 2002 in Kivela & Crofts 2006, 357).

To paraphrase Long’s views on the origin of the culinary tourism, a numerous reasons for the formation of culinary tourism can be listed, such as curiosity, search of authentic experiences, politeness and urge to the feeling of belonging. People tend to have a

natural curiosity to experience and learn new and to a certain extent people seek for authentic experiences in order to gain as much knowledge as possible. Sometimes the seek for these experiences is driven by the urge of feeling belonging. This can be belonging to a certain group or culture and often takes place when one spends a longer period of time in an unfamiliar environment. Occasionally the culinary tourism can simply result from politeness; a person is offered a certain food and does not want to appear as rude by turning it down (Long 2010, 45.)

Hjalager (2003 in Kivela and Crofts 2006, 357) has presented a “model of tourism and gastronomy lifestyles” which he has based on the “phenomenological categorization of tourist lifestyle” by Cohen (1984). In his model, Hjalager has categorized the culinary tourists into four different types, which are; *recreational, existential, diversionary and experimental*.

The recreational gastronomy tourists prefer familiar foods and tend to be rather conservative. They often bring their own food on their holidays and enjoy cooking themselves rather than going to restaurants. For recreational gastronomy tourists the company is important and they enjoy eating together with familiar people (Kivela & Crofts 2006, 358.)

The Existential gastronomy tourists emphasize the learning through food. They frequently seek to gain better understanding of the local cuisine, traditions and culture by trying out different foods. Going to a touristic restaurant is an activity that existential gastronomy tourists generally avoid (Kivela & Crofts 2006, 358.)

The Diversionary gastronomy tourists on the other hand prefer familiar food chains and do not like trying exotic foods. For diversionary gastronomy tourists the importance of the food is in the quantity and easiness of the food. They also enjoy meeting new people and having meal together while socializing (Kivela & Crofts 2006, 358-359.)

The last group is experimental gastronomy tourists. Those who fall into this category are people who like showing their lifestyle through food. Experimental gastronomy tourists often prefer trendy and fashionable foods and they like to be updated on what is happening in the culinary field. People in this category would be likely to choose to eat in a chic and modern restaurant and is often reading about the latest food trends from magazines and blogs (Kivela & Crofts 2006, 358.)

After all eating is an inevitable part of the holiday, but with the gastronomy an extra value can be added to the experience (Kivela & Crofts 2006, 359). Furthermore gastronomy can be used as a marketing tool to promote certain destination or holiday package.

4 Methodology

4.1 Research method

The research method used in this thesis is qualitative research. Furthermore Brotherton (2008, 17-18) has introduced two different approaches to the research. These research approaches can be divided to inductive approach and deductive approach. (Brotherton 2008, 17-18). Brotherton (2008, 17-18) has stated the stages of these two approaches; inductive approach includes:

Identifying the problem/question, Research design, Data collection, Data analysis, Data interpretation, Congruance with existing literature, Development of new theory (Brotherton 2008, 17-18.)

Deductive approach includes stages of:

Identifying the problem, Produce the theoretical framework, Write the hypotheses, Formulate the constructs, concepts and operational definition, Design the research, Collect the data, Analyse the data, Interpret the data, Implement or refine the theory or develop a new theory (Brotherton 2008, 17-18.)

The research conducted in this thesis paraphrases the deductive approach. In the beginning the problem (how vegan diet influences the travel experience) has been identified and introduced by setting the research questions and aims for the research, then the theoretical framework has taken an insight on the existing literature on the field of veganism, concepts behind the vegan diet have been opened up and the veganism in different parts of the world as well as the tourism industry has been reviewed. After that the research was designed and interview was chosen as a data collection method and the interview form was designed (see attachment 1). The data was then collected by using a semi-structured interview. At the end the results of the research were presented and analysed.

The interview conducted was semi-structured, indicating that the questions have been preliminary designed in order to have a certain logical continuum for the interview.

Anyhow the structure of the interview is not rigorous and space for free discussion is left between the questions.

There are many ways to analyse the data of the qualitative research. It is not always as straight forward as in the quantitative research to decide which method to use. Sometimes it even makes more sense to use a combination of different methods (Rapley 2011, 274.) In qualitative research the type of data may vary; it is possible to have text, videos, audio material, maps, diagrams etc. Of course the format of the data helps to determine the analysing method. If the data is in a form of text it is reasonable to convert some of the data into a quantitative form as it was done in the research conducted in this thesis. This way the results are easier to present and certain patterns can be found (Brotherton 2008, 208.)

The analysis of this research primarily paraphrases the Constructivist grounded theory and Interpretative phenomenological analysis. These are methods that include initial and focused coding and memo writing, generating and listing themes, sub-themes and categories which then link together and allows developing various concepts (Rapley 2011, 274-275.) Listing and creating various themes was primarily used to analyse the findings of the research. As the amount of samples in the research was relatively low, the percentages, shown in the chapter 5 and 6, have been calculated by creating lists by using Microsoft Office Word. A certain scheme has not been used as it is not seen indispensable.

4.2 Data collection

Data collection was conducted by interview. Ten vegans were interviewed from which six were female and four were male. The Vegaaniliitto members were contacted by e-mail mailing list and a message was posted on Vegaaniliitto's official facebook-page. Voluntary interviewees were searched also by posting a request in Eläinoikeusfoorumi (Animal rights forum) website and by asking already interested interviewees to recruit their acquaintances.

Most of the interviewees were found through the mailing list and the second most popular channel was the word of mouth. Many of the interviewees told about the research to their friends and acquaintances who then volunteered to take part. Interviewees were contacted between January and March 2013 and all of the interviews were conducted during April 2013.

In the recruitment process the main issue appeared to be the difficulty in finding male interviewees. Anyhow this problem was solved by specifying the e-mail that was sent by inquiring specifically male respondents to participate. Nine of the ten interviews were conducted face-to-face and one by using skype. The usage of skype enabled to interview a person outside of capital area who was unable to travel to Helsinki for the interview. In total seven out of ten interviewees were living in Helsinki at the time of the interview and three outside the Helsinki region; one from Porvoo, one from Joensuu and one from Lapinjärvi. All of the interviews were conducted in Finnish. Anyhow the question form was done in both languages, in English and in Finnish. The question form in English is to be found from the attachments (Attachment 1).

The length of the interviews varied from 15minutes to 45minutes, an average being 30 minutes. As the interviews were semi-structured and the question form was used as a basis to the interview, however the interviewees were given the opportunity to discuss freely on the matters in the form (Attachment 1). The forms were sent to the interviewees approximately two days before the interview, allowing the interviewees to prepare for the actual interview. This was essential as the interview included issues related to the interviewees' personal experiences. Therefore it is possible that the interviewees would not be able to reminisce certain core issues at the time of the actual interview without having to think them prior to the interview.

Actual prepared answers were not asked and the prior preparation was not required. Sending the question forms was mainly to help the interviewees and to have more productive discussion. All of the interviews were recorded and in addition notes were taken. After the interview the recordings were transliterated before analysing the results.

The results are to be presented in the order that the interview was structured. The interview form has been divided into eight different sections in order to help to organise the answers in a best possible way. Correspondingly for this reason the results have been presented section by section. In the presentation of the results some of the sections (1,2&3, 6&7) have been conflated due to the cohesion of the topics. The sections presented are;

1. *Basic information and travel motivators*, including the information about gender, age and place of residence. This section also clarifies how long the respondents have been following the vegan diet and what are their traveling habits (how many times a year do they approximately travel outside of Finland and what are the most popular destinations). Furthermore the section converses on the motivators behind the travelling habits, concerning on the issues that are the most important for the respondents when it comes to choosing a travel destination.

2. *Before the trip*, this section discusses the preparations that are done before the trip itself; whether the respondents plan and schedule their trip and also whether the trip raises certain concerns in advance.

3. *During the trip*, the aim of this section is to gain better understanding on whether the respondents feel that their diet creates certain limitations on their travels. Additionally the section aims to find out how the respondents have coped in situations where the diet has caused particular issues.

4. *Ideological beliefs and personal influence on travel experience*, while the section 3. concentrates on the real life situations that the respondents have experienced, section 4. attempts to find out if the respondents are willing to give up on their principles in situations where finding suitable food might be difficult. This has been conducted by asking hypothetical questions (based on hypothetical situations) and by looking at the situations that the respondents have faced. Furthermore this section concentrates on the feelings that the respondents experience during their travels, whether they think

that the diet has influenced on the travel experience or not and if it's positive or negative matter.

5. *Opinions on existing information*, the last section targets to find out whether the respondents feel that there is enough information available on vegan restaurants and what are the sources of information.

5 Results

5.1 Basic information and travel motivators

There were 10 respondents in the research, from which six were female and four male. The average age of the respondents was 33,5 years old. The oldest being 40 years old and the youngest 21 years old. Helsinki was the current place of resident for 70% of the respondents. Three respondents were from outside the capital area.

The average for being a vegan was 12,45 years. The shortest being 4,5 years and longest for 17 years. 90% of the respondents stated that they had been vegetarians before starting a vegan diet. Only one of the respondents had defected straight from ²mixed diet to a vegan diet. The average time of being a vegetarian before becoming a vegan was 5,25 years. The shortest time of being vegetarian was 6 months and the longest for 11 years.

When asked about the motives of starting a vegan diet all of the respondents mentioned animal rights to be the main reason, or one of the main reasons. 4 out of 10 stated that later on also health has become an important issue. Other reasons mentioned were; ethical reasons, nature and ethicality of meat production.

	21-30v.	30-40v.
Animal rights	High	High
Health	Low	Moderate
Nature	Low	Low
Other	N/A	Low

Table 1. Motives for vegan diet in different age groups.

² In this context by using a term mixed diet, it is referred to a diet containing food products from both; animalia and plantae (translated from “sekaravinto” Suomisanakirja 2013.)

The respondents travel outside of Finland approximately 3 times a year. For 90% of the respondents Europe is the main or one of the main travel destinations. 70% of the respondents had never been outside of Europe. The 30% of the respondents who had travelled outside Europe mentioned the continents they had visited in addition to Europe being mainly North America and Asia. 50% of the respondents mentioned Sweden as the destination they have visited the most often. Also Germany, England and Estonia were mentioned several times. Furthermore the cities that were mentioned for more than once as being frequently visited were Tallinn, Berlin and London.

Travel motivators include information on whether the trips made are holiday or work related, whether the respondents travel independently or take part on package holidays, what are the main motivators for choosing a destinations and whether the vegan diet has ever influenced on the respondents selection of a destination.

50% of the respondents stated that they travel only for holiday purposes. 50% of the respondents travel for both holiday and work purposes, whilst none of the respondents stated to travel only for work purpose. One of the respondents mentioned studying as a motive to travel.

When it comes to independent travelling and package holidays, 70% stated that they only travel independently and have not taken part on the package holidays. 30% stated they do both; travel independently and sometimes take part on package holidays, depending on the situation. None of the respondents stated that they would only travel by taking part on package holidays.

40% of the respondents mention the food being one of the main factors in choosing the destination. Culture, climate and events were also mentioned by several respondents. For two of the respondents the accessibility of the destination was acting a big role. Both for ecological reasons and also from the children perspective.

80% of the respondents see that the vegan diet has some effect when it comes to choosing a destination. It was mentioned that if it comes to choosing between two

destinations often the one that is seen easier food wise is chosen. Correspondingly, for many of the respondents, the influence is not necessarily negative. Those who in the previous question stated their main travel motivator to be food feel it is a positive thing; by travelling you are able to find new foods and try dishes that are not available in Finland.

In this section two of the respondents mentioned that Russia is a destination that has made them to hesitate whether to travel there as it was presumed to be difficult destination for a vegan traveler. One of them had travelled to Russia and found it to be challenging to find vegan food and the other respondent does not have any personal experience on traveling to Russia, therefore the image of Russia is based on stories from friends and acquaintances.

5.2 Before the trip

Planning and making schedules is often an important part of one's travel. This section aims to find out whether vegan travellers have a tendency to plan their trips in advance and whether they think that the vegan diet causes extra work prior to departure. The issue of worrying about finding a suitable food in the destination has also been discussed in this section.

90% of the respondents said they do plan beforehand in some extent by finding out about different restaurants and attractions in the destination. No one liked doing minute schedules for their travels and it wasn't seen as an important part of the trip. Several respondents mentioned that they did schedules but it is not a disaster if the schedules are not entirely followed during the trip.

The planning mainly concentrates on finding information on restaurants. It was mentioned that by doing this a great amount of time in the destination can be saved, as it is not always possible to entry the first restaurant or cafe that comes up.

50% of the respondents stated they do not worry beforehand about finding the suitable food; this is due to the fact that they are so used to it and therefore are well pre-

pared. The other 50% stated that they do worry in some extent. Two of the respondents stated that they would not use the word worry, since it is rather strong expression, but they admit that they do think about the issue of finding suitable food in the destination before they travel.

It was mentioned that if a destination is someplace that they've never visited before, it makes one slightly worried. Several respondents mentioned that it is easily solved by carrying your own food with you, in case you end up in situation where the food is hard to find.

70% of the respondents stated that the vegan diet causes some extra work prior departure. Those who in the previous section mentioned food as one of their main motivators to travel didn't see the extra work as a bad thing but rather as a nice and exciting activity. Those who stated the main motivator to be something non-food related, seemed to have slightly more negative view on the extra work, anyhow most of the respondents stated that it has become such a routine that it does not bother anymore. Furthermore it was mentioned that by knowing well one's own diet and the supplements that can be used to replace certain ingredients it has become easier to find different food solutions.

Several of the respondents stated that before becoming a vegan their attitude to the food was different and as a vegan the importance of the food has become such a big part of life that it influences on all the areas of life.

5.3 During the trip

The section conversing on issues during the trip represents the restrictions that a vegan diet sets for the travelling, what kind of situations the respondents have faced during their travels and have they faced situations where refusing a dish has felt uneasy or even embarrassing.

50% of the respondents mentioned that the main restriction is in choosing the destination. It was stated that many times the respondents chose a destination where they

think it is easy to find food, whether the assumption was based on experiences of their own or someone else or by reading about the destination in the internet, magazines or guides. One of the respondents stated that travelling outside Europe would not be an option because it seems too difficult from the dietary perspective.

It was stated by most of the respondents that many times there are difficult situations during their travel that they need to face but these can't be seen as restrictions because they can be solved by planning well and avoiding certain situations.

The majority of the respondents stated that finding suitable food in big cities does not cause any problems. No matter which country you are at, the cities usually offer some food that is possible to eat and the concept of veganism is better understood than in small towns or villages. Anyhow it was mentioned that naturally different countries and cities vary a lot and often the cultures that were similar to our own seemed to be easier than the cultures far from ours.

From cities, Stockholm and Berlin were mentioned repeatedly when it came to easiness in finding the food. In general Europe was seen as rather easy to travel. Only France for many of the respondents seemed to be a destination that was not as appealing since it is expected to be a difficult destination for vegan traveler. From all the countries Russia was mentioned the most difficult country. Two of the respondents had personal experience on travelling to Russia and the rest based their opinion on what they had heard from friends, family members or read from magazines or blogs. Other destinations that were mentioned to be difficult were certain parts of Spain, Panama, Africa and some parts of Korea.

In addition to Berlin and Stockholm most of the cities in UK, Scandinavian destinations and Crete were mentioned as easy destinations for vegans. There were mixed opinions about USA; some of the respondents saw it as easy destination offering a wide variety of quality vegan food, when other saw the culture so meat dominated that it would seem difficult to travel in the USA as a vegan.

The main reason for the difficulties seemed to be the cultural differences and the language barrier; the respondents and their requests were not understood. Few of the respondents stated that they have had to return the food in the restaurant because the order has not been understood. As a solution to this three of the respondents mentioned they have sporadically used a vegan passport. It is a small document stating in different language what is veganism and what ingredients vegans do not include in their diet.

The majority of the respondents said that the best solution for the difficult situations is to get food from the supermarkets. From the supermarkets you are always able to find something to eat. Also few of the respondents are used to carrying their own food with them, in case there is nothing else available.

In some situations the respondents had difficulties in finding the food but it was not seen as a problem because it was expected. In some cases the respondents expected to find nothing but were positively surprised, for example one of the respondents was traveling in Northern England in small village and did not expect finding any suitable food, but ended up finding a vegan pub, which was a genuine surprise. Some of the respondents have noticed that even though the concept of veganism is not well understood everywhere, it's still often clearer term than vegetarianism. For example it was stated that in some countries it is natural to offer fish for vegetarians.

The majority of the respondents (70%) haven't been in a situation where they would feel uncomfortable to refuse food that was offered to them. About half of them did mention that they could imagine a situation where they would feel uneasy or embarrassed but they do their best to avoid those situations.

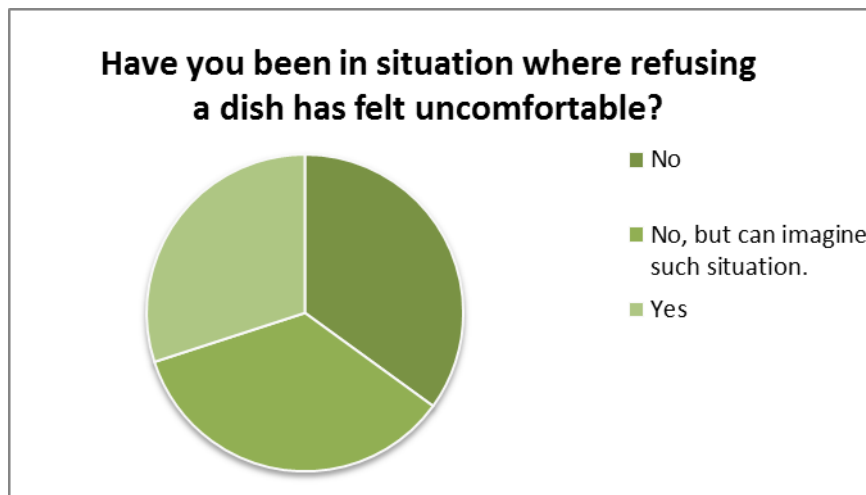


Figure 2. 70% of the respondents have not been in situation where they would have felt refusing a dish uncomfortable, although 30% felt they could easily imagine situation where they would feel uncomfortable or embarrassed.

30% of the respondents said they had been in situation where they have felt uneasy to refuse a food when travelling, but they stated that this also happens in Finland; from all of the respondents about 50% mentioned that they have faced a situation where they feel uneasy to refuse a dish in Finland. It was more common to end up in these situations in Finland than abroad.

5.4 Ideological beliefs and personal influence on travel experience

The majority of the respondents haven't been in a situation where they have decided to concede of some of the ingredients that are not part of their diet. Furthermore it was mentioned by several respondents that it is not impossibility to get into such situation in the future and that there have been situations where the respondent might not have been sure of all the ingredients that the dish includes. This was alleged to be a result from language barriers and cultural differences. Majority of the respondents stated that if they get wrong food in the restaurant they try to eat what they can; only two said that they would be sending the dish back and ask for a new one.

About half of the respondents felt that when travelling they do not expect to be able to follow the vegan diet completely. Being able to keep majority of the food as vegan as possible is seen more important than concentrating in small details. The other half still

wants to be totally aware of the ingredients used in the dishes they eat abroad. It was mentioned by few of the respondents that in a case of language barrier they have used a vegan passport.

When asked whether there are ingredients that would be easier to consume than others, majority of the respondents felt that meat, especially red meat would be the hardest to consume. 60% of the respondents stated that they could eat honey or bees wax even though it is a product they would not normally purchase themselves. Milk products were also mentioned by several respondents as products they might consider consuming in a situation where other food options are not available. Two of the respondents mentioned that avoiding colorants and food additives abroad for them is not important.

In a hypothetical situation of a visit to a small village in Africa where a local community has prepared a dish including milk products, 50% of the respondents would refuse to eat the food in abovementioned situation. From the other half, majority would try to refuse the food but in case it would be very difficult they would not exclude the possibility of trying the food. For majority of the respondents the ingredients are playing a big role. For example milk would be easier to consume than meat. 3 respondents mentioned that even though the situation itself might not be unethical the health consequences would make them to refuse the dish.

As shown in Figure 3. 70% of the respondents felt that in some extent they have missed out some experiences during their travels. None of those 70% felt that it has a significant impact; the most commonly mentioned issue was the lack of options. It was also mentioned that sometimes the respondents have not wanted to take part in certain events because of the uncertainty of the food that is offered.

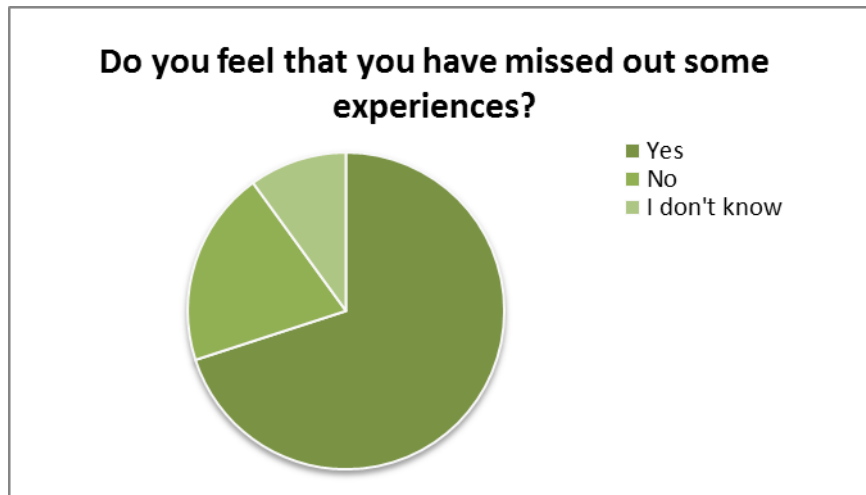


Figure 3. Majority of the respondents feel they have missed out some experiences due to their diet.

Two of the respondents stated that they don't feel they have missed out any experiences, in opposite they felt that following a vegan diet has allowed them to gain experiences that they otherwise would have not experienced.

70% of the respondents feel that food acts a big role in representing the culture of a certain country. Anyhow none of the respondents feel that it is the most important part or that the vegan diet would somehow prevent them from getting to know a certain culture. It was mentioned that there is a wide variety of different vegan options available in many countries and none of the respondents have felt that they would not have the possibility to get to know the culture in a same way as the people who do not follow vegan diet.

Two of the respondents felt that food is not in a big role and it was stated that nowadays the food cultures have spread outside the country borders which makes it possible to get to know the different food cultures also in your home country or in any other country you visit; there is wide variety of different ethnical restaurants around the world such as Indian, Thai and Chinese, and it is not necessity anymore to visit these countries to experience their food culture.

Majority of the respondents (70%) stated that they have never visited a country where vegan or vegetarian food is an important part of the culture. 30% had visited India,

which was also mentioned by majority of non-visitors as a possible “vegetarian-friendly” destination. Addition to India also Thailand and Greece were mentioned as countries where many of the traditional foods are vegetarian and therefore seen as important part of the culture. Even though India is seen as vegan and vegetarian friendly, few of the respondents brought up the issue that the dishes that are offered or targeted to tourists often include meat. According to the respondents many restaurants seem to assume that western tourists prefer meat dishes over the vegetarian ones.

All of the respondents stated that all in all they think that the vegan diet has a significant role in travel experience. Majority of the respondents mentioned that the experience can be positive or negative depending on the easiness of finding a proper food.

5.5 Opinions on existing information

The last section of the interview concentrates to find out the sources of information on vegan restaurants, cafes, shops etc. After defining these sources the respondents were asked to evaluate the quality and the sufficiency of the used sources.

All of the respondents mentioned Happy Cow – website to be the main source of information. Happy Cow gathers different vegan, vegetarian and vegan/vegetarian-friendly restaurants under one page giving the reader a possibility to comment and rate them as well as add their own favourite places. Majority of the respondents stated that Happy Cow is used prior to the trip and most of the time the restaurants they are planning to visit are decided before arriving to the destination.

One of the respondents also occasionally uses a Happy Cow mobile phone app that enables one to find the nearest restaurants in one’s current location. Furthermore the majority of the respondents use Happy Cow to browse different restaurants and not to rate or comment themselves. Only few of the respondents stated that they have written something on the website themselves. This was often the case if the restaurant was seen as a big disappointment or as a positive surprise.

In addition to Happy Cow the other sources mentioned were; friends, Google (finding web pages of restaurants, blogs etc.), foursquare, Eläinoikeusfoorumi (Animal rights forum), Vegaia- magazine (travel stories published by the magazine) and other magazines/newspapers. One of the respondents also mentioned keeping an own little archives on different articles and news about different destinations.

Happy Cow was seen generally as a good source with minor faults. It was mentioned by 50% of the respondents that the website is not updated enough; some of the restaurants have been closed and some of the new ones have not yet been added. It was also mentioned that the technical solutions of the website are poor and the website needs to be brought to the present day. Additionally the descriptions of the restaurants would need to be more detailed and precise.

All in all the majority of the respondents stated that the information is nowadays easily available, even supposing there is still room for improvement. Majority of the respondents don't feel the need for new sources of information. Because of possibilities that the internet has provided, the amount of information seems to be satisfactory. According to the majority of the respondents who felt no need for new sources, the needed amount of information could be achieved by improving the Happy Cow website. By keeping the website up to date and by providing detailed information on different restaurants all of the needed information would be on one website, which majority of the respondents sees as an ideal solution.

6 Discussion and Conclusion

6.1 Discussion

As the average age of the respondents is 33,5 years, 70% of the respondents are from the capital area, average of being vegan is 12,45 years and 90% mainly travel in Europe it can be said that the results of the research mainly describe the opinions of young adults from capital Finland who have been following vegan diet for several years and travel mainly in Europe. Therefore in this research, the analysis is mainly based on these abovementioned characteristics. Citations presented in this thesis are translated, from Finnish to English, by the author.

I can't come up with any reasons why not to be vegan.

It [veganism] started from the pig videos...now when I have started to research more and gained more knowledge it has grown in to more than just not bullying cute little piggies.

It [veganism] sort of started by me giving up all the intoxicants. By doing so I was in a way more exposed to the world.

These three quotes from three different respondents present diverse views on veganism and the motives behind a vegan diet. All of the respondents seem to have different views and thoughts on the matter and every individual explained the starting point of their diet in a different manner. For some it started in the school when hearing where the meat comes from or visiting a local piggery, some got interested because of their girlfriend was a vegan and some seeing videos on internet where animals were treated unfairly. However the motive behind all of this, for all the respondents, was animal rights as presented earlier in the 5.1.

It seems that for the older respondents the health issues have an increasing importance on the motives to sustain a vegan diet. Majority of those respondents who stated health as one of the motives were over 35 years old. Additionally the respondents stating

health as an important factor seem to be stricter with their diet and towards avoiding the colorants and food additives. For those who health issues seemed to act a big role in the diet, avoiding colorants while travelling was more important than for those who did not state health as an important motivator. Even though the animal rights were mentioned by all of the respondents as a main motivator to start a vegan diet, it seems that younger respondents emphasize the issue of animal rights more than the respondents over 35 years old.

As half of the respondents stated that they travel both for work and leisure, it was noticeable that those two types of trips seem to differ widely when it comes to food selection. Those who stated they travel for work mentioned later on in the sections where discussed about finding the food or selecting restaurants, that during their work related trips they rarely put an effort on the food. During work related trips finding the food is seen more important than the quality of the food. Anyhow from those respondents who stated that they travel mainly for food, those who also travelled for work, the majority still tries to find some restaurants beforehand so that the quality of the food would not be significantly lower than usually.

According to the results of this research vegan tourists can roughly be divided in to two categories; those who travel for food and will hereby be referred as culinary vegan tourists, and those who state other travel motivators than food more important (such as nature or culture).

It does not make a difference [whether the trip is work or holiday related] because for me the main thing is to get something out of the veganism, because it's my passion. So anytime I choose a trip, it's somehow related to the food (Citation from a respondent.)

In general culinary vegan tourists seem to be more demanding when it comes to the quality of the restaurants and cafes in the destination. They also have a tendency to plan further before the trip and to gather information on different restaurants than those who stated the travel motivators to be other than food related. Furthermore culinary vegan tourists seem to choose their destination according to the variety of the

restaurant and often return to the places where they have found a rich selection of vegan and vegetarian restaurants.

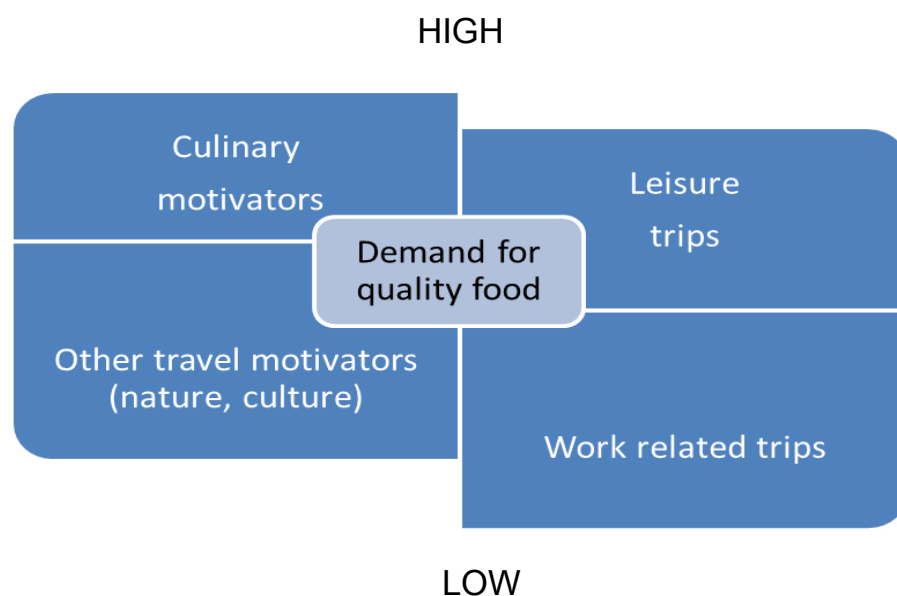


Figure 4. The level of the demand on quality food. This graph presents how the travel motivators and the trip types locate in the scale of demanding quality food.

The culinary vegan tourists tend to visit local shops selling vegan products and bring them home. It seems more likely for culinary vegan tourists to recommend the destination (especially restaurants) to their friends and write reviews on Happy Cow than those who travel for other reasons.

If taking a look at the Hjalager's (2003, in Kivela & Crofts 2006, 357) gastronomy tourist types represented earlier in chapter 3 the vegan culinary tourists in this research seem mostly fall into two of his categories; existential and experimental gastronomy tourists. Moreover those who have features of the existential gastronomy tourists tend to primarily gain more knowledge on vegan food and are aiming to gain their knowledge of the different options in the vegan market, rather than in the country or culture they visit.

Even though majority of the respondents stated that they are interested to know about the culture of the visited country, it's not the main motivator for any of the respondents. Some of the respondents, especially the younger, showed the features of experimental gastronomy tourists. They seem to be interested in learning about the newest trends and to learn more about the different forms of veganism, such as raw foodism. These are also the people who tend to have a food related careers.

For culinary vegan tourists planning of the trip emphasizes on the finding restaurants when for those travelling for other reasons it is more likely, in addition to the restaurants, to seek information on attractions and museums etc. For respondents who do not go into the category of culinary vegan tourists the quality of the food is not in such big role when they travel and they seem to worry about finding the proper food more than culinary vegan tourists. Furthermore it appears to be more common for those tourists to carry their own food with them.

Culinary vegan tourists see the influences on the experience mainly in a positive matter. They gain the best experiences by finding new restaurants, cafes and vegan stores. Therefore also their expectations are higher than other vegan tourists'. Anyhow they often seem to avert disappointments by avoiding destinations that do not seem to offer much variety on vegan food and by returning to places that they have discovered to be comprehensive food wise.

For the culinary tourists the food undeniably is in a major role when choosing a destination and they have a tendency to visit certain destinations frequently. Berlin and Stockholm were mentioned most often by the culinary vegan tourists and these were destinations that all in all were popular amongst all of the respondents. The reason for this seems to be the easiness of finding the food and the wide variety of different vegan options. These destinations are also seen relatively accessible.

As for person who follows the vegan diet also other ethical and ecological issues seems to be important, most of the respondents prefer European destinations in order to avoid long distant flights. For many of the respondents it appears to be important that

flying is avoided if possible. This of course requires time and conceivably extra effort which sometimes leads to the decision to choose to fly; only one of the respondents stated that flying would not be an option in any case. Other modes of transport used are; train, ferry, bus and hitch-hiking. Ferry was especially preferred by the respondents with children.

Recently we [parents and two kids] have been travelling to Stockholm because it is easy with the children. (Citation from a respondent)

The mode of transportation influences on the eating habits during the trip. For example when travelling by bus or hitch-hiking, the respondents are more likely to carry their own lunch since the selection in the gas stations and roadside restaurants are not seen diverse. The lack of options leads to the poor quality of the food during the journey itself. It was discussed by many respondents that even if the destination offers rather good and quality food the journey can sometimes be challenging. Especially for those who come outside of capital area. They first need to travel to airport or train station which makes the length of the journey relatively long even when travelling to the nearby destinations like Stockholm or Tallinn.

As earlier discussed in 2.1.2, the assumption by Puuronen (2008, 200) seems to be followed by majority of the respondents as one of the most import issues in veganism seems to be keeping the vegan line rather than concentrate on small details. This seems to escalate when travelling as it may not be possible to always know what ingredients the dish contains. In these cases half of the respondents seemed to be willing to give up some of their principles in order to sustain a certain level of quality in the food. There are no significant differences between culinary vegan tourists and vegan tourists who travel for other reasons in this sector.

During their holidays approximately half of the respondents from both groups seem to be more willing to eat certain products that they would not normally eat. Those respondents, who stated health to be one of the motivations to sustain a vegan diet, seemed to be stricter to make sure that they eat vegan products on all times, regardless

whether they were on holiday or at home. Even though some of the respondents stated to be stricter on their dietary habits than the others, the unifying factor for all of the respondents appears to be that everyone agrees to concentrate on the details of the diet more in Finland than they do while travelling abroad. For those who are stricter on the ingredients it is shown in leveling down the quality of the food in order to sustain the vegan diet, and for the others in leveling down the importance of the ingredients in order to sustain the level of quality. This has been presented in the figure 2.

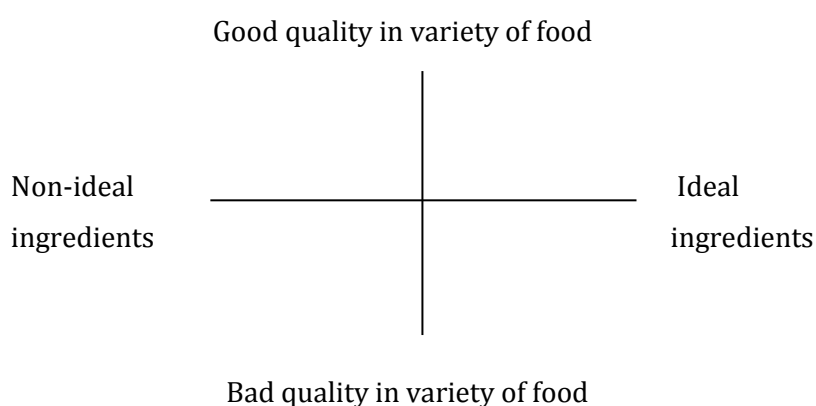


Figure 5. The scope of the quality of the food and the ideality of the ingredients.

Leveling down the quality of the food in this context means the quality in the variety. For example in some destinations the selection of vegan foods can be lesser than in other destinations. In these cases the vegan tourist might need to buy one's own food from the grocery store or come up with other solutions. Most of the respondents stated that they have faced situations where they have cooked their own food or bought finger food such as nuts or protein bars from the grocery store when they have been unable to find restaurants serving vegan food.

When it becomes to the importance of different products the answers seem to vary a lot. Despite the fact that most of the respondents see honey or bee wax easier to consume than for example meat, all of the individuals seem to have different attitude towards different products. For instance some of the respondents see fish as repulsive as red meat and milk products as something they might consume in a situation where other food is not available. Conversely for the others milk products would be harder to

consume than fish. Accordingly there is no cohesion to be seen in the area of prioritizing certain products.

As 70% of the respondents have not faced a situation where they have felt uneasy to refuse a dish, and even those who stated that they have, said it is more common in Finland than during their travels. It seems that the uncomfortable situations experienced abroad are most often a consequence of cultural differences, language barrier and a lack of options. Majority stated that they have often received a dish that did not match their order but did not want to return it as it felt more difficult than eating the unsuitable dish.

When talked about missing out in experiences the majority stated they have felt they have missed out on some experiences mainly because there has not been a wide variety on the vegan options. This was also referred by a term “dish jealousy”, meaning that the non-vegan dishes seem more appealing on appearance making a vegan to feel left out on some food experiences.

In some extent [felt that has missed out some experiences], sometimes there has been some dish jealousy when others have been eating all kind of treats.

Not really, well of course I've missed out some, for example I don't know what some grasshopper tastes like, but I don't look for those experiences. I'm not like oh no I could not taste a grasshopper.

Even though majority of the respondents admit that in some extent they feel they have missed out some experiences it is not necessarily seen in a negative way. It was commonly discussed that the veganism is one's own choice and therefore different type of experiences are sought to replace the ones they feel they have missed out on.

Albeit the food was seen as an important part of the culture there was cohesion on the matter that missing out some experience does not influence on getting to know the

culture itself. Majority of the respondents did not feel that they would need to taste certain foods in order to gain the same understanding on the culture of the country as a person who eats meat products. This is possibly resulting from the fact that majority of the respondents have visited countries that share a similar culture to their own and the traditional dishes of the country are rather familiar to the respondents.

The information on vegetarian food was seen easier to be found than the information on purely vegan food, which can be explained by the amount of these two restaurant types; there simply exists wider range of vegetarian restaurants than vegan restaurants in the market. Anyhow many of the vegetarian restaurants tend to offer also vegan options and the staff is aware of the definition of veganism and therefore is more willing to prepare vegan option. For that reason having lesser vegan options is not seen as a vast problem.

All in all the research seems to show that the travel motivators have a great impact on the eating habits during the travel. For the culinary vegan tourists the quality of the food is often proportional to their travel experience, although it is not necessarily the only factor that determinates the level of the experience.

6.2 Conclusion

As this thesis started from an author's personal interest on veganism and its influence on the personal travel experience, the natural starting point was to deepen the knowledge of the veganism and its history. This was done by reviewing the existing literature and by familiarizing oneself with various vegan societies around the world. The thesis was commissioned by Vegaanliitto and the society was consulted in the matter of getting the information on the number of their members and the history of the society. Vegaaniliitto was also assisting in the process of searching the respondents for the research.

The qualitative research method was chosen since the research questions were merely based on the personal views and opinions of the respondents. Veganism, for many, is a subject that raises diverse opinions, often supported by referring to personal experi-

ence. For this reason it seemed natural to keep the interviews open for the respondents, to correspondingly give an opportunity to freely express their personal views and experiences. The interviews were done simultaneously with the literature review and they supported each other; the interviews gave new perspectives to which direction to lean on and the knowledge gained by studying the literature helped to have better understanding on the issues discussed during the interviews.

The latter part of the thesis presents the results and the findings of the research. The influences of the vegan diet on one's travel experience seemed to be more positive than the author had expected. Even though majority of the respondents admitted they have faced problems during their travels, due to their diet, the positive food-related experiences were seen more essential.

Despite the fact that there is still room for more research in the field of vegan tourism, this research undeniably opened up certain questions connected to veganism and its influence on tourism.

6.2.1 Validity and reliability

As the majority of the respondents are from the capital area the results are not proportional to the scale of whole Finland. Therefore the research mainly describes a vegan tourist in capital area.

This research concentrates on the individual views of a small segment of respondents; therefore it is not possible to state the research to relate to the segment of vegan tourists in a wider scale. Anyhow the research has taken a deep insight in the issue of the vegan diet's influence on the travel experience on an individual level, mainly concentrating on European destinations.

The respondents of this research have mainly travelled in the Europe and in nearby destinations where the food culture is rather similar to our own. It is possible, but not certain, that the results would be different if the respondents had been travelling in the

countries where the food culture is not as close to our own and the traditional dishes would not be that familiar to the respondents beforehand.

6.2.2 Suggestions for further research

Since there is no wider research made in the field of vegan tourism there is need for further research. As this study gives a fraction of information on the influences of vegan diet on the travel experience it still leaves out a wide amount of different groups that the concept of vegan diet includes.

This study concentrates mainly on two different categories; vegan culinary tourists and the vegan tourists with other travel motivators, but has not gone deeper in finding the different types of vegan tourists. In order to acknowledge the different types, a wider research would be needed. Furthermore the difference between vegans travelling with and without children is a possible subject of research.

Since only Finnish vegan tourists were taken into account and from a rather small geographical area, the same study would be possible to repeat in the other countries as well in order to get more information on vegan tourists around the world.

In addition research that studies differences between male and female respondents has not yet been conducted.

By researching the above mentioned issues it will give the destinations, companies, cities, tour operators and consumers, helpful information on vegan tourism and its level of importance in the niche market. As vegan tourism is a relatively unknown area in tourism field, but is likely to be a growing market segment in the future, there is need for further research.

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Attachments

Attachment 1. The interview question form



Vegan travel- In what aspects does following a vegan diet impact on the travel experience.

Interview

Date:

Basic information
Age:
Gender:
City:

Background information to the topic
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How long have you been a vegan?• What were the main reasons/motivations for you to start a vegan diet?• How many times a year do you travel outside of Finland?• To which continent have you travelled the most<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ <i>Europe</i>○ <i>Asia</i>○ <i>Africa</i>○ <i>South America</i>○ <i>North America</i>○ <i>Australia</i>

Travel motivators

- Do you travel mainly for business or leisure?
- Do you usually travel independently or take part in package holidays?
- What are the most important factors for you when choosing a travel destination?
- Does your diet influence on the decision about your destination? *(For example have you decided not to travel a certain place because you have found it impossible to find suitable food on that destination)*

Before the trip

- Do you plan well and make timetables for your trip?
- Do you worry beforehand whether it is easy to find suitable food in the destination?
- Do you feel that your diet causes you some extra work prior you departure?

During the trip

- Do you feel that your diet sets some restrictions to your travels?
- Have you experienced situations where finding a suitable food has been difficult or even impossible? *(How did you cope in situations like these?)*
- Have there been any situations where you have felt uneasy or embarrassed to refuse a certain dish?

Ideological beliefs

- Have you ever experienced situations where you have conceded some of your principles and eaten something that is not part of your diet? *(Tell about the situation)*
- Are there some ingredients you would rather eat than others? *(e.g. eggs rather than fish)*
- Let's imagine a situation. You are in a small village in Africa visiting a local community; they offer you their traditional food that they have prepared for you to enjoy. The food consists of milk. How do you react?
 - Would the situation change if instead of milk the dish would consist of chicken?

Personal influence on travel experience

- Do you feel that you have missed out on some experiences by not being able to try some of the food?
- Do you think that food plays a big role in representing a culture of a certain country?
- Have you visited countries where vegan (or vegetarian) food has actually been an important part of the culture?
- Do you believe that food has a significant role in travel experience?

Opinions on existing information

- What is your main source of information when you look for the information of the vegan options in your destination?
- Do you think it is currently easy to find information about the vegan restaurants and options? (*Happycon, guides etc.*)
- Do you feel that there would be need for more guides or websites that would gather information of good vegan restaurants around the world?