

Case Study: Food Provenance contributing to sense of place

ENTICE

Exploring the Natural tastes of Iceland



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Context

Using evidence from Iceland, this case study explores the relationship between Food Provenance, Sense of Place and the Visitor Economy. It examines the role of food in Iceland's tourism strategy and using examples of best practice from Iceland and the UK, illustrates how local food can be used strategically to create a sense of place supporting the growth of niche tourism markets and the sustainability agenda. While the relationship between food and tourism is at first glance obvious, in productive terms the relationship needs to be integrated into a strategy for local economic development that seeks to maximize economic and social leverage between producers and the tourism industry (Hall, Mitchell & Sharples, 2003).

Food Provenance

In today's global economy, there has been an increasing tendency to separate the connection between food and its source. Indeed 21st century consumerism has resulted in highly processed, over-packaged, branded yet anonymous food products transported from anywhere and available at any time. Consumers have often lost the connection with the source and it has become increasingly hard to remember 'food products' come from plants and animals and are a result of a myriad of complex interactions of seasons and soil and from the toil of real people. Understanding food provenance requires an understanding of the elements that over time have together shaped the 'local food' offer i.e. the terrain; the natural environment; the land available for cultivation; the heritage; the people; the natural produce; the community.

Such an understanding provides reasoned application of the term 'terroir' in connecting food firmly with place thus enabling 'local food' to act as authentic identity marker in the promotion of a destination's tourism offer. Academics in unravelling the concept of 'terroir' concede that it is a complex notion as apart from climate and soil, it also includes individuals, social organizations and activities, such as agricultural practices (Deloire, Prevost & Kelly, 2008).

Iceland – the Natural Environment

Iceland is a mountainous island nation in the north Atlantic Ocean, located between Europe and North America. The name is somewhat misleading, as only 10% Iceland is covered in glaciers and the climate is surprisingly mild thanks to the Gulf Stream. Of volcanic origin, Iceland has a strange but beautiful landscape with spurting geysers, geothermal hot spots and waterfalls. The wildlife consists mostly of birds with the seas surrounding Iceland rich in marine mammals such as seals and whales. It is also endowed with abundant natural resources including fishing grounds, hydroelectric and geothermal energy. In the summer months, the nights are bright and in the month of June

the sun never sets (period of EU visit). During the months of September to mid April, the Northern Lights, a natural phenomenon (also known as the aurora borealis) are often seen in Iceland.



Geologically, Iceland sits on the mid Atlantic Ridge, the dividing line between the North American and Eurasian continental plates, making the island a hot spot for volcanic activity. Due to eruption of the Eyjafjallajökull Volcano in Spring 2010, Iceland became the focus of global media attention with the ensuing volcanic ash cloud grounding and disrupting air travel across the North Atlantic and Europe and forcing around 600 Icelandic people to abandon their homes.

Map 1: Iceland's Terrain



Source: <http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/europe/is.htm>

By EU rural definitions¹ Iceland may be considered 'remote rural' with a low density of population. Iceland's land mass is 42.3% of that of the UK, with a current population of around 321,857 (Statistics Iceland, 2013) more than half of which live in the capital city of Reykjavik. Such a distribution results in a population density in several regions of around 3 persons per km², thus restricting the development of local markets and consequently, implying that distances to the latter are long and transports of agricultural products and inputs, become costly. Land available for agricultural production is sparse with only 0.1% of the total land mass considered arable (Table 1). Iceland² does not have very favourable conditions for agricultural production and by consequence the farmers' revenues are strongly dependant on coupled payments and high import tariffs.



Table 1: Land Characteristics

	Agricultural Land % of total area	Arable Land % of total area	Forest Area % of total area
Iceland	22.1%	0.1%	0.5%
UK	72.4%	25%	11.8%

Source: <http://en.worldstat.info/Europe>

¹ In 1994, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) developed a simple territorial scheme that identifies types of regions based on population density applied at two hierarchical levels. As there is no commonly agreed definition of rural areas at European level, the OECD typology is considered as an easy and acceptable approach for identifying rural areas. However, this typology used is exclusively based on population densities and is highly sensitive to the size of the geographic units and the classification thresholds.

² **Towards the EU Membership**

Iceland has the status of an applicant country, having applied for the EU membership on 16 July 2009. At the beginning of 2009, Iceland had one of the highest economic growth rates globally with low unemployment and low inflation. The ensuing global financial crisis deeply affected the country's image and economy. Tourism offers a route to economic salvation.

Iceland Agricultural Production

An understanding of the profile of the agricultural community and engaged farming techniques contributes to the notion of how the 'local food' product has been shaped by the land, the environment and man.

Table 2: Key facts

- 87% of all farm income is from livestock production
- Average dairy farmer has around 30-40 milking cows
- Average sheep farmer has around 300-600 sheep
- Remaining 23% of farm income comes from production of potatoes, turnip, cabbages, cauliflower and carrots (all grown outdoors) plus tomatoes, cucumbers peppers, nursery plants and flowers, which are cultivated in greenhouses based on geothermal energy and artificial lighting
- Farm holdings are relatively large , often hundreds of hectares
- Most farm have been in the same family for centuries
- All Icelandic farmers are affiliated to one single association – the Farmers Association

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/enlargement/countries/iceland/profile_en.pdf

Role of 'local food' in tourism development

Academic research argues that 'local food' can reconnect consumers with the people and places that produce their food (Kneafsey et al, 2008) and this connection is an intrinsic component in the delivery of an integrated tourism experience (Clark & Chabrel, 2007). According to the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO, 2012), local food and cuisines are one of the distinctive resources that offer a point of unique differentiation and may be a useful tool to market the destination. Local food and cuisines through food provenance offer destinations opportunities to create a real, sustainable identity. Furthermore, visitors and tourists are increasingly searching for authenticity of experience (UNWTO, 2012).

The International Culinary Tourism Association (2013), defines 'culinary tourism' as, *"the pursuit of unique and memorable eating and drinking experiences"*

Today's tourist

In the wake of recent food scandals, consumer interest in the provenance of food i.e. its origin, how it is produced, transported, and delivered, has never been higher. And with the discerning 'New Tourist' seeking out authentic and ethical experiences (Poon, 1993 and Sims, 2009), there has never been a better time to capitalise on this. For

destinations, careful selection of regional products and dishes featuring as USPs in branding, can be powerful symbols of local culture and contribute to a sense of place. With growing interest in culinary products and traditions, food has become an increasingly important factor in influencing tourists' motivations for travelling (Gyimóthy and Mykletun, 2009). For businesses, food provenance can be turned into a competitive advantage by demonstrating quality in taste, in carbon foot print, and in ethics. Research undertaken by Visit Scotland (2007) found that more than 70% of visitors want to taste regional specialities and fresh local produce. What is more, most visitors are also prepared to pay a 15% premium as they expect it to be fresher, better tasting and part of the community they are visiting (Watt, 2013).

Tourism

'Promote Iceland' is responsible for promoting Iceland as a tourism destination and assisting in the promotion of Icelandic culture abroad. It has identified tourism and food as two of its six strategic growth areas (Guðrún Birna Jörgensen, 2013). Tourism is one of the fastest-growing sectors of the Icelandic economy with annual growth of 7.3% since 2000. In 2012 visitor numbers reached 673,000, with tourism representing 6% of GDP and 5% employment. By 2020, visitor numbers are projected to increase to one million visitors (OECD, 2012).

Food Tourism

In recent years there has been an increased emphasis on image-making using nature, and in particular food, in international marketing campaigns. The 'Iceland Naturally' campaign uses Icelandic food products, framed and branded in the context of pure and unspoiled northern nature, to position Iceland as a nature tourist destination. The 'New Nordic Food', a joint campaign with the Nordic Countries, uses food to promote the region and highlights the role of local climate and soil composition in defining the character and taste of its products (Haraldsdóttir and Gunnarsdóttir, 2013).

Regional Initiatives

Since 2004 a number of regional initiatives, most with support from local authorities, have been launched around the country to create regional food tourism clusters. Projects such as Vestfirðir, Vesterland and Suourland emphasise local products and knowledge and mix tradition and innovation to make place narratives. Whilst the clusters have faced a number of challenges, such initiatives have raised awareness that local food products can act as differentiators when promoting different rural destinations and of their importance in attracting the tourists' attention (Haraldsdóttir and Gunnarsdóttir, 2013). The Katla Geopark local product programme uses cuisine, food and tourism as a tool for regional and economic development. Everyone has to eat and therefore food consumption is vital to

tourism and can have significant economic effects in the supply chain. While food may not be the sole reason for people to travel, it works very well with other products such as cultural, heritage or active tourism. The programme works to enhance sustainability within local tourism by attracting tourists that spend in such a way that the money circulates longer in the regional economy (Hreinsdóttir, 2013).

Producers

The most prominent development in this field in the last 6 years or so however, has been the level of individual creativity in designing food products or services. Small scale producers and tourism entrepreneurs are constantly coming up with something new or re-inventing the old, evidencing an awakening among local people about the food being produced in their area and its potential in tourism (Haraldsdóttir, 2013). To support innovation and entrepreneurship, Matis operate three Food Innovators Centres, which provide a wide variety of tools and specialist food processing equipment such as a smoke house and freeze-dryer. SME's receive training and have unlimited access to produce their products or carry out product development. Experts are on hand to provide help and technical advice. The centres provide very low start-up costs and low rent with almost no fixed costs (Einarsdóttir & Jónsdóttir, 2013).

'A Flavour' of our ENTICE Icelandic Experiences

1. Efsti-Dalur Dairy Farm



Table 3: Our Efsti-Dalur Experience

Attraction	<p>Located within the Golden Circle, the farm has been in the family for the last 32 years.</p> <p>Diversified to Dairy farm after scrapie outbreak a number of years ago.</p> <p>First opened up as a small guest house due to demand from local hikers seeking accommodation.</p> <p>Recently diversified to visitor centre/restaurant and ice cream parlour selling 'ice cream' made on the farm from own dairy herd.</p>
USP – Key Features	<p>Viewing gallery consisting of windows between restaurant/ice cream parlour and cows feeding area creates a feeling that visitors are eating with the animals thus connecting the customer directly with product and ingredients.</p> <p>Homemade ice cream using milk from dairy herd (42 cows) using 15,000 litres of fresh milk plus other ingredients sourced from local producers.</p> <p>Family run operation with each member having different roles/duties.</p> <p>Building constructed from timbers from old sheep shed and concrete walls traditionally constructed using local materials.</p> <p>Not totally organic but as close as possible.</p> <p>Local girl makes their crockery.</p> <p>Cow logo on knife-nice touch.</p>
Contribution to Sense of Place – Story	<p>Interesting story going back 32 years of how the family have been forced to adapt their business model to allow them to continue trading despite issues outwith their control.</p> <p>The family have managed to incorporate a 'wow' factor viewing gallery in their restaurant and ice cream parlour into the middle of a fully operational farm and in doing so have created a destination interpretation centre with a number of products each with their own USP.</p> <p>Musical entertainment by family members performing traditional Icelandic songs and encouraging audience engagement added 'fun element' to visitor experience.</p>
Recommendations	<p>Very weak on branding but very early days.</p> <p>Ice cream branding and quality needs to be more consistent and kept in line with the other branding with more overt emphasis on the fact they are using their own milk/cream etc .</p> <p>Requires better signage upon approach to attract passers-by. Huge opportunity to create more ice cream/beef sales to other local establishments/individuals once they have developed the brand.</p> <p>Would be interesting to monitor this business to see how it develops..</p>
Key Contact	<p>efstadal@eyjar.is +354-486-1186</p>

2. 'Geysir' located in the Haukadalur Valley within Iceland's Golden Circle



Table 4: Our Geysir Experience

<p>Attraction offer</p>	<p>Geysir³, Iceland's most famous geothermal field and hot spring area, is located within the Golden Circle and is a 'honeypot' for tourism, offering accommodation and dining in the Hotel Geysir and the Geysir Exhibition Centre.</p> <p>The Hotel Geysir has a good restaurant sensibly designed with large panoramic windows to enable visitors to observe the geysers whilst dining.</p> <p>The exhibition centre provides an alternative restaurant experience and also boasts a large commercial outlet selling Icelandic memorabilia. The volcano exhibition portraying the dangers of living in such an active volcanic landscape.</p>
<p>USP – Key Features</p>	<p>Geysir; this landmark of Iceland is a spectacular natural phenomenon beyond description. The geothermal field surrounding the Great Geysir, the definitive geyser, having given its name to the geological phenomena.</p> <p>Chef demonstration of cooking using geothermal using the geothermal ovens provides a unique visitor experience demonstrating the adaption of man to the natural environment.</p> <p>'Geysir Bread', a rye bread called 'Rúgbrauð' in Icelandic, is a dough stuffed into empty milk cartons and wrapped in cloth then baked/steamed underground between rocks in a geothermal oven for between 12-24hrs. Unique to Icelandic culture, this cannot be replicated without geothermal activity.</p>
<p>Contribution to Sense of Place – Story</p>	<p>Cookery demonstrations include the story behind the product and provide an insight into the relationship between food, culture and the environment.</p> <p>Tastes of Iceland in a unique natural environment included rye bread with Icelandic butter, some boiled eggs (cooked in the boiling water surrounding the geysir oven) all</p>

³ Geysirs in Iceland were originally thought of as 'gateways to hell'

	washed down with some local Geysir schnapps and pickled herrings!
Recommendations	<p>Although spectacular, this natural phenomenon lacks specific interpretation for the casual visitor. Perhaps more interpretation required when tours (organised by the hotel) are not running.</p> <p>The branding of all the 'geyser bread' from various outlets could be improved and would benefit from being redesigned to allow a more consistent product throughout Iceland. This would encourage additional sales to tourists, locals and businesses, selling on and promoting the destination and product.</p> <p>Possibility of getting the product protected similar to a PDO⁴ (protected designation of origin) within the EU and if successful this itself would provide identity and protection recognising the value of unique methods of production embedded in social culture.</p>
Key Contact	<p>Hotel Geysir email: geysir@geysircenter.is Phone: +354 480-6800</p>

3. Friðheimar Tomato farm and Icelandic horse show



⁴ For information on the EU Protected Food Name Scheme see <http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/quality/schemes/>

Table 5: Our Friðheimar Experience

<p>Attraction</p>	<p>Couple moved from Reykjavik to Friðheimar 18 years previously; wife a former horticultural student and husband an agricultural student.</p> <p>Opened up farm for horse shows 5 years ago with greenhouses opening to the public in 2012. Currently operates horse shows and visits to a geothermal greenhouse for groups with refreshments offered at the Greenhouse restaurant.</p>
<p>USP – Key Features</p>	<p>Icelandic horses are unique to Iceland with breed protected by the fact that horses have not been imported to Iceland for the last 1000 years. Icelandic horses have 5 different gaits, the only breed to have mastered this.</p> <p>The horse show (available in various languages) is a professional display narrating the history of the Icelandic horse, providing an insight into one of the finest horse breeds in the world, a breed that has been intertwined with the culture and history of the Icelandic nation throughout the centuries. After the display visitors are invited into the stables to get close to horses.</p> <p>Master chef Jon Sigfusson prepares dishes from products for restaurant and retail outlet, the 'Little Tomato Shop', where products can be purchased straight from the farm (fresh vegetables, sauces, chutneys and oils).</p> <p>Unique atmosphere as restaurant and shop situated amidst the tomato plants serving fresh tomato soup together with home-baked bread and condiments prepared from surrounding plants.</p>
<p>Contribution to Sense of Place – Story</p>	<p>Story narrated by farmer of how geothermal energy has been used to grow tomatoes and cucumbers in raised beds all year round with the highly computerised system enabling feeding and watering of plants controlled by laptop.</p> <p>Six hundred bumble bees constantly pollinate the plants; these are imported from Holland with two new boxes per week.</p> <p>This narration connected the visitor with the product and was backed up by 'Story Boards' portraying the family and production methods used in the greenhouses.</p> <p>The story also extended to innovative labelling of all jams, chutneys, sauces and salsas connecting the lives of the family with the product.</p>
<p>Recommendations</p>	<p>Keep demonstrating connection of product with family and excellent level of customer experience.</p> <p>Develop Ecommerce opportunities by developing the range of goods such as hampers, larger offering of pasta sauces etc and trade sales.</p>
<p>Key Contact</p>	<p>Knútur Ármann, Helena Hermundardóttir.</p>

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UK Comparators / Experience

1. Cornwall

Cornwall is located in the extreme South West of the UK, an established tourism destination, which has successfully used local foods to reinforce its regional identity, stimulate the visitor economy and support sustainability. 'Cornwall Food and Drink' is a commercial membership organisation which creates exciting events, campaigns and initiatives both within and outside Cornwall to promote the sector. It also works with businesses one-to-one to help make sure they are ready to seize every opportunity and able to reach their potential. Since 2003 it has organised the Cornwall Food & Drink Festival in Truro, which attracts 40,000 visitors. In 2013 Cornwall Food & Drink, in partnership with Cornwall Chamber of Commerce, launched the Choose Cornish Awards in 2013. The awards celebrate the businesses in the county who go to the greatest lengths to 'buy local' and make a real difference to the community and economy of Cornwall in doing so.

Table 6: Cornwall & the Cornish Pasty

Attraction	Cornwall & the Cornish Pasty
USP – Key Features	The pasty is a powerful symbol of Cornish culture and worth more than £150m a year to the county's economy (Taste of the West, 2005).
Contribution to Sense of Place – Story	Traditionally eaten by miners working underground. When Cornish miners emigrated overseas they took pasties with them. Cornish pasties are part of the Cornish Mining World Heritage story
Opportunities/, priorities	Pasty Festival was established in 2012 by Portreath Bakery and Redruth Town Council to attract visitors to Redruth. The World Pasty Championships is held each year at the iconic Eden project Pasty Museum is planned at Heartlands, gateway to the Cornish Mining World Heritage Site
Key Contacts	Marion Symonds (portreathbakery@gmail.com) Vicky Martin (vicky.martin@heartlandscornwall.com)

Table 7: The Red River Café at Heartlands, Cornwall

Attraction	The Red River Café at Heartlands, Cornwall
USP – Key Features	Offers local specialities made with local, fresh, seasonal produce, sourced mostly within 15miles of the attraction
Contribution to Sense of Place – Story	Café located in restored carpenters workshop at former tin mine, now part of the Cornish Mining World Heritage Site
Opportunities/, priorities	'We're proud of our suppliers' wall inside the café, displays posters of its local suppliers, sensitising visitors and educating them about provenance. It gives producers the chance to promote and restaurant something to celebrate
Key Contacts	Vicky Martin (vicky.martin@heartlandscornwall.com)

Table 8: Fifteen Cornwall

Attraction	Jamie Oliver's Fifteen Cornwall
USP – Key Features	Social enterprise training restaurant; local ingredient-led menu with Italian theme; Strong Cornish identity based in quintessentially Cornish location
Contribution to Sense of Place – Story	Commitment to source everything possible in Cornwall - high branded visibility of local produce; track record training local people as chefs and working with character-rich supply web of local micro business
Opportunities/, priorities	Extend celebrity brand locally with apprentice chef training at core; strengthen supply chain relationships and value and connect to visitor economy.
Key Contacts	Matthew Thomson matthew@fifteencornwall.co.uk

2. Scotland

'Scotland Food & Drink', established in 2007, is a not-for-profit organisation created to guide food and drink companies of all sizes towards increased profitability. Supported by the Scottish Government, Scotland Food & Drink's is a leadership organisation whose mission is to build Scotland's international reputation as 'A Land of Food and Drink', growing the value of Scotland's food and drink sector and delivering greater global success in today's challenging and competitive environment (Scotland Food & Drink, 2013).

Currently plans are underway to establish a Scottish Food Provenance Village at key locations of the country to showcase regional food. 'Street Food' served by regional characters will connect culture closely with regional produce adding value to the food and tourism experience.

Local Food' is to be highlighted and showcased at events with EventScotland⁵ providing opportunities to profile suppliers and to boost awareness of Scotland's natural larder at major events planned for 2014; the Commonwealth Games; The Ryder Cup; Homecoming Scotland 2014.

Scotland's food producers are encouraged to apply for EU protected food name status for brands to prevent imitation and to assure customers that they are buying the 'genuine article'. Arbroath Smokies and Stornoway Black Pudding are among 12 Scottish products currently registered under the European Union's Protected Food Names (PFN) scheme.

Table 9: Arbroath & the Arbroath Smokie

Attraction	Arbroath and Arbroath Smokies
USP – Key Features	EU 'Protected Geographical Status' means only haddock smoked using traditional smoking methods within a five-mile radius of Arbroath can use the name 'Arbroath Smokie.'
Contribution to Sense of Place – Story	The original 'Arbroath Smokie' can be attributed to Auchmithie, a small fishing village, 3 miles north of Arbroath where fishwives originally smoked the fish in halved barrels with fires underneath, trapping the smoke under layers of hessian sacking. With the movement of people at the start of the 20th century from Auchmithie to nearby Arbroath, the process became known as the Arbroath Smokie..
Opportunities/, priorities	This recognition from Europe ensures the quality, tradition, and identity of the Arbroath Smokie, confirming its place as the signature product of Arbroath and one of the prides of the region of Angus.
Key Contacts	http://www.arbroathsmokies.net/

Table 10: Stornoway & Stornoway Black Pudding

Attraction	Stornoway & Stornoway Black Pudding
USP – Key Features	Stornoway Black Puddings are a black pudding unique to Stornoway, the capital of the Isle of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland. They have a rich, deep reddish-brown to deep brown colour when raw, varying according to individual local recipes.
Contribution to Sense of Place – Story	Traditionally Stornoway Black Puddings were produced by individual crofters who kept a small number of sheep and/or pigs and cows and in order to feed their families had to ensure that every part of those animals was fully utilised. Although the basic recipe for the Stornoway Black Puddings has remained unchanged over the years the methods of production have had to change, in response to greater food hygiene regulations.
Opportunities/, priorities	Protected Food Name Status (PGI) ensures the quality, tradition, and identity of the product, enabling producers within the defined geographical region to produce and

⁵ <http://www.eventscotland.org/>

	<p>label Stornaway Black Puddings which must adhere to the agreed ingredients with each of the producers maintaining full records of traceability.</p> <p>This helps put Stornoway on the map as a producer of high quality produce and ensures the unique black pudding cannot be replicated anywhere else, thereby safeguarding the island's food heritage.</p> <p>Demand has increased and It now ranks alongside the Arbroath Smokie and the Cornish pasty.</p>
Key Contacts	http://www.charlesmacleod.co.uk/producers-association.aspx

Analysis and Success Factors

Whether fuelled by economic or social uncertainty, increased global mobility, awareness of cultural diversity, demand for ever richer experience, or in response to the homogenisation of retail choice in the OECD economies, people across the world are developing greater 'place-consciousness'. A strong sense of place affords residents and visitors alike a greater sense of belonging and influences their behavioural and consumer choices and activities. As a cultural, environmental and social product consumed by all, food sits naturally at the heart of the identity of a place.

“For the tourist, food opens the curtains on a window which reveals the place, the living world as well as the ancient world, the environment, the traditions and the history.”

(McGillvray, 2010)

The extent to which this is articulated effectively in the visitor economy depends very much on how the food is conceived, produced, presented and narrated at the level of individual destinations. Food and food service are therefore instrumental in shaping visitor experience, and consideration of the experiences and destinations referenced in this study affords the identification of factors that determine the success of Icelandic food offers in this respect. These include:

(i) Heritage

The cultural history of a food product can demonstrate vividly the connection it has with a specific locale. The Linden restaurant at Laugarvatn in Iceland offers a seal pate as a traditional fare prepared for centuries by hunters and the

chef locates himself very much in that tradition. Trip Advisor⁶ and traveller websites make repeated references to his descriptions of his own hunting experiences to guests and this becomes a defining feature for visitors.

The chef at the Holsvollur Hotel served smoked horse meat which he smoked himself using methods he had learned from his grandfather. He arranged for interested visitors to visit his smokehouse and to make their own engagements with his place. The sense of place experienced by visitors is reinforced by an understanding of personal relationships, family histories and community traditions explained through food. The distinctive flavours of the food produced using traditional methods provide an insight into, and are anchored in, a broader understanding of the distinctive local culture. Nowhere was this more evident than in the dinner served at the Njalsaga Centre at Holsvollur where the menu, service and eating style were linked firmly to the traditions of Iceland's founders.

(ii) Sustainability

At a time when more people in countries are all over the world are experiencing economic hardship and a growing sense of insecurity, compounded by energy uncertainty and climate change fears, the sustainability agenda has an ever greater prominence in public and media discourse. There is greater media scrutiny of the journey food makes from field to fork, especially in terms of production inputs such as chemical fertilisers, animal welfare, pest controls and food miles and critics are increasingly factoring such considerations into their appraisals of restaurants. Food produced locally to the point of consumption has clear carbon benefits (Pretty, 2001) and gives the visitor the sense that they are contributing to the local economy by consuming it. Local food thereby fulfils the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainability. Its consumption instils a sense of well being in the visitor, and enables them to make an active contribution to a local place through their buying choices. Buying locally produced food keeps local people in work and their skills alive and relevant to their place.

(iii) Wildness

Wild food is increasingly a feature of restaurant menus and has become fashionable in several of the world's cuisines. By foraging, hunting or preparing food in the wild, chefs are making a statement about their understanding of their place and offering insights into the secrets of those places to the visitor. At Café Kjot og kunst, Hveragerdi and at Laugarvatn Fontana chefs demonstrate the art of wild baking using natural heat of geothermal sands. At Hotel Geysir this experience is enhanced by the chef boiling eggs in the natural springs and serving these with wild baked bread, local herring and birch schnapps – a wild dining experience that gives visitors a unique sense of Geysir the

⁶ http://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/Restaurant_Review-g315851-d1890820-Reviews-Restaurant_Lindin_Bistro_Cafe-Laugarvatn_South_Region.html

place. With wilderness concepts featuring so strongly in Iceland's national brand, use of this factor locally to reinforce sense of place and enhance perceptions of authenticity is especially effective.

(iv) Terroir

Terroir is the set of special characteristics that the geography, geology and climate of a certain place, interacting with the plant's genetics, express in food and drink products. Iceland's unique geothermal energy abundance and summer 24 hour days are features particularly striking to the visitor and have been harnessed by horticulturalists working under glass to produce tomatoes, cucumbers and soft fruit over the last century. The resultant products are therefore strongly imbued with a sense of place, even if not especially distinctive in terms of flavour.

At Fridheimar the creation of a simple canteen and shop offering a narrow range of tomato dishes and products within a greenhouse producing over 200 tonnes of tomatoes a year has transformed a food production centre into an engaging visitor attraction offering visitors insights into a hidden industry as well as a taste of absolutely local produce. The shop sells products that are very specific to that precise place and it is the place itself that has driven the business to make them. The family owners talk expertly about the importance of their terroir and use their tomatoes as garnish for table water and even as schnapps 'glasses' offered to guests on arrival. The schnapps itself also draws on terroir to differentiate itself and to connect itself to the locale, citing its use of 1000 year old water taken from the local glacier.

(v) Pride

Local food adds more value to a touristic offer when it is self-consciously local i.e. when those finding, preparing or serving it are fully conscious of the food's local linkages and meanings and able to narrate them. This requires not only local knowledge but also pride in the local on the part of the host, chef or server. Whether by singing songs about local histories to diners as they eat, or by telling stories, showing photos or explaining menus, hospitality professionals enhance the visitor's experience of the local and encourage visitors to find out more themselves. This approach also allows producers to charge a 'local' premium and to highlight particular products in particular ways. Such civic pride underpins a strong sense of authenticity and celebrates local distinctiveness in terms both of visitor experience and market. This practical pride may be reflected by visitors themselves who derive great satisfaction from learning local facts and techniques. Knowledge based tourism approaches and the growing identification of 'leisure learners' are both indicators that this is an area of growth in visitor experience management.

(vi) Character

Food products speak most of their place when related to named individuals strongly associated with that place. The naming of a person associated with the production of a specific item and the branding of that product with their identity or story makes real the connection between the product and the place. Without such a personal connection there is a risk that the product-place relationship remains theoretical. By offering the buyer a real person to whom they can relate, a product gives a human meaning to the sensory experience of consuming that product that links to their experience of visiting the place where the producer lives or works and from where the product originates. If the producer can be identified as someone with endearing or unusual characteristics or with a notable story, the character value of the product is enhanced. In this sense character is the social equivalent of terroir.

Conclusion

Any attempt to brand and use 'local food' in the promotion and marketing of a destination must take cognisance of the amalgam of factors, notably heritage, sustainability, terroir, character, pride and wildness that interplay and connect in determining and shaping a sense of place consciousness, contributing to the memories and imaginations of visitors and potential visitors. In doing so this relationship may be regarded as symbiotic; place contributing to 'local food' and 'local food' contributing to sense of place.

Addendum

The nation of Iceland is at an interesting moment in its history in terms of its relationships with others. Recent political and financial shifts have redefined its relationship and potential relationship with the EU. At the same time tourism has developed very quickly as a foreign currency generating industry. The role of tourism in marketing Iceland as a place, as a nation and a destination (for investment as well as for exploration) is well understood by leaders and policy makers. Traditional touristic perceptions of Icelandic food featured, with an element of caricature, whale, fermented fish and puffin. Now that whale hunting is highly contested by the touristic enterprises dependent on whale watching; and puffin hunting on pause due to conservation and sustainability concerns (linked closely to climate change); both of these traditional food types are disappearing from the menus of most (tourist-oriented) restaurants in Iceland. They have been supplanted by emblematic combinations of highly nutritious, carefully curated products chosen to embody the very fashionable Nordic cuisine. Even as Iceland's own sense of place evolves, so the foods which evoke and define it evolve too.

EXERCISES

Level 1: General points

1. What has been the impact of 21st Century consumerism on food?
2. List the factors that are considered to shape a destination's 'local food' offer.
3. What is the role, as suggested by academics, that exists between 'local food' and tourism development?
4. What type of experience is the 'New Tourist' seeking?
5. From the research undertaken by VisitScotland (2005), what key messages can tourism operators consider to be key to business development.
6. State two food related campaigns that display Iceland's approach to developing a sustainable tourism offer.
7. Outline the role of Matis in relation to food innovation.
8. From the Icelandic experiences provided, list the food offer that you consider to be the most unique. Provide reasons to support your choice.
9. List two UK examples where culture and food have been used to develop a sense of place.
10. List the six key factors that are considered to contribute to the success of a destination's 'local 'food tourism' offer.

Level 2: Group Exercises – Icelandic Case Studies

Choose two attractions from the following list and prepare a brief presentation that provides a comparative analysis on the role of 'local food' in creating identity in tourism.

- Efsti-Dalur Farm
- Geysir
- Friðheimar Tomato farm and Icelandic horse show
- The Linden Restaurant, Laugarvatn

Level 3: Further Research Activity

1. Using the references listed in the report, further research the following terms:
 - terroir
 - sense of place
2. Applying your research and information from this Case Study, provide an evaluative response to the following statement :

'Local food' is crucial to establishing a sense of place for a tourism destination.

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Map

Map 1: <http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/europe/is> [Accessed 5 August 2013]

Tables

Table 1: <http://en.worldstat.info/Europe> [Accessed 8 August 2013]

Table 2: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/enlargement/countries/iceland/profile_en.pdf [Accessed 5 August 2013]