

Enhancing Tourism SMEs Development through Food Tourism in the Czech Regions

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Agenda

- » Introduction
- » The Aim of the Research & Methodology
- » Results and Discussion
- » Conclusion

Introduction1

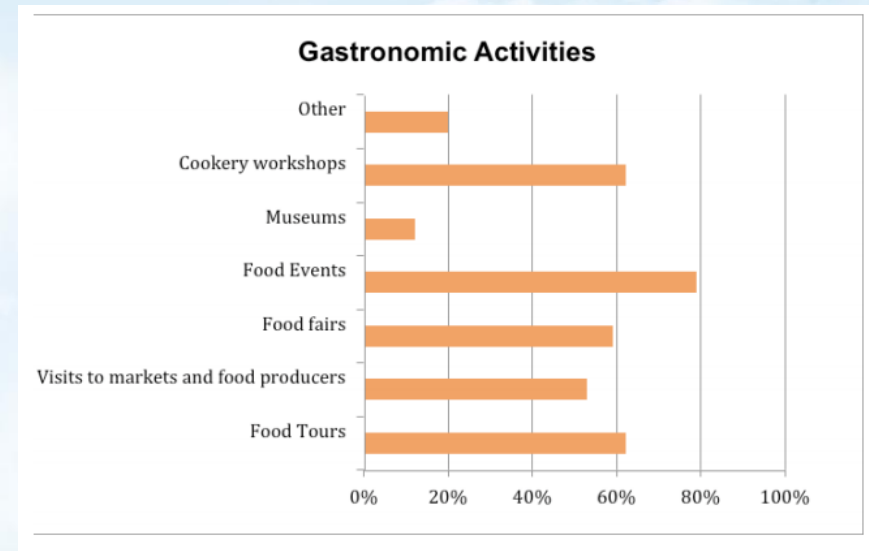
- » The place of food and drinks in tourism is important as they can display the tradition and culture of the destinations as well as the lifestyle of the destinations' residents.
- » Recent research has indicated that travelers spend around 40% of their holiday budget on food (Boyne, Hall & Williams, 2003).
- » In OECD countries, food and drinks services account for up to 30% of total internal tourism consumption.
- » SMEs dominate the European economy - they account for more than 99 % of all EU firms.
- » SMEs constitute the backbone of tourism in the Czech Republic and make up the majority of the business units in hospitality (41 160).
- » 28% of hospitality SMEs are focused on Czech traditional cuisine.

Introduction2

- » Food and drinks are a key part of culture and creativity, a major element of intangible heritage of the destinations.
- » Food and drinks are also an important source for destinations that want to develop quality tourism products and experiences in order to enhance the growth of their economy.
- » According to the UNWTO Global Report on Food Tourism, 88.2% of respondents consider that gastronomy is a strategic element in defining the brand and image of their destination.

Introduction3

- » Local cuisine can add value to the traditional tourism experience; especially for those tourists who wants more and are searching for new experiences.
- » According to UNWTO (2013) survey food events are the most important for the destinations (expressed by 79% of respondents).
- » This is followed by gastronomic routes and cooking classes and workshops, with 62% answering affirmatively, food fairs featuring local products (59%) and visits to markets and producers (53%).



Introduction4

- » The World Food Travel Association states that food tourists tend to be couples that have above-average income, are usually professionals and are aged 30 to 50.
- » Food tourists spend on average around \$1,200 per trip, with over one-third (36% or \$425) of their travel budget going towards food-related activities.
- » Those considered to be “deliberate” food tourists tend to spend a significantly higher amount of their overall travel budget (around 50%) on food-related activities.

Introduction5

- » The structure of growth regarding regional distribution in Czech Republic's tourism is problematic.
- » In the years 2005 - 2014, the number of overnight stays in Prague increased from 11.2 million to 14.75 million (+3.55 mil.)
- » Overall, the number of overnight stays in the Czech Republic during this period increased from 40.32 million to 42.94 million (+ 2.62 mil.).
- » The highest increase of overnight stays was recorded in Prague.
- » Based on the results of the research conducted by UNWTO, OECD, and „food tourism countries“ (delicious destinations: France, Italy, Spain, Thailand, Japan, and India), and considered the potential and diversity of the Czech regions it can be presumed that food tourism can contribute to the development and growth of these regions.

The Aim of the Research

- » The overarching aim of the research was to understand the extent to which regional food and local drinks may strengthen the business of SMEs in the tourism sector and provide a useful tool for contributing to the regional development of tourism in selected Czech regions.

Methodology

- » The research included face-to-face interviews in a one-to-one setting with thirty tourism stakeholders, 17 from Prague and 13 from Central Bohemian Region in a period of three months from December 2015 to February 2016.
- » The specific selection criteria for the purposeful sampling as (1) duration of the restaurant or related business operation minimum one year, (2) and holding a manager role were determinate.
- » The entire sample was selected by snowball sampling method.

Results and Discussion1

- » The most of the interviewees stated that the offer of traditional Czech food is very successful in the frame of their business.
- » The highest success was reported in SMEs in Prague.
- » Local drinks are very often integral part of the offer of SMEs.
- » One of the most offered local drinks is wine and beer; more and more popular are herbal teas.
- » The results for both selected regions are comparable.

Results and Discussion2

- » One-third of interviewees claimed offering degustation menu, and activities such as tasting drinks, and cooking courses linked with traditional Czech cuisine (62% world wide according UNWTO, 2013).
- » Higher activity in this connection is recorded in the Central Bohemian region.

Results and Discussion³

- » Almost 80 % of businesses confirmed that the introduction of regional food and local drinks have an important influence on their revenue growth.
- » More success was reported by SMEs from Central Bohemian region.

Results and Discussion⁴

- » More than 70 % of interviewees reported increase of their guests' traffic based on introduction of regional food and local drinks.
- » Almost 70 % of interviewees stated improvement of their image after introduction Czech traditional menu.
- » 67 % of interviewees said that the average spending of their guests increased after widening the menu by traditional Czech food and drinks.
- » SMEs from Central Bohemian region reported more success due to their offer of regional food and local drinks.

Conclusion

- » Based on the results of the research, it can be stated that the introduction and offer of the regional food and local drinks has a positive impact on tourism SMEs in both examined regions, while it contributes to the revenue growth, increase the guests' traffic, enhance the average spending of the visitors and strengthen the image of SMEs and the regional food and drinks as well.
- » Considering saying the opportunities for future research is in expanding the number of interviewees from SMEs to all Czech regions and widens the interviews to the guests of SMEs in order to discover the impact of regional food and drinks on both, the tourism SMEs and the guests.

Thank You for Attention!

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