

Study reveals what food lovers want

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Credit: Jonas Ingman

University of Queensland researchers found affordable regional cuisine, local market produce, hands-on experiences and food events are the key to attracting food tourists.

UQ School of Tourism researchers Professor Donald Getz and Dr Richard Robinson worked with Dr Sanja Vujicic from Experience Consulting to identify the key factors in attracting high yield food tourists to Sweden.

Professor Getz said competitive cities and tourism destinations must

pursue niche markets like food, fashion, music, and sport in which they can build sustainable advantages.

"One growing niche market to develop is food tourism," Professor Getz said.

"However, it is not adequate to offer good food and fine dining to attract 'foodies'— we have to understand them thoroughly in order to know what would motivate them to visit Sweden for a food-related experience."

Focusing primarily on four target markets including Norway, the UK, Germany and Italy, the research identified what food lovers want and need from food and travel experiences, how they communicate and their travel patterns and preferences related to food.

"The key findings suggest that normal foodies are attracted to a wide variety of planned events with farmer's markets, festivals and gastronomic events at restaurants being the most preferred," Professor Getz said.

"Enjoying regional cuisine at a local restaurant and romantic meals also rated highly among these respondents."

Dr Robinson said for highly involved and dynamic foodies, tactile experiences such as meeting chefs, cooking classes and degustations were preferred.

"These foodies are prepared to spend significantly more on food and related experiences. They enjoy cultural experiences such as visiting art galleries, tripping to the islands, experiencing a winter resort and visiting archaeological and historical sites."

The research also found that many food lovers work in, or have been

employed in food, hospitality or related occupations, suggesting an efficient way to reach potential customers.

"Highly targeted communications, using appropriate images and messages, will be required to promote Sweden as a [food](#)-tourism destination," Dr Robinson said.

"The highly-involved and dynamic foodies identified in this study will respond best to imagery of unique, tactile experiences combined with city breaks and countryside or nature."

More information: www.experiencec.com/en/news.asp?NewsId=10

Provided by University of Queensland

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