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# The Destination

## Learning objectives

Readers are expected to learn the following from this chapter:

- How to apply or adapt the knowledge from real-world food tourism examples to new ventures.
- Challenges facing countries and cities in developing food tourism
- How destinations develop and promote food tourism domestically and internationally
- Comparative approaches from Scandinavia, Scotland, Ireland, Italy, and Canada
- Specific products/experiences for food tourism and their development: food trails and tours; chefs, restaurants and cooking schools, markets.

## Introduction

This chapter provides examples of food tourism development and marketing from several countries. It is unreasonable to think that every city or country can be a mecca for food tourists, but it is probable that every destination can develop some degree of food tourism. Casciola, Laurin and Wolf (2014: 225) presented a concept that classifies destinations according to the strength of food and drink motivations relative to other reasons for tourists to visit. This is a premise that needs testing through actual visitor surveys, but the categories range from primary food/beverage destination to emerging food tourism destinations.

If the starting point is a recognition of the potential of food tourism, then one test of development and marketing effectiveness will be to monitor the growth in the number of dedicated food tourists – that is, the aim is to attract more and more people coming just for food or food and beverages. However, other performance measures can be suggested depending on the vision and aims of food tourism strategies:

- Growth in the number of food tours.
- Higher spending on food in restaurants and commercial accommodations

- Increased food-event attendance.
- Higher proportions of visitors expressing satisfaction with food and resulting word-of-mouth recommendations.
- Image and reputation improvements (compared to a base point and to competitors).

The key point is that objectives and performance measures must realistically fit the destination's nature and its stage of food tourism development.

We start with a discussion of New Nordic Cuisine which is a multi-country branding concept, with specific reference to Goteborg Sweden and Copenhagen Denmark. This is followed by profiles of Scotland and Ireland. Dr Alessio Cavicchi has contributed a profile of Italy, which follows. The chapter concludes with a short section on specific products or experiences for destinations to develop, including food trails and tours, chefs, restaurants and cooking schools, and markets.

## New Nordic cuisine

In this section we have consulted, and quote from a number of Nordic experts:

- Claes Bjerkne, Senior Adviser Bjerkne & Co, Chairman at Visita – Swedish Hospitality Industry, Former CEO of Gothenburg & Co (DMO)
- Ditte Furstrand Nytofte, Project Manager International Marketing, Wonderful Copenhagen
- Claus Meyer, Associate Professor at CPH University Department of Food Science, cofounder of the restaurant Noma, owner of the Meyer Group ([http://www.clausmeyer.dk/en/the\\_new\\_nordic\\_cuisine\\_/manifesto\\_.html](http://www.clausmeyer.dk/en/the_new_nordic_cuisine_/manifesto_.html))
- Mats Nordström, Chef at Restaurant Wasa Allé, Gothenburg
- Bengt Linde, Restaurateur and Chairman of the Board at the Gothenburg Restaurant Association

The New Nordic Cuisine Manifesto is provided on the website of Claus Meyer, co-founder of the famous Noma restaurant in Copenhagen ([www.clausmeyer.dk/en/the\\_new\\_nordic\\_cuisine\\_/manifesto\\_.html](http://www.clausmeyer.dk/en/the_new_nordic_cuisine_/manifesto_.html))

*“As Nordic chefs we find that the time has now come for us to create a New Nordic Kitchen, which in virtue of its good taste and special character compares favourably with the standard of the greatest kitchens of the world.*

*The aims of New Nordic Cuisine are:*

1. *To express the purity, freshness, simplicity and ethics we wish to associate with our region.*

2. *To reflect the changing of the seasons in the meals we make.*
3. *To base our cooking on ingredients and produce whose characteristics are particularly excellent in our climates, landscapes and waters.*
4. *To combine the demand for good taste with modern knowledge of health and well-being.*
5. *To promote Nordic products and the variety of Nordic producers – and to spread the word about their underlying cultures.*
6. *To promote animal welfare and a sound production process in our seas, on our farmland and in the wild.*
7. *To develop potentially new applications of traditional Nordic food products.*
8. *To combine the best in Nordic cookery and culinary traditions with impulses from abroad.*
9. *To combine local self-sufficiency with regional sharing of high-quality products.*
10. *To join forces with consumer representatives, other cooking craftsmen, agriculture, the fishing, food , retail and wholesale industries, researchers, teachers, politicians and authorities on this project for the benefit and advantage of everyone in the Nordic countries.*

Byrkjeflot et al. (2013) have documented the evolution and legitimization of the New Nordic Cuisine movement in the context of ‘gastronationalism’ which has been used as a source of national branding and identity expression. In the last decade, the five Scandinavian countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden) have attempted to brand themselves as the world’s new culinary Mecca. As a brand it was launched with a manifesto endorsed by chefs at a culinary symposium in Copenhagen, Denmark, in 2004. Whether it has worked or not remains to be seen, as data on actual results expressed in food tourist increases are not available. Results of our own multi-country research suggest that it has not done much to change the stereotyped images of Swedish food, although that is not to say there have not been other successes.

## ■ Sweden and Gothenburg

In the document *Sweden The New Culinary Nation* (2009, Ministry of Agriculture), the Swedish advantage is put forward:

- Sweden has unique nature that supplies unique produce. The combination of nature and produce also offers opportunities for an exclusive culinary experience.
- The sea gives the west coast its shellfish, which are world famous for their flavour; there are mussels and farmed oysters, and of course fresh fish caught every day. The great forests and wildernesses offer not just peace and quiet, but also game: an ingredient that holds a special place in Swedish cuisine.

- Growing tourism gives Culinary Sweden a chance to develop further. Culinary experiences form a major part of tourists' experience and image of Sweden.
- Sweden has a diversity of produce and manufacturing methods, blending Swedish culinary traditions with inspiration from other countries.
- Swedish chefs are renowned the world over for their ability to make the best of this blend of tradition and innovation.
- Sweden has a growing food industry that is of major importance to rural areas. Entrepreneurial spirit and ventures are a strong contributing factor to a living countryside. This creates a regional food culture and a local identity.

Mossberg et al. (2014: 344) said that the West Sweden Tourist Board provides a case study on how to use different types of food strategically in destination development. Seafood is at the core of their branding, as each shellfish is "imbued with its own myths" meaning that their consumption holds symbolic significance. The concept 'Seafood Safari' was developed, and in 2009 the theme "All of Bohuslän on one plate" was promoted ([www.skaldjursresan.se](http://www.skaldjursresan.se)).

Gothenburg (Göteborg) in West Sweden has used food as a tool for destination development for over ten years. According to Claes Bjerckne, the former CEO at Gothenburg & Co (the city's DMO), the company "...used food as an enticer for site inspections, airline lobbying, when bidding for big events and conferences, both when visiting Gothenburg and internationally". Famous Swedish chefs from the city travelled with DMO staff when bidding for events in order to cook fantastic dinners and impress their hosts.

In order to attract foodies, Gothenburg promotes itself as a city with four Michelin star restaurants for trendy eaters, top-class seafood, and a vivid agricultural landscape. More casually, the city offers street food and many cafes where people 'fika', that is, drink coffee or tea and have some sweets. Gothenburg also offers local and organic produce like its artisan cheese, jams and sourdough bread, but of course, Gothenburg has world-class seafood such as fresh shrimps, crayfish and oysters. At the restaurant Wasa Allé the chefs are sourcing local-regional foods in order to emphasize West Swedish produce. Gothenburg is also famous for its farmers' markets like Briggens Market Hall, and Fiskekôrka - the fish market nicknamed Fish Church for its design. (<http://www.goteborg.com/en/Eat/Gothenburg-for-foodies/>)

Chef Mats Nordström states that "the new trends now are to do less fine dining and have more small dishes at a faster pace...The focus are on good quality produce". He also hopes that the new trend of produce based on seasonality and local produce will keep on for years and years.

Restaurateur Bengt Linde adds, "today, you have to know what you get when you come to a restaurant. You need a complete concept like being a sports restaurant, French restaurant...you can't just be a restaurant. You cannot emanate from