

Food expectations of international travelers in Finland

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<p>The aim of this study was to research the food expectations of international travelers, image of Finnish food and travelers' wishes concerning food products and services during their stay in Finland. The subject is relevant and contemporary for Finland. This thesis is a part of larger entity FOOD&TRAVEL project, which aims to produce tools for actors in the tourism industry.</p> <p>The study was conducted in a quantitative method and carried out using a survey during March 2013 at the Helsinki-Vantaa Airport and at Esplanade, downtown Helsinki. The questionnaires studied international travelers' images, conception and expectations of Finnish food, money spenditure and most suitable times, places and products for eating. 112 short interview-like open-end questions were performed at the end of the survey asking "What kind of thoughts does Finnish food bring to your mind?" There</p> <p>The results of this study indicate that image of Finnish food is quite unknown. Image of Finnish food is mainly neutral or positive. Finnish food is considered of high quality, clean and safe. Food and food products in Finland were considered strongly safe and expensive as well as fresh, mild, old-fashioned and of good quality. Many travelers assume that food in Finland is produced locally in small farms and generally the food is considered clean. Travelers wish to eat mostly three meals per day. The most wanted Finnish food products were fish in general and the most commonly mentioned species was salmon. The favorite places to dine were casual restaurants and market halls. These findings are consistent with previous researches done in this field. Food as a phenomenon is discussed, conclusions of the results are presented and future research suggestions are made.</p> <p>The survey reveals new information in the form of specific information about traveler's expectations and wishes. To get more valid information the surveys should be repeated annually during high seasons. Investigating travelers' needs and wishes offers fruitful material to be investigated and analyzed. Results offer tools to design, plan and execute better services and products for tourism needs. Nordic purity, the Finnish natural environment with its lakes and forests, the purity of waters, nature and everything in it from berries to game should be carefully designed to create a world-class Finnish Food Brand to be introduced to the world.</p>	
Asiasanat: Food expectations, international travelers, Finland, Finnish food	

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1 Introduction

Tourism is a major global industry which plays a crucial role in nearly every country in the world. The number of international arrivals shows an evolution from 25 million international arrivals in 1950 to an estimated 806 million in 2005. Year 2012 was a new record year with over 1 billion international tourists. (UNWTO 2013.)

Food on the other hand has become a common conversation topic not only in households and cafes around the world but it has also become a hot topic in international business meetings, global tourism conventions and government's development programs. Until recently, food's importance to tourism has been ignored despite its inevitable importance and potential. (UNWTO 2012; WTO 2000) Food and the image of food has been recognized being important both economically and culturally impacting the citizens of each country as well as the travelers visiting them. Clear, refined image of food in a specific region has shown significant positive effect on tourism, strengthening cultural heritage and increasing the feeling of togetherness within a region. (UNWTO 2012.)

Research question was to find answers to the following questions: "What kind of image does Finnish food have among international travelers and what are the conceptions of international travelers concerning Finnish food?" The subject is relevant and contemporary to Finland. To investigate this, the research questions the image of Finland and discusses the current state of Finnish food and food culture. Tourism in Finland is reviewed shortly and the role of food in travelling industry is considered. A survey concerning food expectations of international travelers in Finland was conducted at the international airport in Helsinki-Vantaa and downtown Helsinki, at Esplanade. The survey investigated the image and expectations of Finnish food among international travelers as well as their specific food wishes, money expenditure and eating habits. The aim of the survey was to collect useful information about international travelers for all operators in travelling industry. Quantitative research was conducted as an informed questionnaire survey for information gathering. This thesis is a part of the larger entity "FOOD&TRAVEL"- project which aims to produce tools for actors in the tourism industry.

2 Food and tourism

Food and food services have been an important part of traveling and tourism for as long as people have been travelling. Since food has become a popular subject in all fields of life it is natural that its importance in travelling has also developed more and different kind of dimensions. One new dimension is "Food Tourism" which according to Hellstedt (2010, 1-2) can be described as a special form of travelling where food, drinks and food experiences are partly or totally the motivating reason to travel into a certain destination. It is quite a new phenomenon, and according to Boniface (2003, 29) what has happened is that eating and drinking, which previously played minor parts during a tourism experience have become causes to travel in their own right. "Food tourism" is also considered the most trendiest and interesting form of specialty travelling. There is strong belief in the attractiveness of food and drinks. According to Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry's briefing (2013) gastronomy is one tourism's strongest pull-factors in future. (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry 2013) Within Europe for example, regions in Spain, France or Italy represent this kind of destinations where eating and drinking play a major role in decision making. The most famous publication of food travelling recommendations is the annually published guide books by the French company Michelin called "Michelin Guide". Even when fine-dining genre is not a large part of food tourism as a whole, the reputation of the Michelin-guide is known and appreciated around the world. The idea of the Michelin Guide is not only to evaluate the restaurants around the world in the level of quality concerning food and service but also to offer travelers a tool to make travelling decisions. If a restaurant has one Michelin star it is considered as follows; "A very good restaurant in its category" ("Une très bonne table dans sa catégorie"). If the restaurant has two stars it means: "Excellent cooking, worth a detour" ("Table excellente, mérite un détour") If three stars are given the meaning is: "Une des meilleures tables, vaut le voyage" in English: "Exceptional cuisine, worth a special journey".(Michelin Guide 2013.)

Traveler numbers have increased steadily in Finland during the last years. (Visit Finland 2013) In 2011 there were 7.3 million foreign visitors in Finland. This is 17 per cent more than the visitor number from previous year 2010. Foreign visitors brought 2.2

illion € to Finland in 2011. The Finnish tourism industry had a record year in 2012, both in terms of foreign arrivals and foreign overnight stays according to Statistics Finland. A record level of 20 million overnight stays was exceeded. Overnight stays by foreign tourists increased by five per cent. In 2012, accommodation establishments in Finland recorded a total of 5.8 million overnight stays from foreign tourists. The largest markets for overnight stays were the neighboring countries of Russia and Sweden, followed by Germany and the United Kingdom. (Visit Finland 2013) Tourism is a very significant field to Finland's national economy. According to Statistics Finland in 2009, a total of 11 billion € was spent on tourism in 2007 in Finland from which foreign travelers accounted for 29% and 3.1 billion €. In 2007, the value added generated by tourism amounted to 3.6 billion €, which is 2.3% of Finland's GDP. Tourism was larger than the food industry and nearly twice as high as agriculture. According to the tourism account, total employment in the tourism sector was nearly 65 000 people in 2007. (Tourism account 2007) In 2012 Finland received 7.6 million foreign visitors. The number of travelers grew by five per cent from the year 2011. The latest information from Statistics Finland on 1st August 2013 revealed that foreign visitors brought over 4 billion € to Finland in 2012. The amount of money brought by the travelers has doubled in ten years. (Visit Finland 2013.)

The interest towards other people and other cultures is old and ongoing. Associated food and drink are experimented there. Travelers seek knowledge, reconnection and understanding with the land, its people and agriculture by consuming traditional and artisan food and drink. What people eat, how food is served and how people eat adds specialty features in consumption of food. (Boniface 2003, 27.)

When travelling is considered, it is clear that social class also has a clear effect on the formation of customers. The people in the lowest income class are less likely to travel due to the lack of financial means to spend on travelling. People in the developed world who travel can afford to be more conscious about what they eat also. (UNWTO 2012) Consumers globally are more and more interested in food and increasingly conscious about what they eat. The impact of food on the environment has become an important topic. Food has also become an aspect of destination planning for some travelers. These "foodies" or "food travelers" are a growing number of people. One of the

signals showing the growth of “Food Tourism” is the founding of “International Culinary Tourism Association”. The founder Erik Wolf started the original International Culinary Tourism Association in 2003. The World Food Travel Association (WFTA) changed its name from International Culinary Tourism Association in 2012. The Association identifies industry needs in food tourism education and research, food tourism product development and food tourism promotion. The Association has also been instrumental in forming strategic partnerships with related organizations, and by connecting leadership at regional and international food tourism industry events. WFTA today has over 18 000 members in 135 countries and they have hosted 10 regional and international food tourism industry conferences. (WFTA 2013.)

2.1 Factors effecting food choices

Food choices people make are based on many factors: practicality, necessity as well as context, environment, beliefs, conventions and aspirations. Culture is an integral element of what and how people eat and drink. Consumers want to celebrate through food and drink on holidays and they seek to escape through non-routine foods. Food and drink also offers effortless sensory pleasure and experience. (Boniface 2003, 12) The general supply of food products and services offered in the destination country creates the environment and boundaries where tourists make their food choices. Each country has different kinds of food products and cooking styles which they offer to their own citizens as well as to tourists. For optimal money spenditure it is crucial to investigate the needs and wants of the tourists to make sure the services and products meet their wishes. When it comes to marketing, the basic concept is all about human needs. This also applies when food is in concern. If the wishes of tourists are not considered a large amount of money of the travelers will be unspent. If travelers expect and wish some specific kind of products there should be a large presentation of these products in the destination country. All services, products and price variables should be available to make sure the traveler spends the maximum amount of money. Less desired products, inadequate presentation, unclear communication, poor variety of products all lead to smaller sales. In a recent study composed by Smiigo (2013) Russian travelers stated that they had planned to use more money than what was actually spent while travelling in Finland. This is a clear indication of not having enough products

and services for Russians to spend their money in. Communications play a crucial role in travelers' food options. The same study by Smiigo as well as other studies such as shows that what plays a major role in making the decision of the restaurant services for Russians is if the restaurant has a menu in Russian language. This suggests that there are easily conductible procedures which could increase food sales in all fields of operations. Easy access, necessary communicational products and signs, large variety of options and decent price-quality ratio would offer optimal sales situations. When motivated, well-trained, multi-lingual, professional and friendly personnel would be added to this equation there is a high likelihood of action and satisfaction to take place. (Smiigo Oy 2013, 43–48.)

There are also other kinds of factors effecting food choices of travelers. One factor affecting food choices are changes in the macro environment of the food. Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) or “Mad Cow” or “Bird flu” (H5N1 Virus) which both led into major changes in the supply and demand of the products involved. (EUR-FLEX 2013) Factors such as the weather can also affect travelers' food choices and preferences. Open air restaurants, island operators, ice cream sellers and market places are examples of food operators highly affected by the weather. Effect on food choice comes due to the fact that if the weather is not favorable these operators may keep their premises closed and therefore these options are not available for travelers to use. (Globeadvisor 2003; International Food and Agribusiness Management Review 2005.)

2.2 Finnish Country Brand and image of Finland

What international travelers think of Finnish food and what kind of images and expectations they have contributes to the brand of Finland. Finland has not been investigating images of travelers for very long and only in the last decade serious attempts to figure out the image of Finland have been done. One of them was a project by Finland Promotion Board aiming to create Finnish country brand in 2006. T. Moilanen and S.

Rainisto were recruited in the project the following year 2007 and they published a program of operations in 2008 for building the country brand for Finland. This program included suggestions for operations, participants and organization. The program of operations was meant to open the conversation for all participants. Country brand report was released in November 2011. The report explained that there are two different things to consider: firstly an image of a country which is mainly accidental, unplanned entity, in which an individual has created an image colored with values and emotions, beliefs and experiences. Secondly, there is a country brand, which on the other hand is a conscious action in which the image of a country is pursued to be taken towards a country brands direction via concrete methods and actions. According to the report, the brand must always be based on facts. (Maabrändiraportti 2011.)

Picture 2. Haukkajärvi, Finland (Photo: Pusa, P. 2013)



In the report country branding expert Teemu Moilanen (2011) explains that unlike companies, there are people living in countries and for this reason country branding work can't therefore act based on the logics of economy. When Finland is being marketed in the framework of being a home brings it in elements from outside the business world. Moilanen suggests that whether we want it or not, there are large amounts of images, beliefs, opinions and myths about Finland and Finns. Tourists visiting Finland collect information and spread it all in their own directions. All these opinions,

beliefs and experiences together form the reputation of Finland. (Maabrändiraportti 2011.)

According to Moilanen's prior research (2008), he uses results of a study conducted by Finland Convention Bureau where spontaneous images of Finland was researched in seven most important marketing areas for Finland in the world: In Germany, Sweden, Russia, UK, Netherlands, Italy and France. This research found that the general image of Finland is mainly positive, if there is any. The image differs depending on the country in question. One of the most central results was that Finland does not have a clear, unique profile as a country. General image mainly concerns coldness, nature and winter. General demographic factors did not have much to do with the content of the image of Finland. (Finnish Country Brand Report 2008.)

Simon Anholt explains in an article in November 2000 issue of *Across the Board* that a brand is a complex mixture of attributes whose actual personality in the end only exists in the mind of the customer. One important attribute mentioned is the influence that the brands country of origin has on the perception of the brand. Like corporate brands, the country brand evokes values, qualifications and emotional triggers in customers' minds about any product coming from that specific country, claims Anholt. Nokia has managed to create all new "Brand Finland" which was possible due to the belief that in cold-climate countries people are assumed to be efficient and precise. (Anholt 2000.)

In a survey conducted by Finnish Tourist Board in 2011 concerning image of Finland in Chinese social media food does not come up. The only thing mentioned about food is that everybody can pick berries and mushrooms and to save money when eating, one should order salads or buffet meals due to their lower price compared to other food products. (Finnish Tourist Board 2011.)

Picture 3. Finnish mushrooms (Photo: Pusa, P. 2013)



Images are often thought of being projections of outer reality inside our heads. This would indicate that images themselves are not real but solely some sort of a model or image of reality. These models nevertheless are also parts of the structures in our minds through which we observe the world. This also directs behavior of the people. Images also represent their own kind of reality which strongly affects the reality we produce to ourselves within our choices. Reality of the images is similar to the reality of beliefs, knowledge and information. Despite their immaterial nature they can have severe effects on reality. Images and conceptions have become crucial factors of success in western societies for organizations and people. (Karvonen 1999) Similarly, countries, regions and counties have also noticed that the conception has a noticeable impact on attractiveness. Destination can have an image built concretely by marketing where the image comes from the destination or an image which is built by the travelers own basis. (Saraniemi 2001; Tuohino, 2001.)

A brand is a name, term, sign, symbol, design or combinations of them which identifies the maker, seller, product or service. Consumers view brands as an important part of a products image. Branding has become so strong that nearly everything is branded, even fruits and vegetables. (Kotler & Armstrong 2005, 243.)

The image of a destination has an effect on people's decision to travel. Companies and regions pursue with methods such as advertising to create the desired image. Travelers are consumers, and like all consumers according to Kotler and Armstrong they don't know themselves exactly what influences their purchases. Choices and purchases are influenced by cultural, social, personal and psychological characteristics. Cultural influence is strong and therefore culture, subculture and social class plays crucial roles in decision making. Culture can be considered the basic cause of wants and behavior of a person and the source of basic values, perception wants and behaviors from important institutions like family. Subcultures are smaller groups of people with shared value systems, life experiences or common situations. Social classes exist in nearly all societies in some form. Classes can be measured as a combination of occupation, income, education, wealth or other variables. These social classes are considered relatively permanent divisions. (Kotler & Armstrong 2005.)

A traveler according to World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) is "someone who moves between different geographic locations, for any purpose and any duration" According to same source International Tourism includes all displacements that do not convert the international traveler into a resident (whether usual or non-usual environment) and it is classified by nationality. Based on this idea, researcher accepted as a participant for the survey all people who stated being non-Finnish residents visiting Finland for any purpose. (UNWTO 2010).

2.3 Finnish food

Finnish food culture is multidimensional. Its cuisine characteristics are strongly Scandinavian but separated from other Scandinavian countries due to its eastern influences. Culturally food is important because it promotes cultural togetherness, strengthens identity and maintains the cultural heritage. (Mäkelä 2010; WTO 2013) Overall it is Finland's Nordic location, with its snowy, freezing winters, pure soil and ground waters

as well as long, light summer days which gives the Finnish cuisine its special, fresh taste. Fish, game and berries are characteristic of Finnish food culture. (This is Finland, Fresh from Finland 2013.)

For the past century food has been in a major role when Finnish values and democracy has developed its forms in the society and all of its structures such as in a form of free school to all children. During the last few decades food has become a major topic among everybody in Finland showing its different dimensions in all aspects of lives of the Finns. General interest towards food has risen in all developed countries including Finland. This can be noticed everywhere in the society. Consumers all over the world have increasingly come to understand that there is a relationship between what they have on their plates and what happens in the world. More and more detailed data available about products has made consumers more aware of the effects of the food choices they make. Food scandals keep food in the main stream media. TV offers cooking shows, cooking competitions, food travelling programs, celebrity chefs cooking in celebrity homes and restaurant kitchen stories. New food projects start every year in Finland like Ny Nordisk Mat, Helsinki Food strategy and Finland's national food strategy. Newspapers and internet sites are filled with articles discussing organic food, local production, GMO, small farming and ethical consumption methods. Food has become a vessel to convey beliefs, attitude and opinions about consumption in general. Food choices of urban citizens reflect their view on life. Personal values and health issues are important factors found to influence food choices. (Baker et al. 2004, 995–1012; Honkanen et al. 2006, 420-430.)

2.4 Global nutritional challenges vs. Finnish nutritional values

Current global food system feeds more than six billion people but within unbalanced allocation. More than 925 million people are undernourished and more than two billion are overweight. World's population is estimated to reach 9.3 billion by 2050. World's population increased from 2.5 billion to 6.9 billion between 1950 and 2010.

During this period the proportion of the world's population living in less developed regions increased from 68% to 82%. This trend is likely to continue similarly. (UN Department of Economic and social Affairs Population Division 2011.)

Governments globally are more and more concerned about obesity and diseases associated to it as well as escalating health costs. (WHO 2000) Overweight is a form over-nutrition which is already nearly as major contributor as tobacco to national and international health. (Scarborough et al. 2011; 1-9.) Obesity is not only a problem in developed countries but increasingly growing into a major problem in developing countries. As developing countries become prosperous, shift in eating and activity patterns occur. People eat more sugars, more fat and processed foods. From the countries where highest increase in obesity has occurred 8 out of 10 where newly industrialized or developing nations. In China, Mexico, Thailand and Brazil for example obesity is growing faster than in United States. (Popkin & Gordon-Larsen 2004, 28:S2-S9) This paradox is a global problem. Population suffers from obesity and under-nutrition at the same time. In Bangladesh for example population is struggling with high rates of under-nutrition and simultaneously obesity numbers increase rapidly. (Gill 2006, 3-14.)

In developed countries people of the 21st century rely more and more on snacks and convenience foods, packaged food which can be quickly and easily prepared. One trend surfacing globally is interest towards ethical consumerism where consumers intentionally avoid or prefer certain products based on their moral beliefs. Other new trends are "slow food", regional cuisines, traditional farming, functional foods (super foods) organic food and democratization of healthy eating. (Olmsted, L. 2013; European food Trends Report 2008, Australian Institute of Health 2012)

Finland was the first country in the world to legislate school meals in 1943. A law was passed committing the schools to offer free meal to all students. Nowadays nearly 900 000 students eat free school meals in Finnish schools. (EDU 2013) School meals must be arranged appropriately, structured and supervised and well-rounded. The main principals of health, nutrition and teaching of manners are taken into consideration. The process unites the view of representatives of students and their parents, school personnel and thereby creates the foundation for continuous development. (EDU 2013)

Free school meals have been the foundation of Finnish food culture, and a sign of Finnish governments' understanding of importance to commit to populations democratic nutritional care and education. National Nutrition Council publishes and promotes recommendations for population of Finland which have been the foundation when communal meals (in kinder gardens, schools, hospitals, nursing homes etc.) have been planned. National guidelines promote health as an entity where food and beverages should include not only the energy needed but more importantly all necessary nutrients. These guidelines protect the population against national diseases but also act as guidelines preventing other illnesses as well. As an example the vitamin and mineral recommendations effect the condition of the skeletal system through adequate amounts of vitamins A and D, and vitamin C possibly preventing certain cancers. (VRN 2005). Finnish citizens are also enlightened with the usage and effects of salt on high blood pressure. Recently the salt intake limits have been increased to increase the likelihood of more realistic short term goal achievement. (VRN 2005)

Finnish nutrition recommendation follow the guidelines of Nordic Nutrition recommendations. The Nordic countries have been setting collaborated guidelines for several decades when it comes to dietary composition and recommendations of nutrient intake. There are similarities in dietary habits and in the prevalence of diet-related diseases like cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, obesity and diabetes. Medical societies from Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden have been co-operating since 1968. In the recommendations (Nordic Nutrition Recommendations 2004) Nordic Nutrition Recommendations (NNR) also serve as guidelines for the nutritional composition of a diet which provides a basis for good health. The basis for recommendations is defined for each individual nutrient using available scientific evidence which changes in time, and therefore recommendations have to be reassessed when appropriate. NNR are based on the current nutritional situation in the Nordic countries. (Nordic Nutrition Recommendations 2004.)

2.5 Tourists food experiences in Finland

The Finnish Tourist Board (MEK) produces annually statistic records about travelling and travelers but the image of Finnish food and the food expectations has not been investigated widely. There are studies where travelers are asked about their food experiences in Finland such as in 2009 Statistics Finland interviewed travelers from Russia, Sweden, Estonia, Germany and UK asking about their food experiences. Travelers were asked: “What were the best and worst things about eating in Finland?” The results showed that most bad experiences were about the pricing which was considered high. Best things which came up were fish and fish dishes in general. Other “best things” mentioned were bread, reindeer, quality and service. Travelers living in Germany, Russia and UK chose Finnish food more often than travelers living in Sweden or Estonia. (MEK 2009.)

Picture 4. Restaurant Nokka in Helsinki (Photo: Pusa, P. 2013)



Customer expectations have been researched, but food expectations on the other hand is not very widely researched. Some thesis work has been done in Finland in this field; Liisa Pietilä (2009) has done her research about “The international travellers' expectations of the National Park's nourishment services” and Päivi Leppänen (2009) about Russian Customers' Wishes and Expectations of Scandic Patria Restaurant Torilla's Services”. Ville Tillgren (2013), for his part researched “Finnish food as from foreign tourists' point of view”.

A study released in May 2011 by Finnish Tourist Board investigated the image of Finland in Chinese social media. Positive things which came up in this research were following: arctic, aurora borealis, nature and peace, sauna, unique shopping, people, eco-friendliness and beautiful church buildings. Negative things mentioned were the price level (expensive) lack of activities and long flights. The study is based on conversations and comments in Chinese social media. This study did not mention food in anyway.

2.6 Literary review

Literary review consists of books concerning travelling, branding, marketing and tourism, travelling articles and studies, food and travel magazines as well as blogs, open forums and comments in social media. Google was used for searching and social media channels such as Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and blogs. Words used for search were “Food travelling” “Tourism and food” “culinary tourism” “Finnish food” “food experience” “Gastronomy and travel” and “Finnish Brand” during February 2013-september 2013.

Signs of increasing food interest in Finland are the constantly increasing numbers of new, innovative food services and products. Food services and products reflect the food culture in Finland and therefore contribute to the image of Finnish food directly and indirectly. One example of new food phenomena is “The Restaurant Day” which started as a small pop-up happening in Helsinki and has grown in two years into its current state: a worldwide food carnival where anyone can set up a restaurant, café or a bar for a day. It can take place anywhere: at someone’s home, office, on a street corner, in a garden or inner courtyard, park, or on the beach. More than 3600 one-day restaurants have had estimated 12 000 restaurateurs catering for over 180 000 customers in the past Restaurant Days. The growth has been rapid: from the first Restaurant Day on 21st May 2011 in Finland and there were 45 restaurants in 13 cities. Only two years later on 18th of May 2013 there were 1701 restaurants in over 200 cities and 30 countries. (Restaurant Day 2013.)

Picture 5. Taste of Helsinki 2013 (Photo: Pusa, P. 2013)



Another sign on growing food interest in Finland is the foundation of food fairs like “Taste of Helsinki”. “Taste of Helsinki” describes itself as “a boutique picnic, where the best restaurants in the city prepare the food for you”. Taste of Helsinki is the largest gourmet food and wine festival in Finland showcasing 12 restaurants, including 3 of Helsinki’s Michelin starred restaurants and visiting restaurants from other cities where each restaurant prepares 3-signature dishes for you to choose from together with a fantastic selection of wine, champagne, beer and live music in the heart of the city. On the first “Taste of Helsinki” in 2011 they attracted estimated 10 000 visitors. (Taste of Helsinki 2013.)

For tourism purposes there is also a new kind of food service in Helsinki called “Food sightseeing Helsinki”. It is a company which explains their services as “Culinary discovery and getting to know genuine Finnish food, culture and people”. Food Sightseeing was founded 2008 and they arrange tours sampling Finnish flavors in food tastings around the city, gastro-tours and introduction to the Association of Useful Plants. (Foodsightseeing 2013.)

One new food service dimension is the introduction of Finnish private people. A company called “Cosy Finland” arranges “Cosy Finnish Evenings” where private people invite travelers into their home for a three-hour visit. During this visit the Finnish host offers a lunch or dinner and while eating, the host tells about Finnish everyday life.

This new intimate way of eating is a good example of the new, personalized food services. The company has a record of different kinds of private people and the procedure proceeds like dating services. International traveler gives their specifics, interests and hobbies and describes what kind of people they would be interested in. The operator searches from the database a person and home matching the travelers wish criteria. Finnish homes and people are divided into main groups to choose from, for example family with small children, academic elderly couple, farm with animals and ecological lifestyle, single, cosmopolitan city girl etc. Traveler can then decide what kind of “life” they wish to step into for a few hours. The host cooks lunch or dinner and tells about themselves and their lives. This way of eating authentic Finnish home-cooked meal surely has a memorable impact on the travelers’ food experience. (Cosy Finland 2013)

All of these food services have an impact on the image of Finnish food and Finnish food culture. Every food related experience by a traveler returns home into the countries of the travelers and continue spreading forward by word of mouth. These examples also reveal that food has become more of an “experience” and the simple consumption of food products is rapidly changing into unique, personalized food experience.

2.7 The government’s participation

The Finnish government has also recognized the importance of food and food culture. The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Employment and Economy and Finland Convention Bureau all work together for promoting Finnish food culture. There are more and more ongoing projects and researches being conducted concerning food and food culture. The foundation is in the fact that an independent country must ensure the supply for its citizens but it is clear that all food related projects and strategies affect directly travelling industry. Ministry of agriculture and forestry state their vision in “Food for Tomorrow - Proposal for Finland's National Food Strategy” as follows: “Our vision on food for tomorrow is that in 2030 the Finnish consumers eat tasty, wholesome, sustainably produced and safe food. Consumers have the ability to make informed choices. A transparent, highly skilled, flexible and internationally competitive food and service system responds to the

demand. The growth and advancement of the sector find support in well-coordinated, high-level research and development.” (MMM 2012) One indication of the importance of food culture is that the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) included food culture in Unesco World Heritage List in 2008. (Ruokatieto 2010)

While Finland is now rapidly experiencing growing interest towards food, other countries around the world have already been dealing with foods new more visible role for longer. The signs are similar in many countries: TV offers more and more cooking shows and cooking competitions. Celebrity chefs are the new faces of everything possible from grills to spices and plants to pots. TV shows from news to reality shows have chefs participating in them. One could claim that chefs today have expanded into all sections of society and they can nowadays even have political power. One example of making political statements and change and make public old-fashioned structure is Jamie Oliver’s “School Food Revolution”. Jamie Oliver actively encourages the children themselves to take action and demand better food in schools. In Jamie Oliver’s case he has convinced already over 800.000 people globally participating signing an online petition for Food Revolution. (Food Revolution 2013.)

3 Methods

Methods used were chosen because the information wanted was concerning travelers' expectations, beliefs and attitudes. A survey was conducted to learn specific things about international travelers view. Survey forms can collect information about facts, behavior, knowledge, values, attitudes, beliefs and opinions. (Hirsjärvi, S. et al 1997) Likert scale question presents claims and the person answering decides the option which best describes the magnitude of agreeing or disagreeing with the claim. (Hirsjärvi, S. et Al, 1997)

Since this thesis was a part of "Food & Tourism" project, there was specific information wanted by the project leaders Kristiina Havas and Kristiina Jaakonaho. Thesis supervisor Kristiina Jaakonaho explained what kind of information would be useful from their perspective and questions for the questionnaire were modified in order to get the desired answers. Questions and answering options for this survey were formulated based on information needed and based on general assumptions of the researcher. Questionnaire was sent to the project leader K. Jaakonaho three times for commenting. After the first reading Jaakonaho suggested more specific questions about desired mealtimes and these questions were added at this point. There were a total of 23 questions, from which first 7 questions concerns background information such as country of origin, gender and education. Then follows questions concerning general interest towards food, image of Finland and Finnish foods. Images and beliefs were measured by giving the travelers and opportunity to express volume in beliefs, resulting into more specific and detailed answers. Last question was an interview-like open question to get more specific, less guided answers asking. People were encouraged to speak openly and honestly.

Structured questionnaires were created with Webropol 2.0 survey and analysis system. Surveys were distributed in English face-to-face to 112 international travelers at Helsinki-Vantaa airport during 1.-30.3.2013. The airport was chosen because 36% of all travelers fly into Finland, which makes the airport a natural and manageable place to locate a high concentration of international travelers. Esplanad in downtown Helsinki was chosen due to the same reason, it is a place known for being popular among tourists. Only 13 surveys were conducted at the Esplanad. Because of the timing being in March it was cold outside and it seemed difficult to get people to stop and stay for 15

minutes on the street, so the research continued after first 13 surveys at the airport. Due to the direct contact method the participation level was high. The subject was considered interesting to the interviewees and therefore it was quite easy to get travelers to participate. Only a few people refused the interview due to lack of time. Travelers were chosen randomly at the airport at between 09.00 and 19.00 based on following basic criteria: international traveler, willingness to participate, approximately every other male/female. Surveys were conducted at the airport inside the terminal area. The surveys were printed on paper and filled by the interviewees and/or the researcher. Questions included 21 closed questions, one short interview-like open question and one multidimensional question using "Likert scale". Likert scale was used in a question to find the intensity of chosen attributes claimed about Finland. The question gave claims in pairs such as "expensive" – "cheap" and the interviewee chose between "Totally agree"- "Somewhat agree" and "Neither" on each pair. Only two pairs resulted into "Neither" being the most popular choice. Only two attributes which were "expensive" (-cheap) and "Safe" (-unsafe) received strong "totally agree" results. Majority of the attributes were found "Somewhat" one of the two options. The time spent was 15-20 minutes per each survey. Questions were explained when necessary. Parts of the survey were translated in Chinese for Chinese travelers to make sure the questions and options were understood properly. There were three people in operative part of the research, collecting answers at the airport. One Chinese person and two Finns. Majority of the travelers participated in English, only exceptions were two Chinese travelers who were assisted in Chinese. There were a total of 112 questionnaires completed. The answers were later on added to the Webropol- system for result analysis.

4 Summary of the results

The results of the questionnaires indicate that image of Finnish food is quite unknown. Image of Finnish food is mainly neutral or positive. Finnish food is considered of high quality, clean, safe and expensive. International travelers in Finland are generally interested in food; every fourth woman stated having “High Interest in Food” and every tenth man felt the same. Image of Finnish food in their minds is mainly neutral (59%) or positive (40.2%). It is rare for the international tourists to have a negative image of Finnish food. Food and food products in Finland are considered fresh, mild, old-fashioned and of good quality. Many travelers assume that food in Finland is produced close by in small farms. Travelers wish to eat mostly three meals per day. Most wanted food products to eat in Finland was fish in general and the most common fish mentioned by name was salmon. Favorite places to eat dinner were casual restaurants and market halls.

Picture 6. Norwegian salmon (Photo: Pusa, P. 2013)



4.1 Germans, Chinese and Russians largest groups

There were 24 countries represented among 112 interviewees. Largest group of travelers were from Germany (24% of the interviewees) Chinese tourists (15.2%), Russian travelers (10.7%) and Japanese tourists (9.8%). These four countries all together were 60% from all travelers in this survey. The rest of the travelers were from 20 other countries. 56.3% of the interviewees were men. Among the travelers there were 63 men (56.25%) and 49 women (43.75%). Most women came from Germany and China. (Figure 1.)

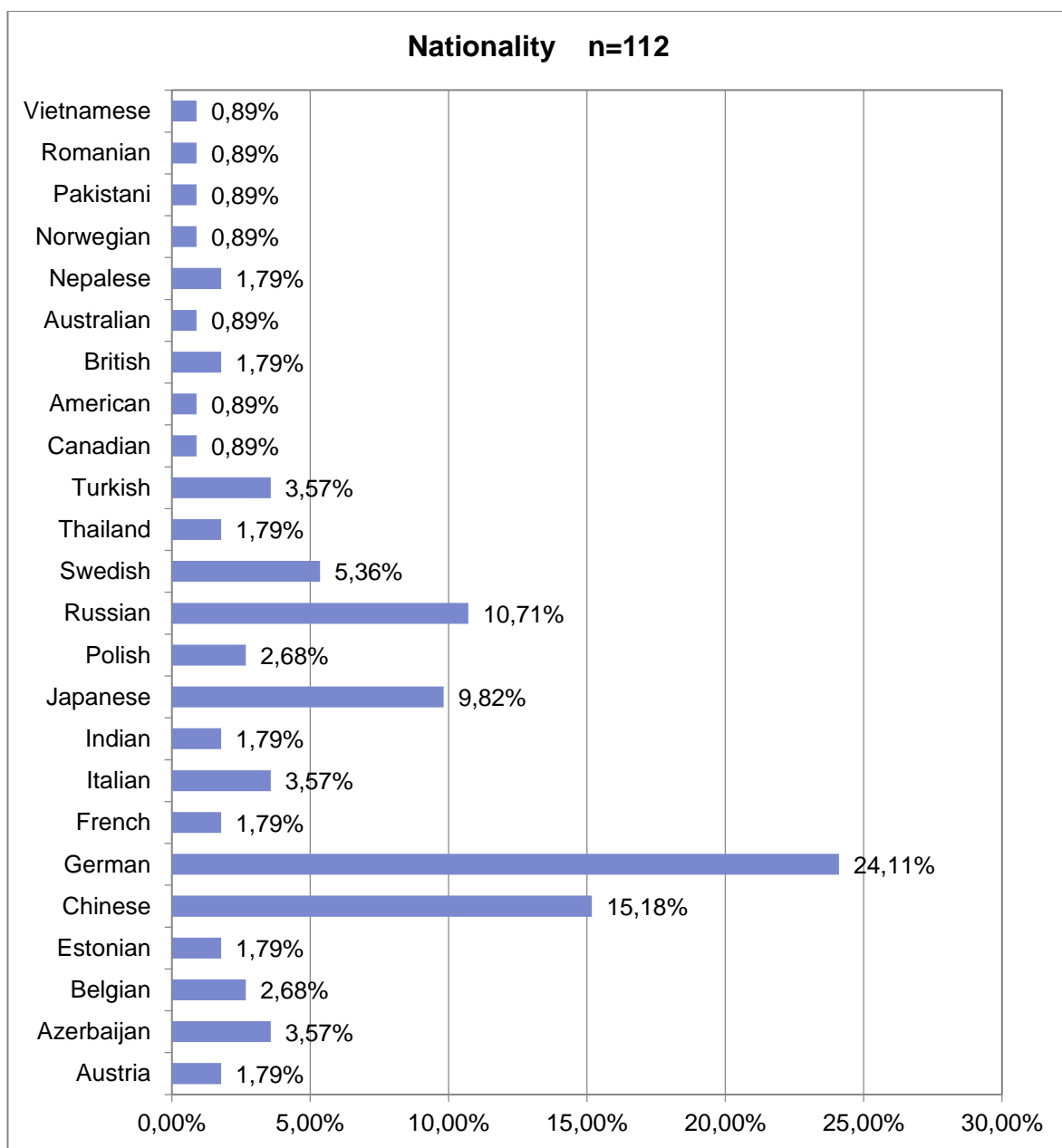


Figure 1. All travelers by Country of Origin, n=112

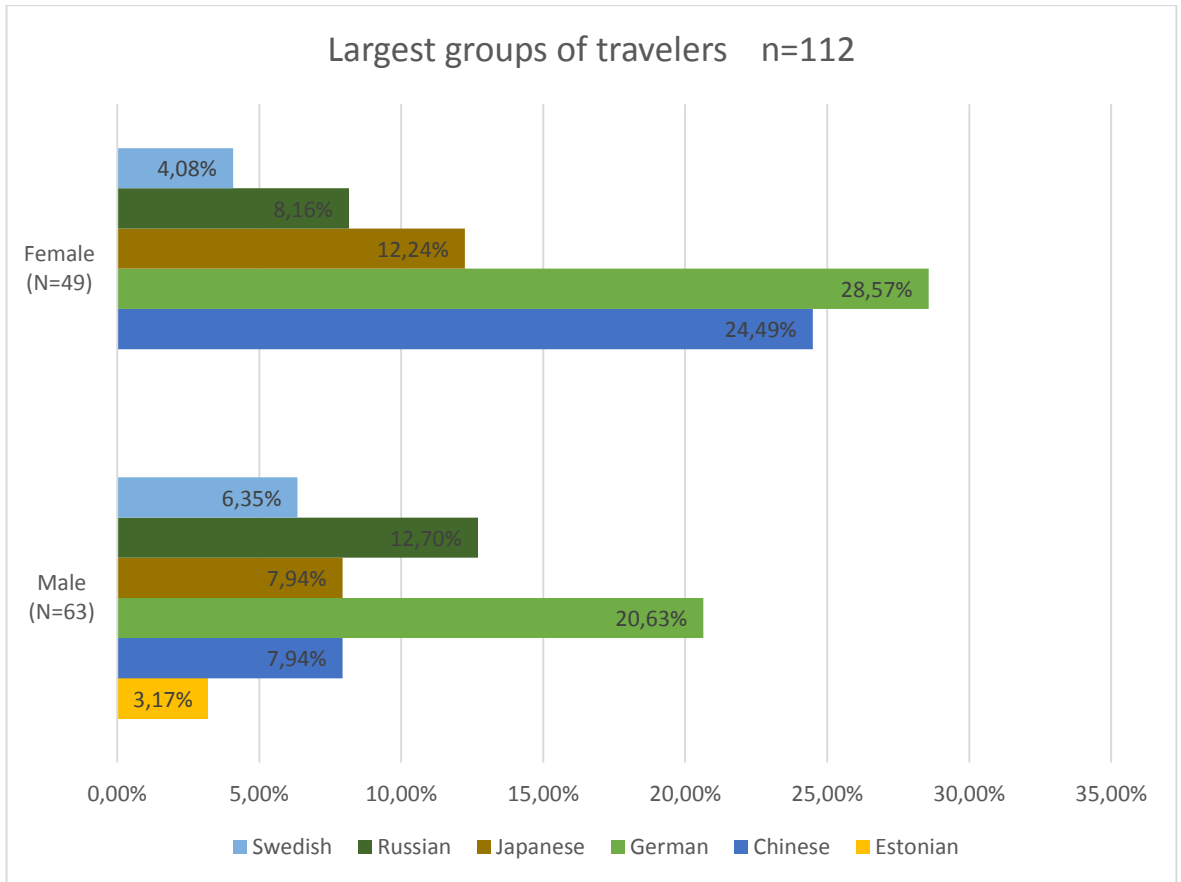


Figure 2. Largest groups of travelers, n=112

4.2 70% of the travelers between 25-45 years

The largest age group was the age group 25-34 years (38,4%) from which 53% were women. Majority of the travelers, nearly 70% were between 25-45 years. 12,5% of travelers were between 55-64 years from which 11,1% were women. There were no travelers over 75 years. (Figure 3.)

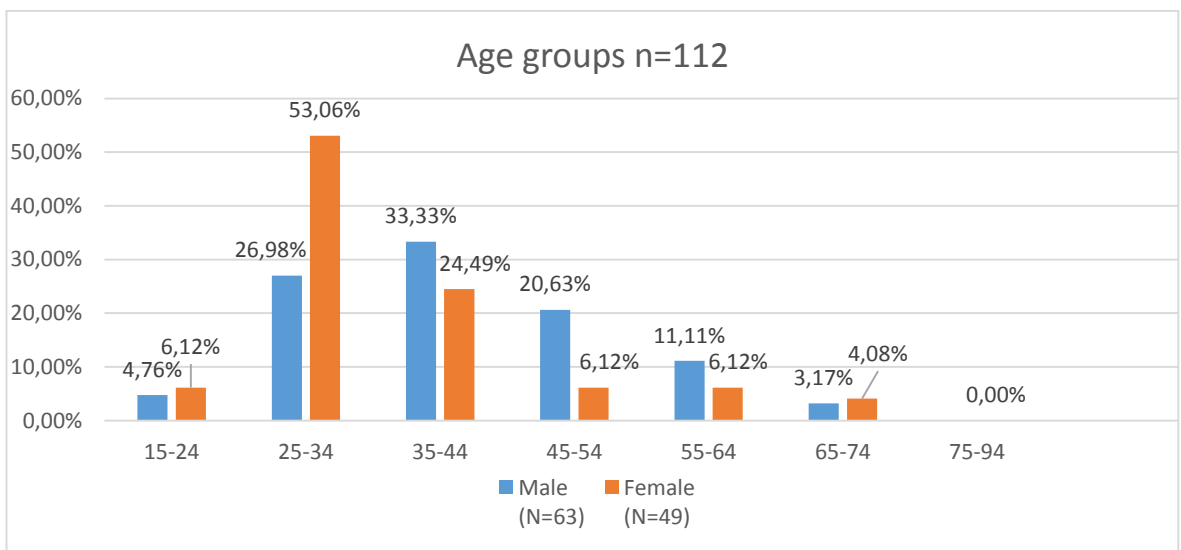


Figure 3. Age groups, n=112

4.3 Education

International travelers in this survey were highly educated. Majority (over 82%) of the interviewees had a university level degree or higher. 16% of the travelers stated having secondary level of schooling. There were no travelers with primary schooling only. (Figure 4.)

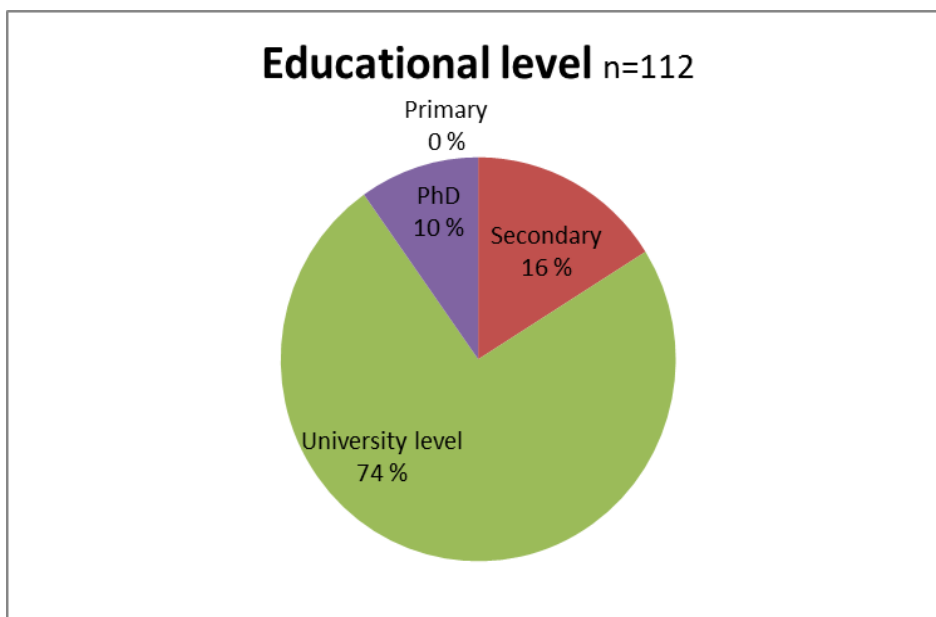


Figure 1. Education, n=112

4.4 Prior visits

40% of the travelers were in Finland for the first time and 26% of the travelers had visited more than 6 times. Every second woman (51%) visited Finland for the first time. (Figure 5.)

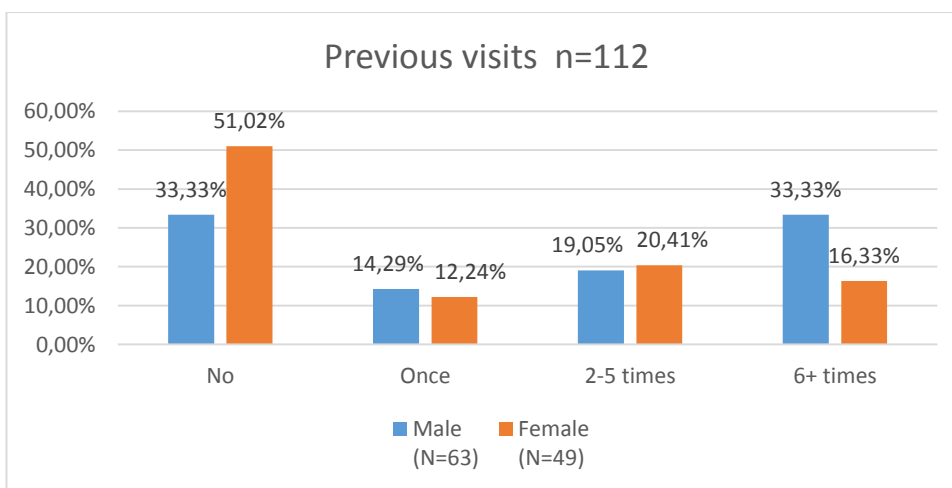


Figure 5. Prior visits to Finland, n=112

Almost 70% of the travelers were staying in Finland for 1-5 days. Nearly 40% were only staying for 1-2 days. Women had slightly longer visits than men. (Figure 6.)

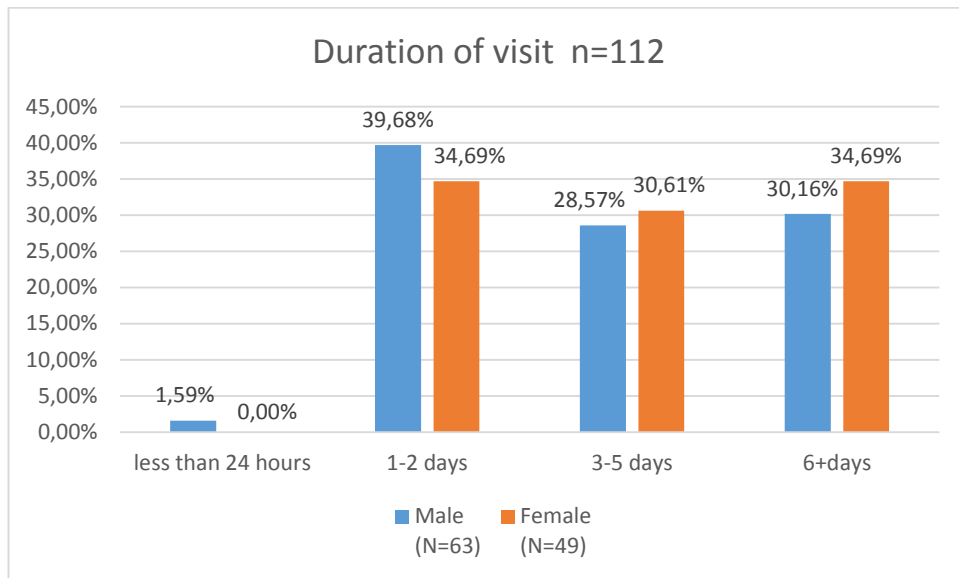


Figure 6. Duration of visit, n=112

Most of the travelers in this study were in Finland for business purposes (55%) and 26% were on holiday. 19% were visiting friends or relatives. (Figure 7.)

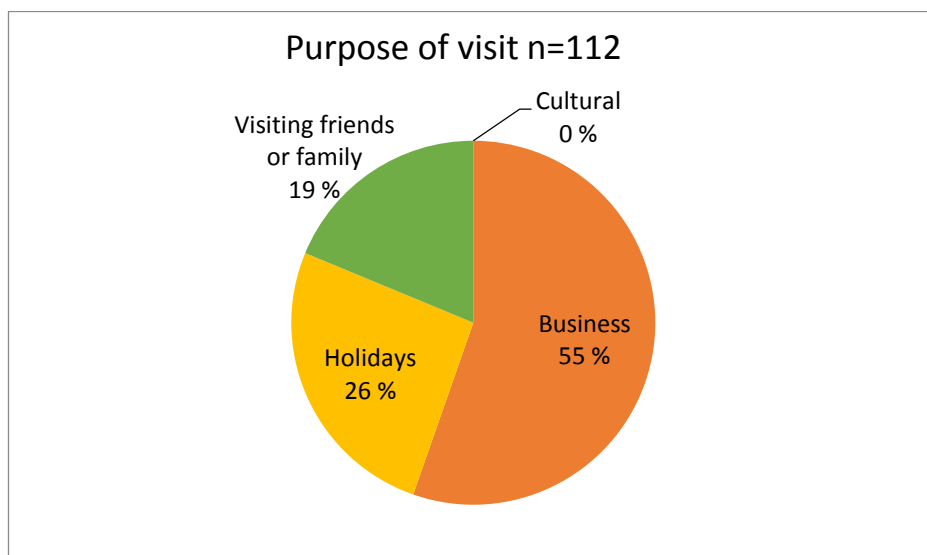


Figure 7. Purpose of visit, n=112

4.5 Majority is interested in food

Food interests most travelers and majority of the travelers (80%) indicated that they have general interest towards food and 17% answered that they had high interest towards food. No one chose the option “Food does not interest me at all”. 24% of the women had “High interest” towards food whereas only 11% of men had “High interest.” “General interest” had nearly 86% of men and 73% of the women.

4.6 General image of Finnish food is neutral or positive

General image of Finnish food is mainly neutral (59%) or positive (40%).

Only 2 persons out of the 112 persons had a negative general image of Finnish food.

Most of the women (53%) had a positive image of Finnish food and 30% of the men felt the same way. Majority of men had a neutral image (68%) and 47% of women also. (Figure 8.)

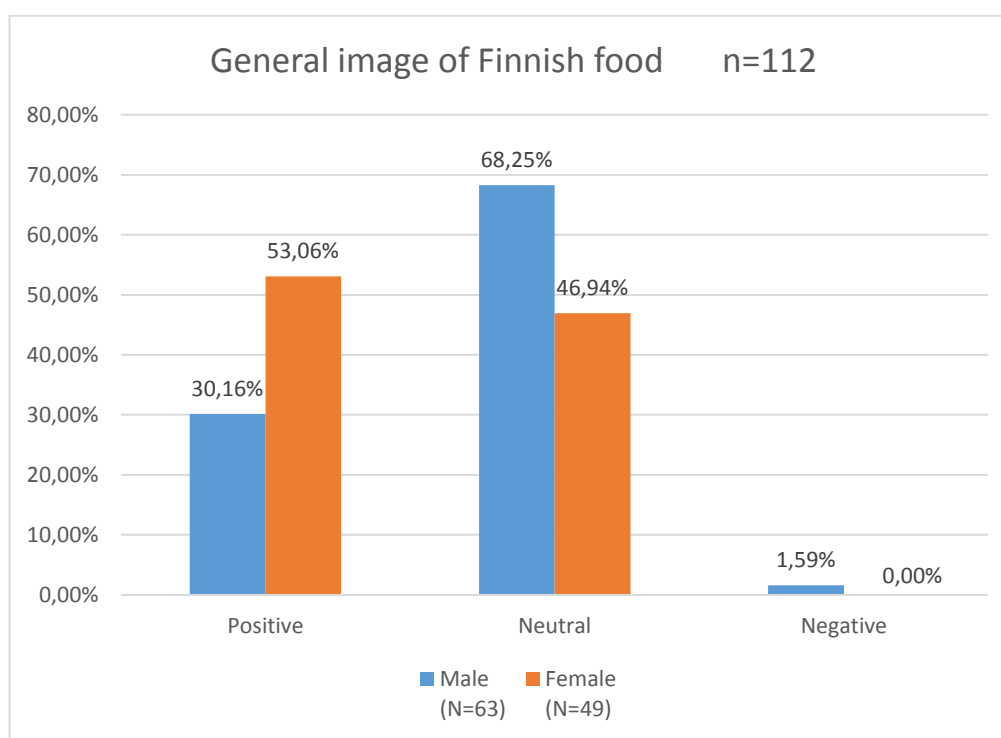


Figure 8. Image of Finnish food, n=112

Travelers interested in food had a neutral or positive image of Finnish food. 17% of all travelers stated having high interest in Finnish food. From these “high interest in food” travelers 42% had a positive image of Finnish food. Majority of men (85,7%) stated having general interest towards food and majority of women (73,5%) stated the same. (Figure 9.)

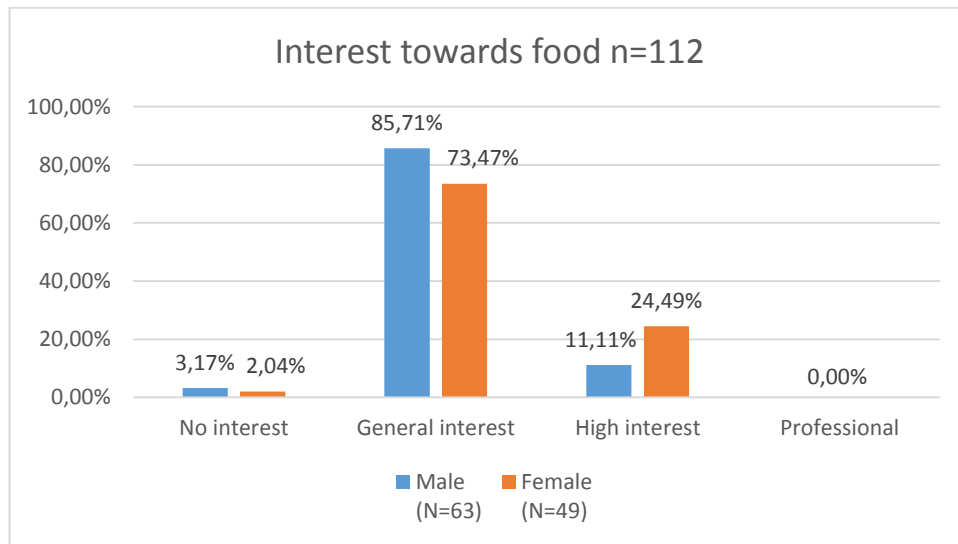


Figure 9. Interest in food, n=112

Majority of the travelers described Finnish food being “Somewhat interesting” (42%). Every fourth person thought Finnish food is somewhat or totally boring. Most of the travelers (85%) described Finnish food as “Somewhat old-fashioned” or “totally old-fashioned”. No one chose the option where Finnish food is “Modern”. 95.5% of the travelers felt Finnish food is “Totally expensive” or “Somewhat expensive” and also safety was rated very high. All of the travelers felt Finnish food is either “Totally safe/somewhat safe”. Options where Finnish food would be “Somewhat unsafe/ totally unsafe” were not chosen by any of the travelers. Most travelers (85%) believe that Finnish food is “Mild” and 93% felt that the food in Finland is “Totally natural” or “Somewhat natural”.

Most travelers believe that Finnish food is locally produced (88%) and fresh (95%). Half of the travelers believe that food products come from small farms and more than every third traveler believes that Finnish food is organic. 90% of the travelers felt that Finnish food and food products are “High quality.” (Figure 10.)

	Totally	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Totally	n=112
Interesting	11	47	26	26	2	Boring
Modern	0	2	25	75	10	Old-fashioned
Predictable	8	48	51	3	2	Unpredictable
Expensive	59	48	4	1	0	Cheap
Safe	67	45	0	0	0	Unsafe
Spicy	1	2	14	53	42	Mild
Natural	33	71	8	0	0	Unnatural
Surprising	2	17	62	27	4	Unsurprising
Clean	41	70	1	0	0	Unclean
Local	19	80	12	1	0	Exports
Fresh	27	79	6	0	0	Old
Small farming	9	55	44	3	1	Large production
Organic	7	42	62	1	0	Manipulated
High quality	21	79	11	0	1	Low quality

Figure 10. Which of the following describes Finnish food best? (Highest scores highlighted)

4.7 Restaurant service expenditure between 51-100e per day

Most of the travelers believed that they will spend 51-100e per day for restaurant services (66%) and 28% believed that 50e per day is enough. 7% estimated spending 101-150e per day on restaurant services. There was no one thinking they would spend more than 150e per day. (Figure 11.)

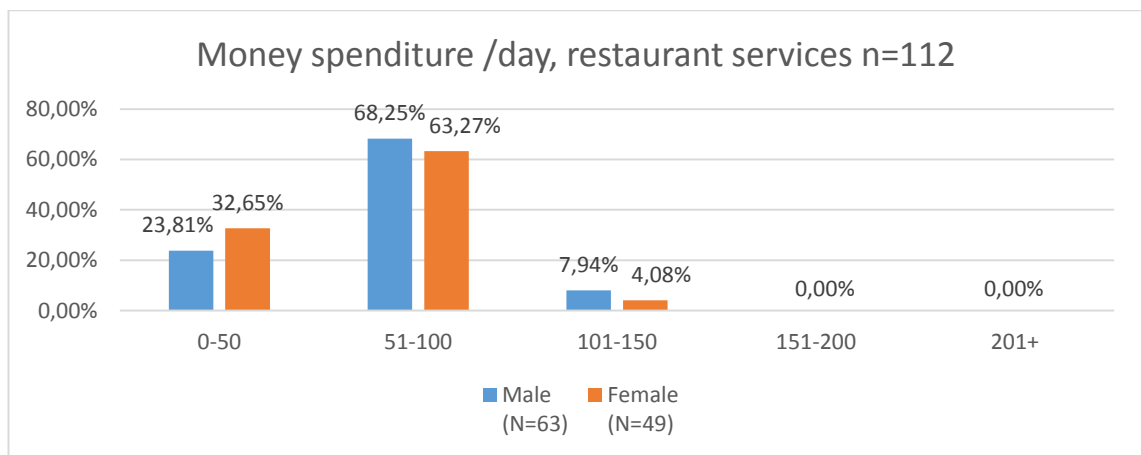


Figure 11. How much money (Euros) do you estimate you will be spending (per day) on eating out while travelling in Finland? (restaurants and other food services)

Most travelers (93%) were planning to spend 0-50€ on grocery shopping and only a few estimated using 51-100€.

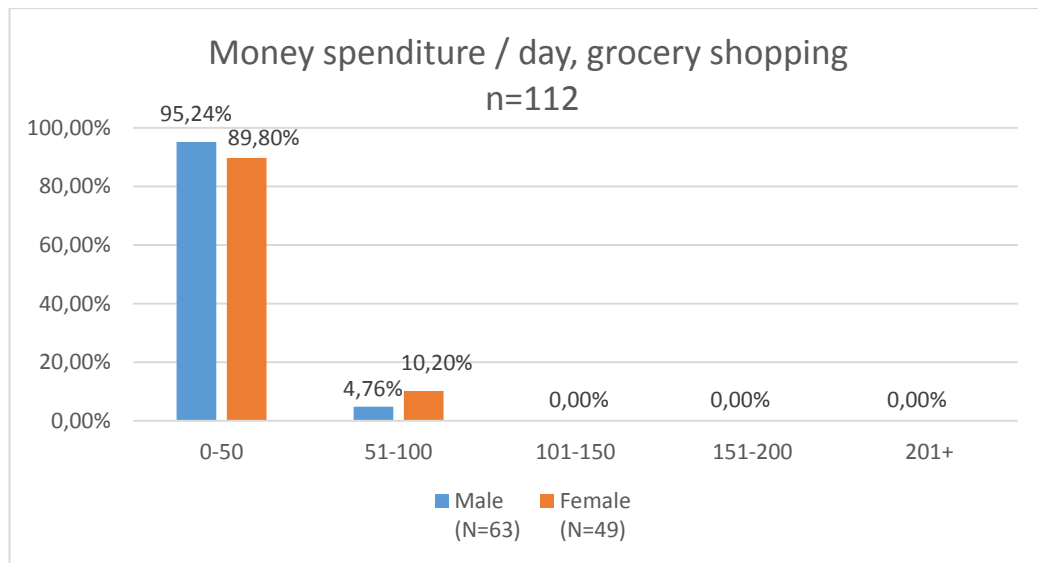


Figure 12. How much money (Euros) do you estimate you will be spending (per day) on grocery shopping when travelling in Finland?

4.8 Most travelers eat three times per day

Most of the travelers (63%) eat three warm meals every day and 32% eat two warm meals. There were no travelers eating more than 4 meals a day. (Figure 13.)

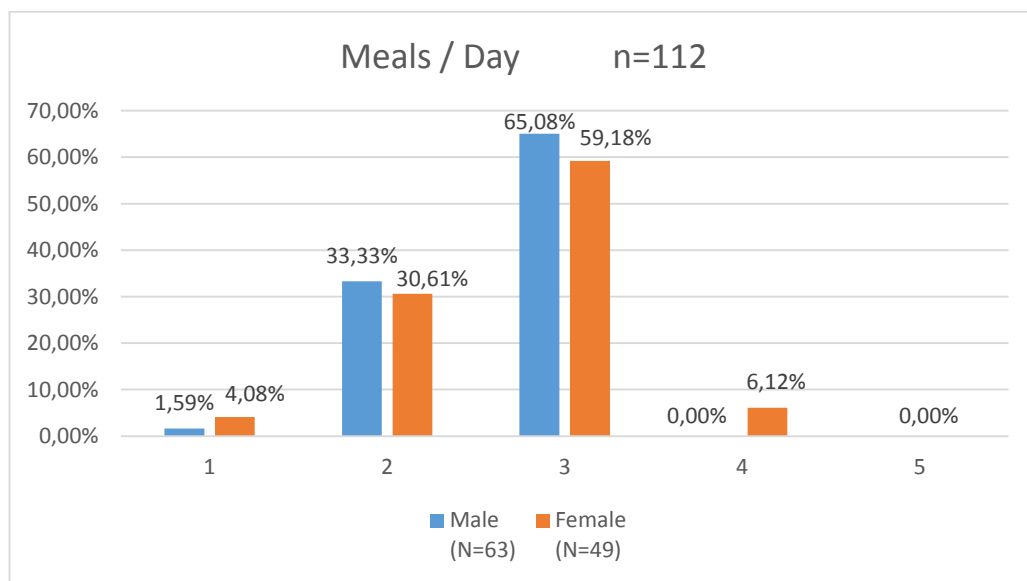


Figure 13. How many warm meals do you usually eat daily?

Majority of the travelers (87,3% of men, 89,8% of women) eat breakfast daily. The rest of the travelers stated that they eat breakfast “sometimes”. (Figure 14.)

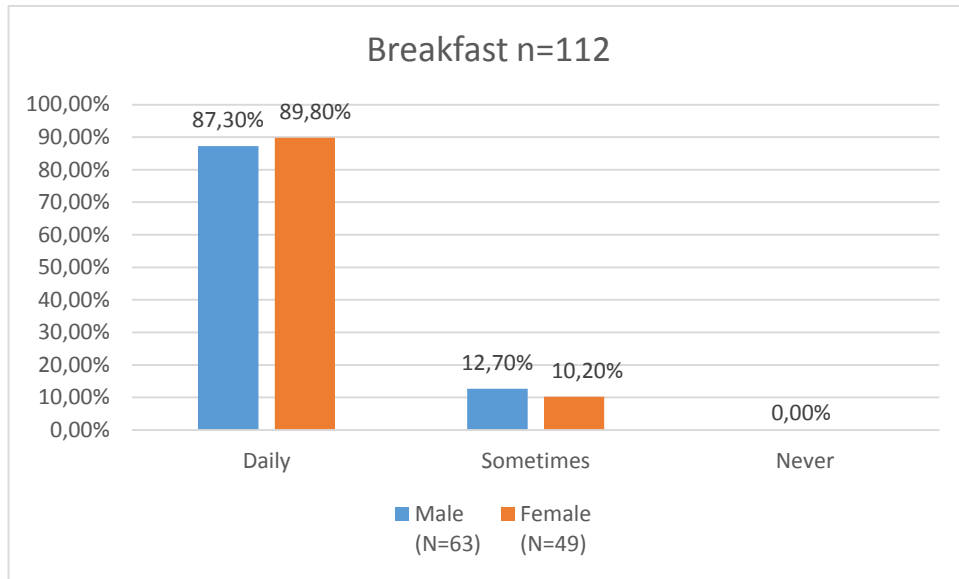


Figure 14. Do you eat breakfast?

Majority of the travelers answered they sometimes eat snacks. 82% of the travelers eat snacks. Asians answered more often “I don’t eat snacks” than other travelers. 27% of men stated they do not eat snacks and 8,2% of women stated the same. (Figure 15.)

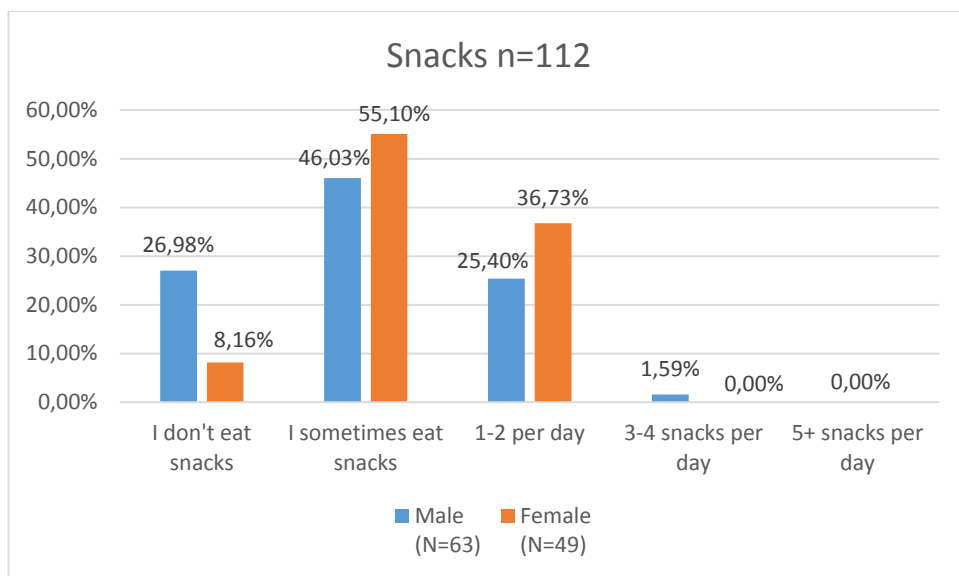


Figure 15. How often do you eat snacks?

When asked what travelers usually eat for snack were most common snack sandwiches (60% of women, 53,2% of men) sweets (55,6% of women, 49% of men) or fruits and berries (47%). Least wanted snacks were snack bars, yoghurt and smoothies. (Figure 16.)

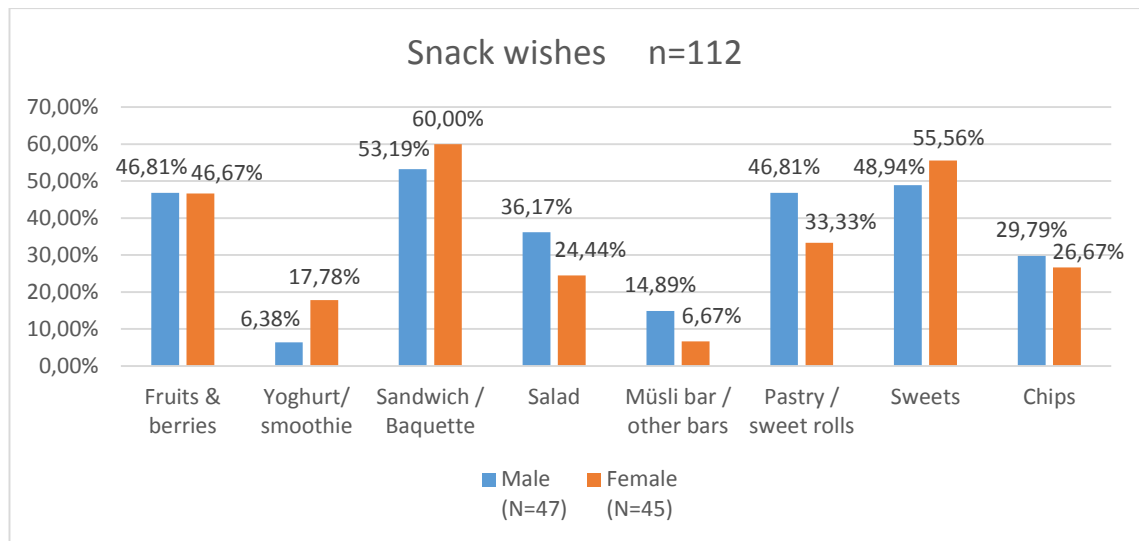


Figure 16. What do you usually eat for a snack?

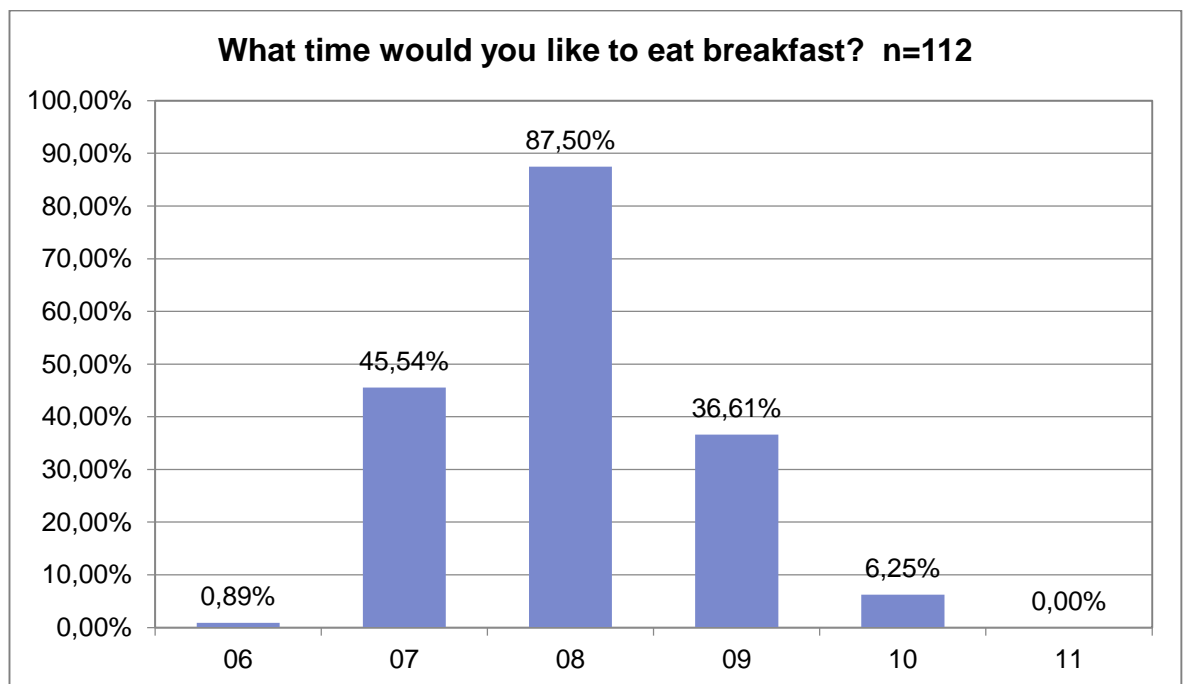


Figure 16. What time would you like to eat breakfast? (For example 08, 09)

Majority of the travelers eat breakfast every morning and most of the travelers would like the breakfast to be served at 08.00 (87,5%). Earlier time for example at 07.00 would be a good time for 45,5% of the travelers and 36,6% believe 09.00 would also be a good time to have breakfast. (Figure 16.)

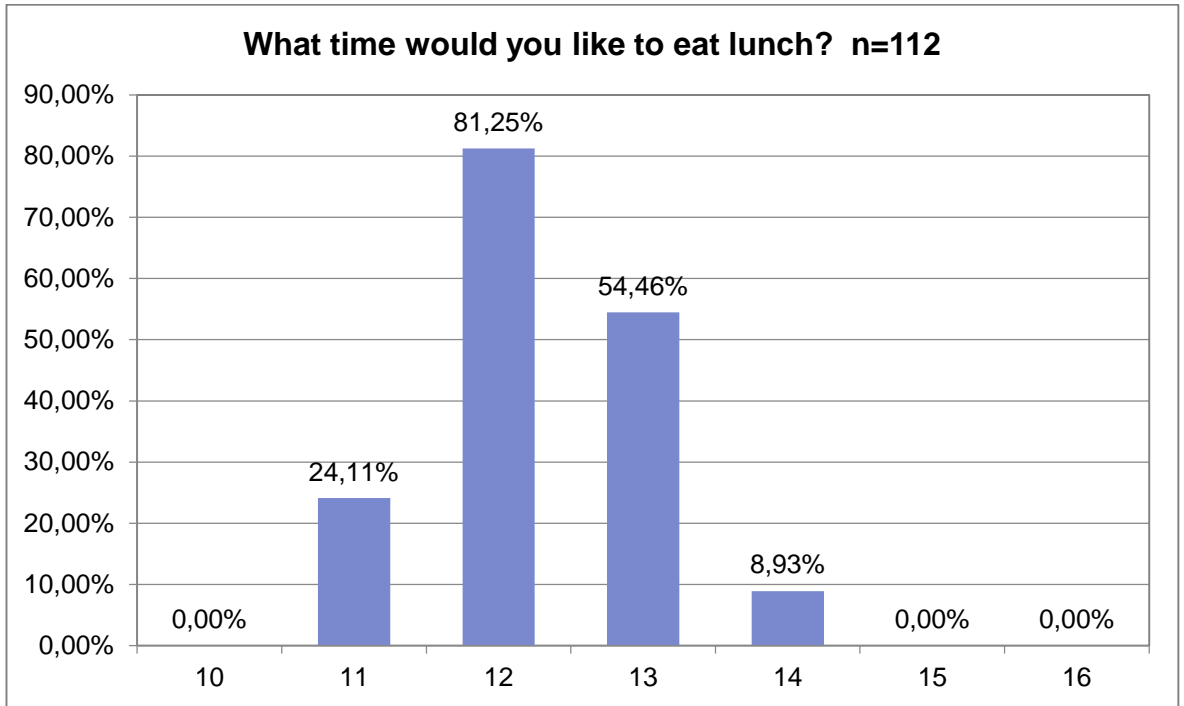


Figure 17. What time would you like to eat lunch? (For example 12, 13)

Most of the travelers (81,3%) would like to eat lunch at 12.00. At 13.00 still 54,5% could imagine having lunch. 24,1% of the travelers would like to start lunch at 11.00. After 14.00 there would still be 9% interested in lunch. (Figure 17.)

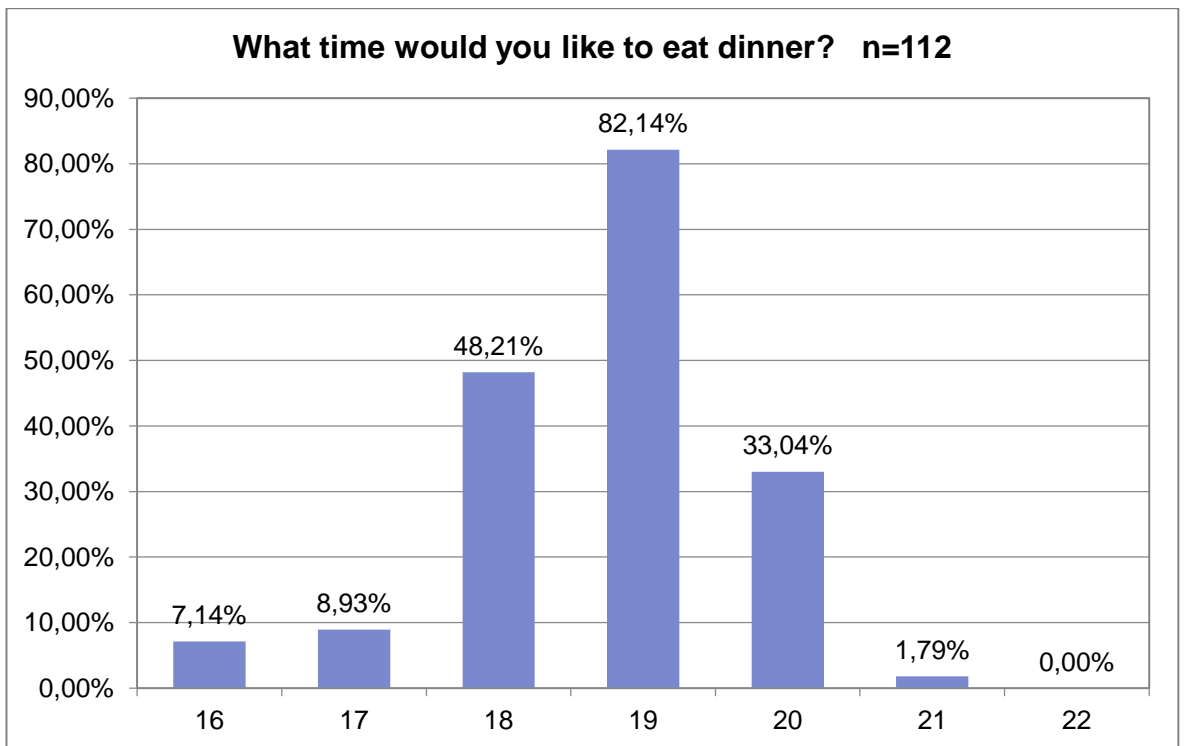


Figure 18. What time would you like to eat dinner? (For example 16-17)

Most of the travelers (82,1%) would prefer their dinner at 19.00, 48,2% would like to eat dinner at 18.00 and 33% would continue after 20.00. Some of the Russian travelers answered questions within given time lines but also indicated that they wish there was a possibility to eat dinner also later than suggested option (16-20) even as late as 23.00-24.00. (Figure 18.)

4.9 Fish products interests the most

Most interesting food products in Finland for international travelers were fish and seafood which interests 84% of the travelers. 68% were interested in meat, game, fruits, berries and vegetables. 41% wanted fresh, local production items and 21% were interested in soups especially. 17% of the travelers said they were interested in “Strange traditional dishes” (Figure 19.)

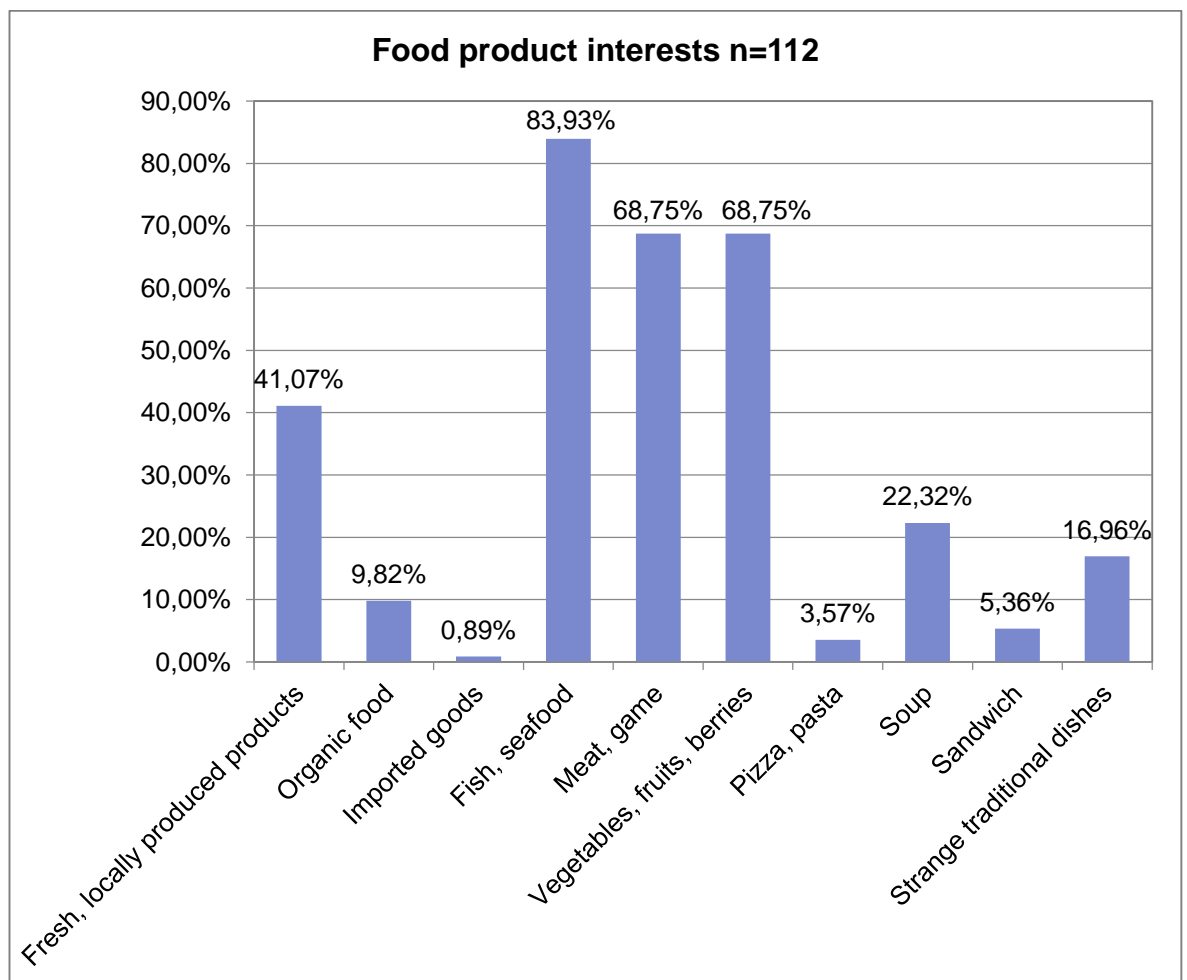


Figure 19. Which food products do you wish to eat in Finland? You can choose more than one option.

4.10 Casual restaurants and market places are most wanted places to eat

Most of the travelers wanted to eat in “Casual restaurants” (92%) or at a market place or at a market hall (64,3%). “Home-style dinners” interests 43% of the travelers and 18,8% were interested in “Semi-fine dining or Fine-dining”. 6,25% of the travelers indicated that they would be interested in “Theme restaurants, such as reindeer/Lapland restaurant” and approximately every fourth traveler would be interested in eating in restaurants which are popular among locals and about the same amount want to eat in a “Tourist restaurant”. (Figure 20.)

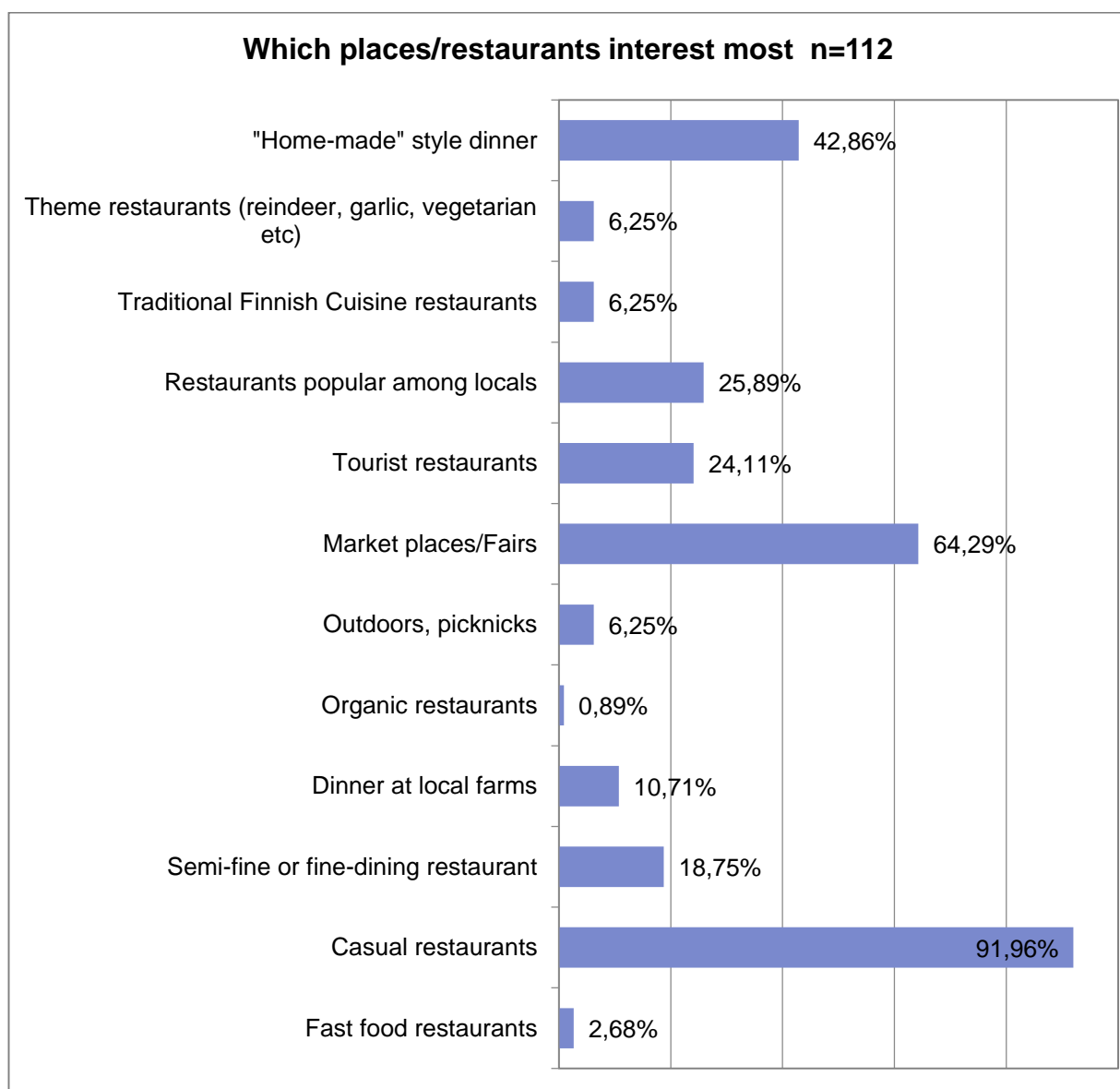


Figure 20. What type of places/restaurants would you like to eat in Finland? You can choose more than one option.

Majority of the travelers (90%) in this survey believed that the image they have about Finnish food is based on their own experience. 19% of the travelers used also books and 17% of the travelers felt that the image is also based on internet information (sites, blogs) and 2.7% had seen something about Finland on TV.

4.11 “What kind of thoughts does Finnish food bring to your mind?”

Final question was an open question: “What kind of thoughts does Finnish food bring to your mind?” Thoughts that Finnish food brought to mind were most often fish or reindeer. Fish or salmon came up in 53.6% of the answers. Other things which surfaced were the quality of the water which was considered good, food in Lapland, freshly-baked bread and freshness of food in general. Negative thoughts which came up were high pricing, boringness, quality of coffee and the food “not being very exciting”. “Finnish food” brought to mind also things which were about something else than food. “Finnish food” was also memories of places, statements such as “Finland is beautiful”, “Midnight sun”, “Countryside”, “On Sundays everything is closed”, “Finnish schools offer warm lunch daily to children and it is free of charge” and “I think it is European”. 54 of travelers used the word “Good” (48.2%) when describing Finnish food in their open answer.

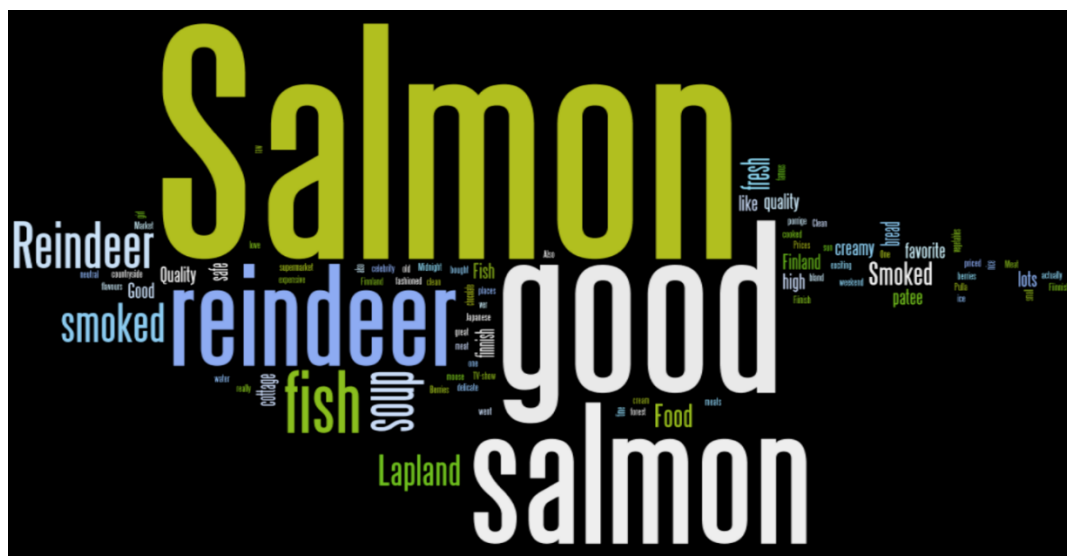


Figure 21. Open question answers in a “Wordle” picture cloud

The word cloud shows the answers of the last open question:” What does Finnish food bring to your mind?” Figure gives greater prominence to words that appear more frequently in the source text.

5 Discussion & Conclusions

Results of the study indicate that there are many things which could be done for better customer satisfaction as well as higher sales numbers in Finland. The fact that many travelers wish to eat at market places or fairs for example highlights the fact that there are very few of them. One Japanese traveler showed me the Kauppahalli market place in his Helsinki guide book as the “must visit” target after interviewing. I explained that the Kauppahalli is actually under construction and there is a temporary market hall located in Hietaniemi. This got me wondering if the operator at Kauppahalli Market Hall realized the need to communicate very clearly where the temporary market place is and how to get there. The information should be located in Kauppahalli market place at the main entrance and it should be in English, possibly also in Russian and Swedish. The value of this one unit to the travelers visiting Helsinki is great because in this Japanese tourist’s case for example it was the only place mentioned for local food shopping in Helsinki.

Picture 7. Finnish spring potatoes (Photo: Pusa, P. 2013)



5.1 Communication

Communication plays a crucial role. More signs and more services could be developed to better meet the expectations of customer groups such as Russians or Chinese. When

English is not commonly spoken communication becomes more challenging. In simple ways such as translating menus, signs and hiring personnel with adequate language skills the customer satisfaction could be increased. Pictures could be used more widely in menus. Russians would like to have later supper options since they often eat warm meal late in the night also and a quick review of downtown restaurants reveals that late supper selection is very limited. Most hotels and restaurants offering casual, semi-fine dining or fine dining close their kitchens at 22.00. Both restaurant and product selections could be more carefully planned to better meet the expectations of the customers. Continuous research should be done among the travelers concerning their wishes and experiences regularly.

5.2 Thesis process

This thesis has been a long path to me into tourism and food services and products. There are so many aspects and angles to view food within tourism that limiting the subject was challenging. Studies in HAAGAHELIA prepare students into doing this and the process felt natural and comprehensive. I needed to interview people at the airport not just for the research information but to really get among the travelers to learn from them. Finding the right questions to ask was challenging but my supervisor helped me to word out the thoughts and questions better to get the kind of information wanted. One thing I also learned is that having the right questions doesn't guarantee the right answers.

To have a Chinese colleague with me at the airport gave me the opportunity to get information from Chinese travelers which I felt gave added value to the research. A total of 17 Chinese interviewees understanding questions and answers is a lot. In my experience on previous field work like this I have noticed it is difficult to get Chinese people's opinions in general for any project. Other projects where I have been involved in interviewing travelers were all missing the Chinese view. Due to their lack of language skills and unwillingness to try to speak English means that their opinion is rarely heard.

Last year I volunteered to help conducting a survey researching Sea fortress Suomenlinna's conspicuousness among international travelers. I did over a hundred surveys and among these surveys there were many different nationalities present, but not one single Chinese person agreed to answer the research questions. According to The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) the volume of international trips by Chinese travelers has grown from 10 million in 2000 to 83 million in 2012. Expenditure by Chinese tourists has also increased eightfold since 2000. Chinese travelers spent a record US\$ 102 billion in international tourism in 2012. This is 40% more than 2011 when US\$ 73 billion were spent. Since China has become the largest spender in international tourism globally in 2012 it is fair to say they should be taken into consideration and their needs and wishes carefully researched. (UNWTO, 2013)

Picture 8. Finnish Pike (Photo: Pusa, P. 2013)

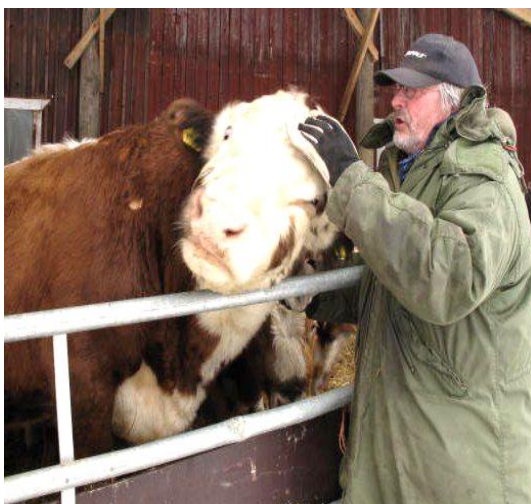


5.3 Background

I have worked over 20 years in the field of food and tourism and I have always been curious about tourists and tourism. During my working years in downtown Helsinki area I have met and talked with thousands of international travelers and most of them seem to have had no image or very little image about food in Finland before their visit. Based on their experience here they then formed their perception and return home with that idea in their minds. This image varies greatly depending on what kind of food experiences they have had. The places where they ate had a tremendous impact on their experience and therefore also into the image which was created in their minds

during their visit. A person staying one night in Scandic Continental Helsinki eating a burger at the hotel restaurant has a totally different view to food experience than a

Picture 9. Sebastian Nurmi and his Finncattle (Photo: Pusa, P. 2013)



Person who eats 10 courses in a fine-dining, small farming specialized restaurant like Restaurant Nokka, Chef & Sommelier or Ask. Totally different experience also is a lunch on the backyard of Sebastian Nurmis' organic lamb farm in Snappertuna.

Some countries are represented around the world in the form of food. These products convey the image of the country directly, honestly and inimitably. Clear image of a certain food can be a strong statement and advertisement for a whole country. Globally high profile food products such as Pizza, Pasta, Parmesan, Prosciutto, wines from Piemonte and Toscana from Italy are very strong country brand images. The cradle of the western kitchen could be still considered by many being France with legendary wine regions like Bordeaux, Bourgogne, Alsace, Loire and Rhone. Food products like truffles, oysters, Le Foie Gras, frog legs, snails and croissants are globally recognized and desired- and French. Every single country from Italy to Mexico makes meatballs but Sweden has branded "Swedish" meatballs simply by adding cream as a sauce and by putting lingonberry jam on the side.

Picture 10. Lingonberries (Photo: Pusa, P. 2013)



Finland doesn't have any monumental, globally well-known signature dishes but due to its clean ground waters, unpolluted land and unoccupied wilderness it could easily build its future food image around it. Finland could be the pioneer of the healthy, clean nutrition provider in the world. Due to the relatively small tourism sector, Finland could quite easily transform itself into the mostly eco-friendly, sustainable tourism leader with unique tourism products like no other country in the world. Focusing in organic, health beneficial food products from the cleanest country in the world could differentiate Finland from the rest of the world. High quality products, outstanding cleanliness combined to storytelling, and the revolution of northern food heritage could become globally recognized and desired food brand.

5.4 Limitations

The survey was conducted in March which is a slow month for the travelling industry in Southern Finland. There are significantly less tourists in March than during the high seasons such as summer months from June until September. During summer months there are more travelers on vacation and the variety of travelers is greater. In this survey, conducted in March, there were mostly business tourists: 55% of the interviewees were business travelers, 26% were on holiday and 19% answered they were visiting friends or relatives. One of the interviewers was Chinese, which shows a larger amount of Asian participants than other international travelers. Choices of words were noticed

being challenging for some travelers and some attributes required more explanation which was more time consuming than expected. Words such as “surprising”, “predictable” needed to be more carefully explained. Also words: “Strange traditional dishes” most likely had an impact on the answers. Low result on interest towards organic restaurants can be similarly misleading. Since many travelers assume Finnish food is organic, there might not be interest towards “organic restaurant” specifically.

Having only a few strong opinions in “Which of the following describes Finnish food best?” question can indicate that the descriptions were not understood or agreed by the travelers. Questions could be more specific questions and answers. Answering options limited the answers more than expected. Interview-like question “What kind of thoughts does Finnish food bring to your mind?” revealed that food has more dimensions than the simple consumption part. “Finnish food” brings in mind memories of cottage trips, eating habit differences such as “Finns eat in silence” or general thoughts like “Finland is beautiful” and “Everything is closed on Sundays”. These other dimensions have not been research further in this study.

5.5 Further suggestions

Research findings should lead into planning of change, locating and implementing the products and services which are needed. Without action the information is useless. This would require more actions at the governmental level. By creating flexible regulations, fast responding supportive structures and by providing for example cheap rental opportunities for restaurateurs the markets could respond to the needs of the travelers quickly, effectively, cost efficiently and without the need of entrepreneurs having to carry high risks. This would create jobs in the service field when people would have significantly lower threshold entering the markets. Lower rents could create more spontaneous, adventurous business ideas because more people would see it as a possibility. More selection would lead into more supply from which the customers’ selections would weed out the profitable ones worth keeping. More small businesses, more selections, more services, more jobs, more money to the government in the form of

taxes and in the form of unpaid unemployment benefits. It would also offer a versatile, concrete and easily accessible option for immigrants to start their own businesses and vicariously lead into better integration, higher levels of satisfaction and increase general satisfaction and well-being.

More studies in the field of food expectations is needed. All year round, different target groups, different seasons as well as off-seasons. Qualitative research and interviews should be performed for detailed information about traveler's needs and wants.

Resources

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Attachments

Attachment 1. Questions of the survey

1. What is your nationality?
2. Gender?
3. Age group?''
4. What is your highest educational degree?
5. Have you visited Finland before?
6. How long is your visit to Finland this time?
7. What is the purpose of your visit?
8. What is your interest towards food?
9. What is your general image of Finnish food?
10. Which of the following describes Finnish food best? *

	Totally	Somewhat	Neither	Somewhat	Totally	
Interesting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Boring
Modern	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Old-fashioned
Predictable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Unpredictable
Expensive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Cheap
Safe	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Unsafe
Spicy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Mild
Natural	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Unnatural
Surprising	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Unsurprising
Clean	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Unclean
Local	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Exports
Fresh	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Old
Small farming	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Large production
Organic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Manipulated
High quality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Low quality

11. How much money do you estimate you will be spending (per day) on eating out while travelling in Finland? (restaurants and other food services)
12. How much money do you estimate you will be spending (per day) on grocery shopping when travelling in Finland?(food items)
13. How many warm meals do you usually eat daily?
14. Do you eat breakfast?
15. How often do you eat snacks?
16. What do you usually eat for a snack?
17. What time would you like to eat breakfast? (For example 8-9-10)
18. What time would you like to eat lunch? (For example 12, 13)
19. What time would you like to eat dinner? (For example 16, 17, 18)
20. Which food products do you wish to eat in Finland? You can choose more than one option.
21. What type of places/restaurants would you like to eat in Finland?

- Fast food restaurants
- Casual restaurants
- Semi-fine or fine-dining restaurant
- Dinner at local farms
- Organic restaurants
- Outdoors, picnicks
- Market places/Fairs
- Tourist restaurants
- Restaurants popular among locals
- Traditional Finnish Cuisine restaurants
- Theme restaurants (reindeer, garlic, vegetarian etc)
- "Home-made" style dinner

22. Where does your image of Finnish food come from? You can choose more than one option.

- Own experience
- Work/hobby related channels
- Friends or relatives
- Internet sites or blogs
- Travel books
- News
- TV

Attachment 2. Final open question answers

“What kind of thoughts does Finnish food bring to your mind?”

- Meat, fish, potatoes.
- Safe, fresh, good.
- Salmon.
- Clean, safe.
- Fish, fresh, mild.
- Finnish food is good. Good quality.
- Good food, fish, clean food.
- Typical, boring.
- Chocolate was really bad, and coffee was horrible. Bread is very good!
- Good and safe. Normal food.
- Water is specially good, and Lappish food.
- Good food, salmon patee, creamy salmon soup. Very good!
- Don't use spice.
- Food is good.
- Excellent water & good reindeer!
- Finnish food is bland. Quality is good. Salmon is Finnish.
- Home-made, honest food. Good quality, safe and fresh food.
- Reindeer, salmon.
- Good food.
- Good food.
- Midnight sun, countryside, smoked salmon
- I looked at wikipedia, it said Finnish food is verimakkara and milk. Finnish food is natural, good food. Quality of the food is good, because Finland is a small country. In bigger cities quality is poor.
- Finnish food is good quality. Sundays everything is closed and there is no food (restaurants).
- Not delicious
- expensive
- Clean, safe, expensive. Fish, salmon is Finnish.

- Fish, reindeer, normal.
- Good, fresh, safe.
- Expensive, mild, typical.
- Home made, feels good.
- Reindeer, salmon.
- Salmon is Finnish.
- Good, not too strange.
- Salmon soup, reindeer
- Good food. Safe and good for everyone.
- Finnish food is good!
- Good, high priced!
- Finnish food is good but high priced.
- Salmon, reindeer, Lapland
- Salmon, reindeer!
- Reindeer meat, Salmon.
- Salmon.
- Reindeer and salmon.
- Many different milk products, adults also drink milk. Good food.
- Finnish food is mild, bland and not very exciting. Fish, meat. I don't think about Finnish food really, I eat in coffee shops, cake and other small things.
- Salmon, fish, smoked fish. Market places, fresh vegetables, fish and bread. Food is good in Finland!
- Traditional, not very passionate, mild food. Clean nature, good products.
- Finns eat a lot of pizza and soups like sausagesoup, this is Finnish food.
- Finnish food doesn't bring anything to mind, really, except mild flavours.
- Finnish food is good, salmon, very good smoked fish. Also patee is very good. And water.
- Clean, simple. Good, fresh breads.
- Salmon, reindeer
- Finnish food is neutral. It is safe and clean. Salmon soup!
- Salmon, reindeer. Japanese celebrity was in Finland in one TV-show.
- Good, fresh, salmon. Meat. Reindeer, actually it is moose.
- Finnish food is easy, good.

- Lapland food, reindeer, salmon.
- Salmon.
- Reindeer, salmon.
- Salmon
- Finnish food is good, good quality and safety.
- Finnish food is well prepared, easy to eat and mild to taste.
- Finnish food is not memorable.
- Finnish food is not very exciting. Fish, meat, weird specialities. Finnish schools offer warm lunch daily to children and it is free of charge.
- Fish, meat, reindeer, very good berries.
- Salmon
- Finns drink a lot of coffee and milk. Bread is very good!
- I don't think anything of Finnish food. It is quite boring.
- Finnish food is good, but high priced. Salmon is very Finnish.
- Finnish food is fresh, lots of fish. Fish soup, smoked fish, raw fish. Salmon is very Finnish. Finnish chocolate is good!
- Finnish food is not very well known, but I think it is European, fresh and people eat lots of fish.
- I have no thoughts, really. Fish?
- Finnish food is of good quality, it is clean.
- Finnish food is normal, not too spicy or strange. Finnish food is good.
- Finnish nature is clean, food is safe and good. Water is good.
- Finnish food is very good. Salmon is most famous Finnish food.
- Finland is beautiful. Food is good and very clean, very tasty!
- Finland is not exactly known for its great food but I think food was quite good. Finns eat in silence.
- Finnish food is mild and clean.
- I don't like Finnish food much. Finland is not known for its good food, more about the drinking.
- Lapland food, smoked salmon, reindeer.
- The quality of the food is very good. Berries, meats and fish are very good. Salmon is my favorite Finnish food. Prices are high but quality is also very good. I like Finnish food.

- Finnish food is very good, good quality, clean and safe. Food is expensive, alcohol is also very expensive. I like to eat in Finland.
- Finnish food is very good! Lapland has great food, salmon is very good. Smoked salmon soup was my favorite food. One time I was in Finland I went to a small cottage with a girl, we bought lots of food from a supermarket and cooked all weekend in the forest, in the cottage. Very good food!
- Finnish food is very tasty and of good quality. I like Finnish beer, meats and fish. Bread is very good also, and fresh.
- Finland is clean and safe.
- Quality is very good. Salmon, reindeer.
- Finnish food is tasty, good quality and safe to eat.
- Food is good. Salmon, porridge, berries.
- Finnish food is very good! Smoked salmon.
- Finnish food is very good, good quality, tasty, fresh and safe. Fish is very good in Finland.
- Salmon, reindeer
- Food is good, fish especially.
- Finnish food is nothing special. It is ok, but I wouldn't "look for" Finnish food.
- Finnish food is good, delicate flavours. Smoked salmon is very good.
- Finnish food is fresh, good and tasty.
- Finnish food is very good.
- I really like Finnish food, bread is very good, and I love "Pulla"! Salmon is very Finnish and so is reindeer.
- Salmon, reindeer.
- Berries, fish, rye bread.
- Finnish food is good. Quality of the products is good.
- Salmon.
- Salmon
- Finnish food is very high quality, fish is very good.
- Salmon, ice cream, reindeer
- old fashioned, not very exciting, salmon
- Salmon, reindeer.
- Very nice, creamy salmon soup! Food is good.

- Salmon
- Good food, tasty bread.
- Salmon
- Finnish food is good, good fish. It doesn't really make me think of anything special but quality is good.