

Metropolitan Cuisine Tourism: Exploring Food Tourists to the Creole Cuisine in

New Orleans, LA USA

by

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## ABSTRACT

Cuisines are becoming increasingly significant in a tourist's experience and as such looking into different cuisines and their effects on the tourist's destination provides strong indicators of the outlook for the destination. Metropolitan areas within the United States have a history of being known for specific food items as well as types of cuisines. This study explores the Metropolitan area of New Orleans and the cuisine specific to this region: the Creole cuisine. A mixed methods approach was used to identify the Creole cuisine within the New Orleans area as both a regional cuisine and as a culturally significant cuisine, within the context of the United States of America. Once established, and through the help of the local New Orleans' Convention and Visitors Bureau, an online questionnaire was distributed to individuals that had shown an interest in visiting the New Orleans area. The questionnaire identified the characteristics of the Creole cuisine and the respondents' most recent trip to New Orleans. The Brief Sensation Seeking Scale, adjusted for cuisine tourism, provided a categorical separation of the respondents into three groupings: "Foodies", "Semi-foodies", and "Non-foodies". Two important findings emerge from this study, the cultural significant cuisine segmentation model and the foodie scale. These two findings allow for an in depth look at characteristics of regional cuisines and food tourists, while providing a way to predict food characteristics of both destination and individual.

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### *Background of Study*

Food has always been a marketing tool whether individually through the use of dinner and a movie for courting efforts, ceremonial occasions, religious and non-religious, to whole communities claiming to be the birthplace and/or best producer of unique cuisines. Food as a marketing tool on the macro level has been frequently overlooked as the product is very much perishable, differs from individual to individual and variations are poorly defined (Boyne, Hall, & Williams 2003), but through closer examination food tourism has the potential to help revive whole communities, whether they are just starting to look at the tourist market or are communities restructuring their marketing strategies.

Eating is a necessary and universal activity, and it gives insight into the lifestyles, history and cultures of a locale, and cuisine is an essential manifestation of this (Roberti, 2008). These points are strengthened by Lucy Long who argues that “culinary tourism is about food as a subject and medium, destination and vehicle, for tourism. It is about individuals exploring foods (and wines) new to them as well as using food to explore new cultures and ways of being. It is about groups using food to ‘sell’ their histories and to construct marketable and publicly attractive identities, and it is about individuals satisfying curiosity” (Long, 2004 pp.2)



Food/cuisine/culinary tourism has increased tourism in areas of the world where it has been incorporated into their tourism initiatives (Roberti, 2008). According to Roberti (2008), “food and drink of local people area a doorway into their culture” (Roberti, 2008 p.1), Long (2004) also adds that “food tends to provide us with a sense of the ‘realness’ of things” (Long, 2004 p.5). Many western European countries, Canada, and the U.S. offer tourists optional tours that specialize in culinary tourism, such as cooking demonstration tours, wine tasting tours at retreats, as well as trips to farms, agritourism.

This project begins from the disadvantage of not having a clearly defined theoretical framework. Long’s (2004) concept of ‘culinary tourism’ plays a central role in guiding ethnographic research. According to Erik Wolfe, who is the president of the International Culinary Tourism Association, culinary tourism is defined as the development and promotion of food and drink as an attraction for visitors (Robert, 2008). The Canadian Tourism Commission also states culinary tourism goes well beyond the dining experience. “It includes a variety of culinary, agri-tourism and agri-food activities, developed expressly for tourists, that showcase food and beverages and provide an opportunity for visitors to discover dishes indigenous to each region while learning about the talent and creativity of artisans” (Canadian Tourism Commission, 2001 p.3).

However, what appears central to the concept is the issue of authenticity, which is considered to be central to the notion of culinary tourism. This view, as a form of shock treatment in culinary tourism, is defined for the purposes of this

research as a outsider's indulgence in localized types of cuisine during travel. "Food can then carry us into other realms of experience, allowing us to be tourists while staying at home" (Long, 2004 p. 1), Long says that there is much more to tasting new, exotic and authentic foods of different cultures. Instead, it is all about the perception of the otherness and the realization of something being rather different from the usual. For instance, The annual Worcester Food and Wine Festival which is held in Cape Town, South Africa, is a means of entertainment for many and allows one to engage in historical culture an functions to promote the best in local wine. Hall (2006) argues that food, or culinary, tourism has become part of local culture of a destination consumed by tourists.

Numerous food biographies and ethnographic studies which focus on history demonstrate that tourism has often misinterpreted the meanings for food and intensified the meanings that are in use. A nation's and country's identity is reflected and reinforced by the food experiences it offers (Long, 2004). The ways in which certain ingredients and fresh produce are combined and cooked form an important element of a national cultural identity. Based on these view points, one can argue that local and regional food is a feature that can add value to a destination and can contribute towards effective marketing of a destination (du Rand Heath and Albert, 2006).

While ethnic experiences through cuisines do not necessarily require long distance travel, Long (2004) further explains that one also does not necessarily have to travel to have a culinary tourism experience of a culture different to their

own. Ethnic restaurants are an example where people can engage in a tourism practice without leaving their community. Molz (2004) also shows this in the increase in Thai cuisine restaurants in America and the experiences the diners wish to have while eating at the restaurant. Customers soak in the atmosphere, style of dining, the décor and the cuisine when they are indulging in ‘authentic dishes from Thailand’ (Molz, 2004).

Today’s tourist is more cultured than visitors of 20 years ago, is well travelled, is searching for new experiences, is concerned about the environment, is interested in taking part in a health and well-being lifestyle and wants to experience the local culture when on holiday. Trend analyst, Ian Yeoman (2008) writes that food is a significant aspect of the tourist’s experience of a destination, driven by the growing trends of authenticity and the need to have a high-quality experience. Food tourism shapes gastro destinations such as France, Italy and California, whereas in emerging destinations such as Croatia, Vietnam and Mexico, food plays an important part of the overall experience.

One of the fastest growing trends in food is that of well-being and healthy eating habits which shows there is a higher awareness of health issues and food purchase decisions. Around 30% of adults say that they have been eating less fat and sugar compared to the previous year and 28% say they are eating less salt, whereas other food groups, specifically vegetables, fruit and starches are on the rise (Yeoman, 2008). These trends have transformed themselves into the food industry with Starbucks offering soy milk, and McDonalds offering salads. In

New York, the city council has banned certain types of fats. The proportion of vegetarians has only increased slightly in the last 20 years, with just over 5% of UK adults reporting themselves to be vegetarian in 2004 (Yoeman, 2008). However, the number of food venues offering vegetarian options due to its association with healthy eating has increased exponentially along with a perception that vegetarian food in restaurants is more than vegetable lasagna or a cheese omelet. Restaurants are also aware of specialist diets, whether it is catering for gluten free or the Atkins diet. Consumers will even visit a nutritionist for opinions about food balance or sensitivity towards certain foods (Yeoman, 2008). The specialist diet is becoming more mainstream with individuals avoiding certain foodstuffs like dairy products or seeking detoxifying diets to cleanse the body. Consumers are therefore becoming ever more demanding and cautious regarding the food they eat. These concerns and fears can be exploited to maximize potential marketing of certain products. However, due to the volatile nature of demands and trends, these requirements are hard to predict.

When on holiday, dining becomes the social occasion when busy people create a time oasis, but also connect with family members and friends who maybe time-impooverished. Eating becomes a human-space within frequently harried lives. As the consumer desire for new experiences increases, the authentic restaurant experience becomes more important. Authenticity is about food that is simple, rooted in the region, natural, ethical, beautiful and human, all of the making for a food tourism destination.

Gershuny (2000) notes that food has an important position and role in the emerging experience economy whether in the preparation of it, knowledge of it or consuming it. We have various skills in different sorts of consumption and organizational participation, individuals play football, organize social events for the synagogue or church or mosque, cook food and give dinner parties, and listen to music. All of these activities give the participants different levels of satisfaction, and different degrees of social status, depending on how fully and effectively they are able to participate in them. So, the growing importance of cultural issues, as a leisure activity and as a point of differentiation, means it is an important trend in food tourism as it is the tourist's knowledge of food that distinguishes them. This means the food tourist has a desire for new tastes, knowledge and concepts and therefore food creates its own cultural capital on which destinations are able to capitalize. As consumers become richer and more sophisticated, they are drawn to new and more adventurous tastes (Foxall, 1993).

Some destinations have begun to realize that there is great potential for food tourism to offer a sustainable tourism product, whether it is the fine wines of California or the great cheeses of France. One of the best examples of food tourism has been the rise in prominence of New Orleans as a food tourism destination, for its festivals, slow food and Michelin star restaurants. From its early beginning as a harbor market, New Orleans has prospered into a major food tourism destination with a density of high quality restaurants, an abundance of local food suppliers in the high street and food festivals and events to attract

tourists. New Orleans as a food destination illustrates its success by using food as a means to create cultural capital and social cachet, creating a density of food and drink suppliers, which results in a tourism eating and shopping experience, creating a local authentic promise based upon good quality and fair pricing, creating a unique product better than that found in other regional food destinations, producers seeing themselves as being involved in tourism, tourism providers focusing on food as a point of difference (Yeoman, 2008).

There has been little discussion about the importance of food in the heritage of destinations, let alone the cultural significance and authenticity. The majority of studies to date mention food as a side note as either something un-researchable or un-deserving, however there has been a slow push towards looking at the real influence food has on regions. Bessiere's (1998) study really gives the first look into what food is to culture and heritage especially at the tourism level. Bessiere (1998) introduces four different categories for food in a brief review of social anthropology. These categories are food as a symbol, food as a sign of communion, food as a class marker, and food as an emblem. These four categories outline what a culturally significant cuisine exemplify, the fact that the cuisine has become so representative of the area that it is a symbol and emblem for the destination and that the cuisine is apart of the culture through its sharing and indication of prominence, but this is only where the study begins. Bessiere (1998) delves into the reimagining of how western societies are eating and how this new system of random snacking and eating to fulfill biological needs has

developed the need and desire to experience rich cuisines and food items. This is where the bases for this study is able to form strong foundations.

Further discussion of the topic of food heritage has led many researchers to the growing desire of experiencing the ‘natural’ and homegrown aspect of local cuisine and the idea of escapism from modern food trends (Che 2006; Espeitx 2004; Long 2006). This escapism form modern food has resulted in the decline of culinary knowledge among younger generations and the increased ease of purchasing premade and prepackaged food items. Because of this changing food trend tourists have sought out destinations that not only have rich heritages but a rich heritage in culinary arts. The trip itself is getting back to one’s roots and relearning the old traditions of the culture, but this doesn’t necessarily mean that these tourists are only exploring their own cultural backgrounds or even specific cuisines.

Lee Jolliffe (2007, 2010) has written two books on the travels of tourist to different areas based on the ancient beverages of tea and coffee. These books, while a delightful read, show the interconnectedness of food and cultural heritage through the different regions where travelers visit to retrace the old trade lines. This is where the significance of the cuisines and food items finally begin to be discussed in modern research. Food as a cultural artifact provides a story of the people that cultivated it, refined the product, and traded the product and show the how much food is apart of culture and heritage.

### *Purpose Statement*

To study cuisine tourism, especially at the community identity level, we need to establish what makes a culturally important cuisine. This was generated by first establishing focus groups from the New Orleans communities and determining a unique cuisine associated with the region. From this base this study proceeded to send out surveys to those interested in traveling to New Orleans based on the use of Brief Sensation Seeking Scale or BSSS, through the local Convention and Visitor Bureaus and examined their perception and motivation of the destination in relation to the cuisine associated with the area.

### *Objectives*

The aim of this study is to:

1. Identify the Creole cuisine as a culturally significant regional cuisine of the United States of America.
2. Establish a method of analytically identifying food/cuisine/culinary tourists.



## Chapter 2

### Critique of the Literature

#### *Food Tourism Market*

Food tourism utilizes locally produced products that not only enhance the tourist's pallet but create excitement towards the destination, increases the tourist's experience, as well as establishes a sustainable structure for which locals experience the revenue generated from tourism while regulating policies and programs to prevent over saturation and loss of natural resources (Everett & Aitchison 2008). Food has become more than just a source of nutrition; food has become a driving factor in the stability of cities and through the correct usage can create substantial rewards and enhance other industries and policies.

Food tourism is in its early stages of the product life cycle (Boyne, Hall, & Williams 2003) and with the increasing availability of global commuting, travelers are now capable of seeking out destinations where food is a dominant motivation for traveling to the location. Because of this emergence of a unique social behavior, exploratory research is warranted for understanding how such behavior affects the local communities through regional identity, economic significance, policy making, environmental influences, and what makes these cuisines culturally important. This paper will explore the food tourism market and the research conducted to explain as well as confirm the market segment.

In defining food tourism there is a need to differentiate between tourists who consume food as a part of the travel experience and those tourists whose activities, behaviors and even destination selection is influenced by an interest in food. Food tourism may be defined as visitation to primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants and specific locations for which food tasting and experiencing the attributes of specialist food production region is the primary motivating factor for travel (Hall & Mitchell, 2001a). Such a definition does not mean that any trip to a restaurant is food tourism, rather the desire to experience a particular type of food or the produce of a specific region or even to taste the dishes of a particular chef must be the major motivation for such travel. It is the conscious acknowledgement by tourists that food is more than sustenance, it is a cultural artifact with a myriad of facets that can be enjoyed in many locations and through many activities such as food trails, events, festivals and visitor attractions.

To begin with, McKercher, Okumus, & Okumus (2008), argue that consuming food may be a “ubiquitous” activity for most visitors to sophisticated urban destinations and may not be representative of a specialist segment. McKercher et al point out that food does play an important role in choosing a destination, as much so as climate, location, and even accommodations. Food has been found to be the most to second most important activity while at a destination. While this is strong indicator of a possible food tourist emergence, McKercher et al argue that this desire is for activities that only involve food and beverages. McKercher et al also show that food only plays a part in the

destination decision and is not necessarily the most important consideration in choosing a site. While eating can be viewed as a special interest tourism group, the same individuals that claim to be food tourists can also be grouped into adventure-based tourists, cultural tourists, and shopping tourists. This suggests that food tourists may not always be pure food tourists and because of this finding food tourism may not be a separate special interest tourism group.

McKercher, Okumus, & Okumus (2008) surveyed self-proclaimed culinary tourists and compared their results to non-culinary tourists. The study finds that while the self-proclaimed culinary tourists visit restaurants, and are more open to unique foods, non-culinary tourists follow a similar path. These findings are potentially important, for contemporary market segmentation theory suggests that destinations should focus on values or benefits segmentation and abandon their traditional focus on demographic segmentation (Frochot & Morrison, 2000; Sung, Morrison, & O'Leary 2000). In this way, quality experiences can be provided that satisfy the underlying needs of visitors.

McKercher et al's study shows that while the food tourist as a separate special interest group may not be finalized, there is still a need to conduct more research on the subject.

*“Is food tourism, or for that matter any other specialist activity, a stand alone market segment worth pursuing? The answer should depend on whether the activity appeals to a group of visitors currently not being attracted to the destination and the destination has the ability to deliver high quality product and services.” (McKercher, Okumus, & Okumus, 2008 p.140)*

While McKercher, Okumus, & Okumus (2008) were unable to disprove the existence of the food tourism market, many other articles in the tourism field examine the changes of policies and support for food-related initiatives to identify if food tourists are changing their choice in destination and behaving as a separate interest group or replacing cuisine experiences with another encounter, and thereby supporting McKercher, Okumus, & Okumus's theory.

Identifying the food tourism market requires finding what attracts the food tourist to a destination and which regional cuisine and culinary experiences will offer the greatest chances of actually reaching a food tourist. Two interesting articles take on the tasks of specifically attracting food tourists to a destination through different means. Fox (2007) sets up the authenticity of the local regional cuisine as being both unique and culturally important as a means to attract visitors to a destination while Boyne, Hall, & Williams (2003) work through the local bureaucratic policies and programs in place to advertise the destination with food tourists.

Fox (2007) makes some good points on the need for a gastronomic identity when it comes to attracting tourists to the host destination. Food appeals to all the senses and should be used as a major attraction for any destination

*“there is no difference between visiting a museum and eating a traditional meal: both constitute an act of consuming cultural heritage” (Fox, 2007 p.551)*

One of the keys to attracting tourists to a destination through food tourism is the need to have a unique cuisine that utilizes locally grown produce and techniques. By establishing a regional cuisine, destinations have an extra tool to draw visitors to their destinations and have a pre-developed forum in which locals and visitors are able to relate with each other. Food tourism studies have shown that typical food tourists fit the demographics of professionals with higher disposable income and a desire to experience local culture (Fox, 2007; Getz & Brown, 2006; Mitchell & Hall, 2001a; Mitchell & Hall, 2003).

Fox's paper (2007) is an example of some of the work done in the food tourism field. Previous research has shown a correlation between tourists who go to destinations for an attraction and travel to a destination for its restaurants and cuisines. The solidification of a "Food Tourist" has yet to be established but nonetheless shows that food tourism is playing a role in the choosing of a destination.

Boyne, Hall, & Williams' (2003) study shows that when policies and programs are in place for food-related and food tourism there is an increase in the number of visitations to the community which helps to promote development of the area. The interrelationships between tourism and food are being recognized, explored and built upon by policy makers and planners engaged in regional economic development. The drawing together of policy for tourism and food production in rural areas can be seen to represent a shifting emphasis in the way in which governance for rural development is being reconceived from a

“sectorally-based” (Boyne, Hall, & Williams 2003) approach based on businesses and controlled resources, to a territorially-based one where the local community works together to shares resources.

Boyne, Hall, & Williams (2003) explains that studying the food tourism group is a difficult task because there are few published studies and that the enjoyment of food is so diverse that individuals cannot be compared.

Consequently Boyne et al studied how potential visitors first became interested in a destination and whether they intend to purchase the trip using the World Wide Web.

Many of the internet sites researched are those of culinary festivals and regional popular cuisines. These festivals help to promote the community as well as provide an economic stimulus to the community from all the outside revenue entering the system. Regional cuisines also have an interesting influence on visitors’ destination determination; many times visitors will plan side routes on their way to a final destination and stopping at certain communities to experience the regional cuisine along the way.

Boyne, Hall, & Williams (2003) show that marketing directly to food tourists can increase the destination revenue generation, as well as enhance regional development for the community. While no solid demographics of the elusive “foodie” exist, Boyne et al clearly show there is a special interest group causing these effects on communities, and when policies and programs are changed to support such behavior there is an effect on destination selection.

Finding the food tourist in a highly-acclaimed culinary destination is like finding water in a swimming pool. While it is logical to look for food tourists here it is difficult to discover food tourists in the decision-making process. Finding the food tourism segment before a destination decision is made would make it possible to determine what a culinary destination should provide while at the same time identifying the characteristics of the food tourist market.

Getz & Brown (2006) take an interesting approach to finding food tourists by targeting locations that are not the destination of choice but the starting location of tourists seeking to visit a food destination. While the approach appears to be a “shot in the dark” to find the elusive food tourist, this method shows an examination of the decision-making process that generated the visit to the destination as well as the possibility to determine the latent demand that may exist within a given target market. In short if a food tourist does not exist outside of the destination then the concept of food tourism as a primary role in destination selection is debunked, but if a food tourist is found outside the destination it might be possible to identifying which destinations are picked and what criteria are used.

One of the keys in identifying a food tourist is not only the desire to experience different cuisines but also the knowledge a person has about culinary practices. Getz and Brown (2006), as well as Mitchell and Hall (2001, 2003), show most participants in a food or wine club’s activities are also more likely to have higher levels of culinary knowledge.

Getz and Brown (2006) find that distance from home actually plays very little role in choosing a food destination. Most respondents have traveled or plan to travel to European countries or the South Pacific, with about 50% going just for the food and wine. Getz and Brown break the respondents' answers into three different categories to show the decision-making process: destination appeal which relates to the scenery, climate, accommodations, and ease of information about the destination; cultural product which encompasses the uniqueness, traditions, and taste of the product; wine product which is based on friendly and knowledgeable staff, fame of product, and a large number of wineries to visit.

With the food tourist market loosely defined and a presence measurable in cultural cuisine-friendly destinations, determining if food tourism is really helping or worthwhile to a community now becomes the main issue. So far the literature on the topic has pointed out the perceived benefits food tourism has in sustaining tourism and protecting the environment as well as social benefits. These studies of the dialectic between material geographies and cultural flows are central to analyzing the sustainability of culinary heritage and identity, yet discussion of the triple bottom line of tourism (social, economic, and environmental impacts), food and identity is surprisingly limited given the extent to which food is used in destination and place promotion (Hall & Mitchell, 2001a).

Everett and Aitchison (2008) conducted case studies of rural areas in southwest England and explored how food tourism is used in the area's regeneration, agriculture diversification, and closing the gap between production



and consumption of locally-grown products. The southwest rural area of England was devastated in 2001 with outbreaks of diseases and a growing fear of genetically-altered foods. Because of this loss of confidence in the area, tourism was severely diminished. The local regional governments initiated policies to increase tourism to the rural areas through the use of food tourism and by promoting sustainable rural tourism, farm diversification, and the reconnection of consumers with the land, marking significant moves towards greater convergence between production and consumption and between academic research and policy development.

Everett and Aitchison (2008) were able to study the redevelopment of the southwest rural area through the use of food tourism and map the progress. While the area has traditionally had a tourism seasonality, after the introduction of the food tourism policies the tourist season lasted slightly longer, and ‘reconnected’ tourists with locals who had previously resented the tourists. This change in community perceptions of tourism shows the potential of food tourism for redevelopment and sustainability.

Through new initiatives, more food-themed activities were brought to the area to highlight the region’s agricultural identity and promote diversification, protection of local production, and educate the visitor base about the history of the region. Everett and Aitchison (2008) were clearly able to show the benefits food tourism can provide to a destination.

Overall past studies take very different approaches in establishing and confirming the special interest group of food tourists. Some take a practical approach of interviewing each visitor to determine if he/she considers themselves a food tourist and how he/she behaves. Other studies take on an almost opposite approach of identifying destinations that have changed policies and programs to drive food tourism into the community and relate this to changes in the number of visitations. Even McKercher, Okumus, and Okumus (2008), who tried to disprove the existence of special interest food tourist showed self-identified culinary tourists chose destinations specifically for the cuisines offered. Boyne, Hall, and Williams (2003) also showed that individuals chose destinations because of the cuisines available.

Current research on food tourism as a market segment illustrates the challenge in identifying the market and determining the decision processes in choosing a destination purely based on the cuisines. However, the continued examination of the food tourist segment has shown that people travel to destinations for the cuisines and that food tourism marketing can increase in the number of visitors.

#### *Sensation Seeking Model*

Food tourism is an interesting research topic, as it appears to be following a growing market as ecotourism, cultural tourism, heritage tourism, and adventure tourism have done. However, since not much research has been conducted on the group there is no definite determination of the group's existence (McKercher,

Okumus, & Okumus, 2008). Nonetheless food-related tourism is a growing sector and for marketing purposes is in the beginning of the strategic planning process (Boyne, Hall, & Williams 2003; Hall & Mitchell, 2001a; Fox, 2007; Getz & Brown, 2006; Everett & Aitchison, 2008) .

Since food engages every sense of the human body, food tourism can be in various contexts considered a sensation-seeking activity. Sensation-seeking behavior has been studied using a personality construct called the Sensation Seeking Scale. This scale involves willingness to take physical and social risks in order to obtain varied, novel, and complex sensations (Zuckerman, 1979). Additionally, Arnett (1994) indicates that the construct involves not only a potential for taking risks but also of seeking intensity and novelty of experience in multiple areas of a person's life. Sensation seeking has been observed to be positively related to such general features as disclosure of personal thoughts and feelings (Franken, Gibson, & Mohan, 1990); tendency to avoid repetition (Cronin, 1995); proneness to boredom in restrained and repetitive situations (Vodanovich & Kass, 1990); tendency to disinhibition, and not to avoid harm (McCourt, Guerra, & Cutter, 1993); consumption of alcohol (Ames, Zogg, & Stacy, 2002); preference for social interactions (Ellis, 1987); tendency to try novel foods (Pliner & Melo, 1997); reactivity to social rules (Chirivella & Martinez, 1994).

The Sensation Seeking Scale is a personality measure characterized by “the need for varied, novel, and complex sensations and experiences and the willingness to take physical and social risks for the sake of such experiences”

(Zuckerman, 1979, p.10). A revised version of the sensation-seeking scale, the Brief Sensation Seeking Scale or BSSS (Hoyle, Stephenson, Palmgreen, Larch, & Donohew, 2002), has remedied many of the deficiencies of the original scale. The new scale is shorter, using only eight items compared with the forty in the original, the wordings of the items have been brought up to date, replacing such terms as hippies and other 1970s era terms, and a Likert format has been substituted for the forced choice format of either agree or disagree in the original scale.

The new shorted BSSS-4 consisted of items with the most appropriate wording for the widest range of potential respondents. The four items were: (a) I would like to explore strange places; (b) I like to do frightening things; (c) I like new and exciting experiences, even if I have to break the rules; and (d) I prefer friends who are exciting and unpredictable (Stephen, Hoyle, Palmgreen, & Slater, 2003). Each item was anchored by strongly disagree and strongly agree. These items were developed after revisiting the conceptual elements of the sensation-seeking scale and assessing trends toward risky activities in general rather than specific risky behaviors. Both the BSSS and the BSSS-4 were found to have acceptable alphas of 0.74 and 0.66 respectfully.

While the BSSS has not been used in tourism research until lately, it has been used in marketing and even food-related fields. This provides a starting point for the examination of the use of the sensation seeking scale to determine the specialty tourism group, Food Tourists, which will be referred to as “foodies”.

Two papers explained sensation-seeking with respect to the food selection process, Foxall (1993) and Pliner & Melo (1997). These can be considered prequels to the identification of the food tourists market. Foxall (1993) examined how the sensation-seeking scale has been used in product determining and food consumption. He argued that optimal stimulation level may be too general to account for so specific an aspect of food consumption as variety seeking.

*“Variety seeking is undoubtedly related to personality: it is closely related, for instance, to the trait of sensation seeking. However it is determined in part by product-specific factors such as sensory variation, the number and availability of preferred items, consumer knowledge and the ability to evoke involvement. Variety seeking is likely to be especially prevalent for foods which possess a certain minimum level of sensory variation and which arouse a degree of involvement.” (Foxall, 1993 p.33)*

Individuals rely on sensory information to judge quality and the need to try other competing foods. However, for novelty foods, where the consumer cannot definitely know the sensory properties of the item, the consumer is forced to rely on marketing information and on a range of similar experiences to determine if they are interested in trying the product. This area of research has been largely overlooked according to Foxall (1993). What is interesting is that while food purchases make up a large portion of an individual’s spending it is not considered a “high pre-determining priority item” such as vehicles and houses or even vacations. However, when looked at as a whole and in the longer term, the amount of money and resources spent on food is equal to the “high pre-determining products”

Sensation-seeking behavior meets the marketing anagrams at the consumer level. Foxall's (1993) study focused on local purchases, and predicted how tourists might act when considering food purchases at a leisure destination. Foxall (1993) showed that individuals can be sorted into three purchasing groups: less-involved adaptors, high-involved adaptors, and innovators. These three market segments can be linked to sensation seeking and/or high level of personal involvement with the product. This overlaps on the BSSS where low-involvement adaptors typically have familiarity seeking attitudes but generally do not go out of their way to find unique or new food items. Innovators generally have a more experience-seeking attitude to find food items not typically found or marketed to.

Pliner and Melo (1997) used the sensation seeking scale to explore the willingness to try novel foods. The authors took a controlled approach in studying the levels of arousal, which can be correlated to involvement and the desire for new sensations from food. The researchers had participants play with exciting, neutral, or boring video games and then offered them a selection of different food items ranging from familiar to novel. They attempted to find the optimum level of arousal for trying new food items.

Pliner and Melo (1997) found that participants who engaged in high levels of arousal were more likely to try the novel food item. This paralleled Foxall's (1993) study where individuals that reported high levels of involvement were more likely to try the new food item. Again this offers great potential not only in food marketing but also in food tourism by showing that destinations that can

offer the tourists higher levels of arousal and/or involvement simply in the food item might experience a higher level of attendance.

It would be another 15 years before the topic of establishing a food-seeking market within the confines of tourism is brought up again, in the tourism research studies until the work of Eachus (2004), who applied the BSSS to predict tourist destination selection. Eachus' 2004 paper suggested that the BSSS slowly entered tourism research as a psychometric model as researchers began to see its use in determining and predicting tourist behaviors and destination selection.

Since no new psychometric had come forth in the tourism field of research, Eachus compared the scale to Plog's psychocentric-allocentric scale as well as Eysenck's Personality Inventory, to the BSSS. By combining the Plog and Eysenck scales into a two dimensional tourist personality typology adapted from Jackson (2001), Eachus was able to establish four semi-distinct attitudes towards a destination. By using this typology Eachus compared his findings to respondents' scores on Jackson's combined scale to determine the legitimacy of the BSSS.

Eachus (2004) compared a sample of 111 respondents on BSSS to Jackson's model and found that the majority of the predicted behaviors and attitudes did match up with what was expected. However the results did not match up entirely. There were a surprisingly high number of discrepancies in the sub categories of the BSSS. Eachus attributes these discrepancies to age since the range of the ages in the studies differed. After correcting for age Eachus was able

to see an amazingly clear picture of attitudes and behaviors from the respondents in leisure destination selection.

While the BSSS was primarily used on younger individuals, Eachus (2004) hypothesizes that older respondents would have lower scores in disinhibited and thrill seeking. However, age had no correlation in indulgent leisure activities even though older respondents had a greater disposable income. This bodes well for food tourism, since the typical food tourist is considered to be in the higher disposable income category and food and shopping are the two highest areas of spending and indulgence-seeking behavior. Eachus (2004) concluded that the findings reported in the study suggest that the BSSS may have wider applicability than what was originally envisaged, and in the context of the study, would include the interface between psychology and tourism research.

After the completion of Eachus's (2004) research it is as if the flood gates on the application of the BSSS in the tourism field were let loose. Four years later tourism research journals throughout the United States were buzzing with the new psychometric scale and not only with just how accurate the new scale is but at the size and practicality of the scale that it would be used in surveys without the risk of losing the respondent's attention in comparison to the 40-item sensation-seeking scale.

Litvin's (2008) study showed that the BSSS is extremely accurate and even shows that the full understanding of the tourist's personality is still in the working since Plog's (1974) psychometric scale only accounted for the



adventurous destination selection and not the desire for sensation seeking. This distinction provides the tourism research field with a great source for understanding tourists, whether they are identified as psychocentrics or allocentrics, or which destination they are more likely to choose.

Galloway, Mitchell, Getz, and Crouch (2008) continued where Foxall (1993) left off. Their findings indicated that tourists who are involved in the process are more sensation-seeking individuals and are more adept at identifying higher quality products rather than “adaptors” who generally base their decisions on price and brand. They identified wine tourists, who look for high levels of involvement in sensation seeking situations as “immersionists”, while those who seek low levels of involvement are “generalists”. By establishing the differences in the level of sensation-seeking of the tourist the BSSS might then be used to determine the level of involvement and even the criteria used in predicting and determining a destination the tourist would choose.

Galloway et al's (2008) research results indicated that sensation seeking is related to a variety of attitudes and behaviors of wine tourists that are relevant to the segmentation and management of such markets. These findings also indicated that in many instances sensation seeking significantly adds to the ability provided by the construct “involvement” to predict those characteristics.

Lepp and Gibson (2008) explored how the sensation seeking scale can be compared to Cohen's tourist typology (1972, 1979), which showed the difference between the segment group drifters and explorers. The study showed that the

BSSS accounted for these different types of tourists accurately and even goes beyond that of adventurers into mass tourists.

These studies all showed that the BSSS has become an important psychometric tool capable of predicting tourists' destination selection and to an extent their personalities. Even though the original use of the scale was intended for evaluating risky behaviors, the SSS offers another picture into how tourists feel about their leisure and even more so within the food tourism market. Food tourists are sensation seekers in the purest form, as food stimulates every sense within the body. But the greatest benefit from this new psychometric scale is its potential to combine the current psychographs and create a greater picture of how tourists can be identified and marketed to.

## Chapter 3

### Methods

The research method used in this study was a parallel track of both qualitative and quantitative research methods lending to each other during the process. Figure 1 maps out the research path where the beginning goal is to identify food tourists, “foodies”. The goal of the qualitative approach is to identify a culturally-significant cuisine and representative dishes that would attract foodies. This is accomplished through the use of interviews and focus groups part of a grounded theory approach.

The quantitative path looks at previously tested models and scales to determine an appropriate model to use in identifying foodies. From the literature the Brief Sensation Seeking Scale is found to be an appropriate model and operationalized through the adjustment of wording in the scale items. Since the BSSS consists of eight items, four supporting statements and four opposing statements, the model was adjusted for food tourism by the rewording of the scale items to (a) I enjoy trying new foods whenever possible (b) Meals from my childhood are still my favorite (c) I like to taste strange dishes (d) I prefer to prepare my own food (e) I never change the preparation of a menu item (f) I do not try a food item if it has an ingredient that I do not recognize (g) I trust other people to order for me (h) I prefer familiar foods when available. These scale items were applied from the review of literature on food tourism (Long, 2004; Hall, 2006; Molz, 2004; Boyne, Hall, & Williams, 2003; Hall & Mitchell, 2001;

McKercher, Okumus, & Okumus, 2008; Frochot & Morrison, 2000; Sung, Morrison, & O’Leary, 2000; Fox, 2007; Getz & Brown, 2006; Everett & Aitchison, 2008). The scale items were alternated with supporting and opposing statements and placed on a five-point Likert scale which was anchored with strongly disagree (-2) and strongly agree (+2). Each increment was assigned a proportionate value, and the values were added up to give a final score,

$$\text{"Foodie" Score} = \sum BSSS = (a + b + c + d + e + f + g + h).$$

The survey was distributed with the help of the New Orleans CVB by list serve email where a link to an online survey was attached. The survey included demographics, the BSSS adjusted for food tourism.

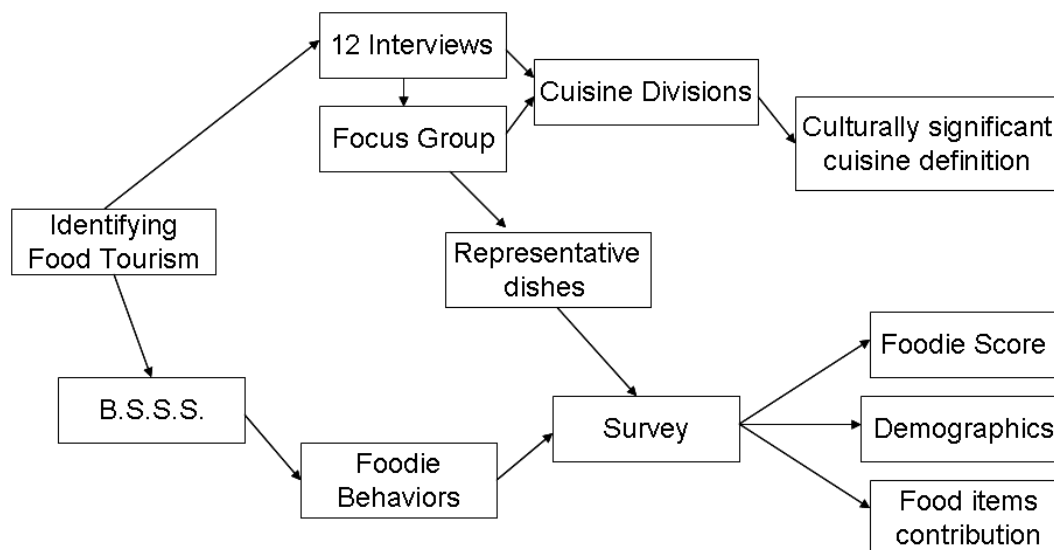


Figure 1.

### *Data Collection*

The literature review revealed that only limited interdisciplinary research had been undertaken on the interrelationships between food, identity, and tourism.

There was also minimal interaction between academic discourses and current policy and practice debates. The academic and policy literature review was augmented by tourist brochures, websites, and advertisements, establishing the foundation for research questions and methodology.

This is a relatively new area of research so a regional case study strategy was undertaken which allows findings to be generalized into a theoretical framework and applied to other situations, thus exposing avenues requiring greater investigation. The case study is an exploratory study, acknowledging that its small-scale nature prevented it from being fully explanatory (Yin, 1994).

Recent work on food tourism has acknowledged the case study approach to be an effective research strategy, providing a vital link between theory and practice (Hjalager & Richards, 2002). It has also been suggested that 'a case study can identify relevant issues and the various driving forces that are important for the development of tourism or gastronomy in a particular area' (Hjalager & Richards, 2002 p.228), and recent food tourism case studies have proved successful in this endeavor (Jones & Jenkins, 2002; Kneafsey & Ilbery, 2001; Sharples, 2003).

A flexible, qualitative methodological approach, cross-validated by secondary quantitative surveys, was selected as most effective in capturing the rich diversity and depth of data relating to identity, heritage, personal experience and the role of food within the New Orleans metropolitan area from other, studies and as such this study will adopt a similar approach. Qualitative data generation is sensitive to the social context of the research and can unearth meaningful

elements in a multilayered local context (Mason, 1996), making it appropriate in an exploratory study of identity construction and cultural phenomena. The research issues are intrinsically subjective in nature, and therefore a semi-structured 45-minute interview is considered appropriate, incorporating a degree of flexibility within a predesigned interview structure.

*Qualitative Methods.*

A sample of 12 individuals from the New Orleans area were interviewed, four local “long-term” residents having spent at least 10 or more years in the New Orleans area, four civic leaders from the area, and four individuals currently working “first contact” positions in the hospitality industry for at least two years. The goals of the interviews were to establish a cuisine identity for the area, cultural importance of local cuisines, and identities associated with the New Orleans market. By interviewing long-term residents and civic leaders it was possible to see the changes and growth of the New Orleans identity as well as community identity with local cuisines. Interviewing first contact hospitality employees not only provided an examination of how the New Orleans area is being promoted towards tourists but also the perception and interest of tourists.

Each participant was interviewed for 30-45 minutes. Interviews were conducted using an interview guide designed by the researcher. The aim of the interviews was to identify themes grounded in the subjects’ experiences, rather than the interview questions. Therefore the interview guide had general questions placed at the beginning and targeted questions about specific components of

Creole cuisine, agricultural history, cultural significance, host identity, and tourist perceived image. This was done to permit open-ended, unbiased narration of the subjects' experiences, while still allowing for data collection about specific key food items and cultural elements of interest. All interviews were audio taped, with supplementary handwritten notes taken by the interviewer/researcher. Audiotapes were then transcribed to text files, which were read by the researcher and colleagues independently to identify themes. Theme choices were then discussed and a final list of themes was agreed upon (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The text segments were then coded according to the identified themes of Creole cuisine, agricultural history, cultural significance, host identity, and tourist perceived image. Coded text was again read independently and then discussed cooperatively to consolidate similar themes, producing the final coded texts.

Following the interviews, a focus group of local chefs from the area was used to see how the culinary field perceives New Orleans as a food destination, as well as to provide information on locally-produced products. Since 1972 when the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) began, there has been a push for organic and healthy foods, providing food items that have been grown locally increases marketability and popularity in the mainstream. This is a key component for regional cuisines since the majority of produce is required to be grown locally. Once local food products used in the restaurants were established, examinations of trends within the region were

looked into. Since regional cuisines can be considered either by the local produce or by technique used to produce the food items both need to be explored.

*One-on-One Interviews.*

The 12 interviews conducted identified the Creole cuisine as being a culturally-significant regional cuisine by having each participant identify with a cultural group and food items and/or cooking techniques unique to that culture. Since the interviews were semi-structured general open ended questions were used to begin with such as, “What unique/identifiable culture(s) are in the New Orleans’ metro area?” and deeper probing questions were used to identify importance from those questions such as, “How are these cultures viewed locally and nationally?”

A grounded theory approach was used in the coding and development of concepts from the interviews. A two-person team was used initially to code the interviews for words and phases that were common throughout each interview. Following this a second round of coding was used to organize the information from the interviews into core concepts such as family history, perception of tourists, cuisine, community, as well as cultural perspectives. These core concepts were later developed into diagrams to help shape the ideas and impressions into relevant information to be used in the research.

Each interviewee identified him/herself as either “Creole style” or of the “Creole Culture”. This led to the identification of the group as “Creole”, and deeper questions were asked about the group and more specifically the cuisine



associated with the culture. The Creole cuisine was identified as being an essential part of the region and of the culture, which also brought national attention to the area. Both civic leaders and hospitality workers acknowledged and celebrated the Creole cuisine as a strong community-building pastime, as well as a strong tourism attraction on the national level.

The 12 interviews showed that the Creole cuisine was a unique cuisine for the region and provided a social artifact for preservation within a community by the traditions and history each interviewee had with the cuisine. Personal stories and narratives of family history showed that the Creole style of cooking has both been an integral part of the history and community of the area and also that the Creole cuisine is an important part of what the community and culture are.

*Local chefs focus group.*

The focus group was carried out through the use of Skype, an online application that allows different persons from anywhere with an internet connection to talk over the internet as well as see a video feed of the person if a web cam was available. In this case a conference call was placed at a predetermined time and each chef was logged into a 'chat room' where he/she could hear each other speak and see their reactions. The focus group consisted of five local executive chefs from the New Orleans area in which the restaurant or hotel they worked at featured Creole cuisine food items. The focus group was led by the researcher with the assistance of a fellow graduate student for note taking support.

From the interviews, the importance of the Creole cuisine was already accepted and was briefly addressed to the focus group which unanimously agreed that the Creole cuisine was a culturally-significant cuisine. The group was asked to discuss where their food produce came from, trends in food for the area, as well as food items representative of the Creole cuisine.

The focus group established the Creole cuisine as a regional cuisine by agreeing, as a group, that the majority of the ingredients needed for some of their dishes have to be obtained locally for the dishes to be prepared correctly. The group also agreed that certain cooking techniques originated from the area, specifically the use of thickeners such as red roux, okra, and sassafras leaves. This information shows that the Creole cuisine is a regional cuisine since regional produce is needed for the creation of the dishes as well as the development of specific cooking techniques within the region.

Following the discussion of regionality for the Creole cuisine, the discussion was guided to the trends in the food for the area. The group stated that local and national events such as Katrina and Next Iron Chef contestant John Besh have brought more curiosity and enthusiasm to the area's cuisine, increasing both the frequency of dishes being ordered and the increase of demand to have authentic dishes on menus. What proves to be interesting is the increase in cuisine curiosity after the effects of Katrina. Some of the focus group members stated that the increase was due to the fear of not getting the chance to experience the cuisine

while the other felt it was a non-local's way of supporting the New Orleans recovery.

Lastly the group was asked to identify food dishes representative of the Creole cuisine that would be asked on the online survey. While each chef suggested signature dishes from their respective restaurants, the group did come to an agreement that gumbo, as well as red beans and rice, were one of the most common ordered dishes by both locals and tourists. Jambalaya, etouffee, and shrimp creole were eventually selected from the other dishes suggested based on their popularity on menus as well as the items being on the list of dishes the group created.

#### *Quantitative Data.*

A quantitative survey was distributed towards the beginning of the tourist season of the New Orleans area, after establishing the food items associated with the cuisine, with the help of the New Orleans' CVB. The survey consisted of 31 items including demographics, as well as a brief sensation seeking scale, adjusted for food tourism, for the level of attraction the individual feels towards unique foods which play a role in the individual's decision in choosing New Orleans as a destination. The survey was administered through a web-based survey tool, zapsurvey.com. A link to the survey was emailed out to individuals that had contacted the CVB about interest in traveling to the New Orleans area.

#### *Questionnaire Design*

The survey was developed both to identify potential tourists as foodie and track their expenditures based on the local regional cuisine of Creole, and to provide demographics and grouping characteristics of respondents. The survey was sent out from the New Orleans CVB's listserv to those who have expressed an interest in traveling to the New Orleans area.

The first question "purpose of travel" is one of the first identifiers for food tourists, where business and conference meeting do not show a primary motivation to travel to the destination for the local cuisine. This also helps to identify what types of tourists are traveling to the New Orleans area and provides a marketing strategy to be developed to attract underrepresented groups.

The second question of source material on selecting New Orleans is used to identify which publications respondents are reading that are affecting their decision to travel to the New Orleans area. The publications were selected by researching the top 4 highest purchased publications in Travel and Food themes as well as an option for online sources. These publications are to identify which magazines are producing better results from advertisements as well as identify which food themed magazines food tourists are reading.

The third question about the importance of experiencing local cuisine is one of the primary identifiers for food tourists as this will be the primary motivation in selecting a destination to travel to.

The fourth question presents the respondents with a list of food items that have been identified as being representative of the Creole cuisine through semi-

structured interviews of local chefs, first contact hospitality employees, and civil leaders. The Creole food items are followed by generic common American cuisines food items also identified in the interviews. The questions are to identify semi to pure food tourist in their food item selections. By selecting food items that are representative of the local regional cuisine, Creole cuisine, shows that the respondents have a desire to experience the local cuisine and that while the experience itself may not be a primary motivation it may be a strong secondary motivation.

The fifth question is the brief sensation seeking scale adjusted to food tourism. The scale is the primary measurement on whether or not the respondent is considered to be a foodie. The scale is based on Hoyle et. al. (2002) scale and looks at the respondent's food preferences. This scale was developed through a pilot study to identify foodies in the Phoenix metropolitan area.

The sixth, seventh, and tenth questions are of gender, age, location, and education level and used as categorizing groups to identify demographics of the respondents as well as to identify demographics of foodies.

The eighth question is to identify the last trip to New Orleans, the length of the trip, and the number of people with the respondent while on the trip. This is to identify both non foodies and foodies travel patterns to the New Orleans area. This is to help with marketing strategy development and to identify any differences between non foodie tourists and foodie tourists.

The ninth question is of total household income, food expenditures, and total expenditures. These questions are used to both establish grouping characteristics as well as identify differences in foodies to non foodie tourists. The income level of \$80,000 was selected from research of the average household income level in the United States and only a greater then or less then answer is available as a way to group the respondents.

The questionnaire and cover letter are provided in the Appendix.

#### *Qualitative segments*

The semi-structured interviews conducted with civic leaders, hospitality employees, and long-term residents show that the regional cuisine, Creole cuisine, is to be considered a culturally significant regional cuisine of the host country through the identity and image portrayed by both the residents and outside populations. The Creole cuisine has become synonymous with the New Orleans area worldwide and especially within the United States through TV, print, internet, and radio channels. This association with a specific area leads the cuisine to be considered significant to the local culture.

#### *Data Analysis*

Data from the online survey was downloaded and entered into PASW Statistics version 18 for processing and analysis. An Analysis of Variance was conducted with the dependent variable being the score on the Brief Sensation Seeking Scale adjusted for food tourism (a Foodie Score). The ANOVA evaluates the relationships of income level, source material, desire to experience local

cuisine, and trip expenditures both on food and total expenditures with the level of foodie association. Along with the ANOVA analysis, descriptive statistics including measures of central tendency and frequencies will be calculated for foodies, semi-foodies, and non-foodie groups.

## Chapter 4

### Results

The results section is divided into two sub-sections, one for the qualitative findings and one for the quantitative findings. The qualitative section is broken into two parts which examine the one-on-one interviews with local residents, civic leaders, and hospitality workers and the other examining the focus group of local chefs from the area. The quantitative section is broken up into three different parts which examine the descriptive overview of the sample, the results from the study's "foodie" score, and food item comparison.

#### *Qualitative findings*

The interview data resulted in the development of a diagram that demonstrates the different culturally significant cuisine segments, areas in which cuisines exist before becoming culturally significant regional cuisines, which appear in Figure 2. These segments show the different bases a cuisine needs in becoming a culturally significant cuisine, the "sweet spot". The sweet spot is the area in the diagram which is the cuisine of mutual benefit. The mutual beneficial center is a cuisine which has reached a balance between the three positioning factors, history, support, and perception. Cuisines that inhabit this area are both culturally significant and financially successful but also possess exceptional integrity. The cuisines that inhabit the center are prominent cultural artifacts both within their host nation but also outside of it. The center also shows the cuisine to have a robust product through the integrity of the food items, brand equality by no



underselling the product to lessen its value and thus losing quality, profit maximization through the benefit of local suppliers and high demand for the area, and lastly a beneficial location since the cuisine acquirers the majority of the resources to make the food items locally.

In the case of the New Orleans Creole cuisine, the cuisine has had a long history with the region, strong support from the local population, as well as strong interest from visitors, giving the cuisine solid foundations in each area to maintain to be a culturally significant regional cuisine in the United States.

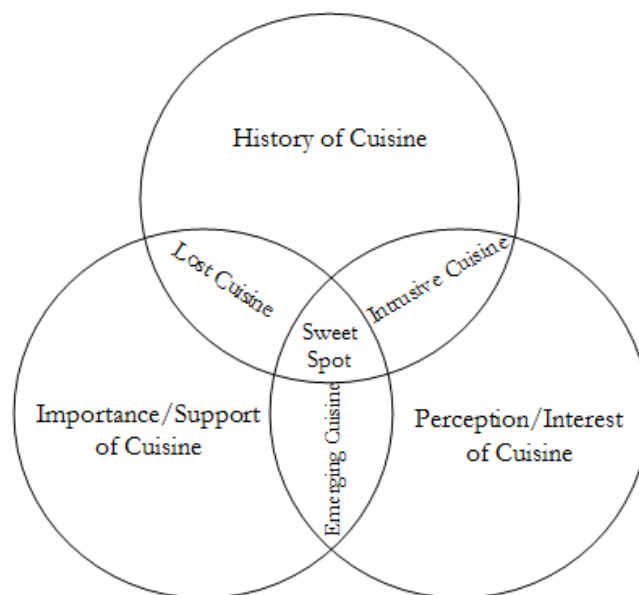


Fig. 2. Culturally significant cuisine segments

From each of the three groups interviewed a sense of significance arose from each perspective. Among the long-term residents the sense of history was a common theme throughout each narrative and the passing down of techniques from previous generations was almost symbolic of communicating with one's lineage. The civic leaders viewed the cuisine as a means of bringing groups of

people together and creating community and strengthening bonds within the public. The civic leaders commonly expressed support of the cuisine and the importance it has on New Orleans residents. The hospitality employees stressed the perception and interest of both the locals and of the visitors to the area about the cuisine. The locals prided themselves on knowing where the best style of cuisine was located and the visitors would commonly show interest by asking where to go from the locals.

With these three perspectives a conceptual pattern began to emerge demonstrating the different kinds of culturally significant cuisines, however to achieve mutual beneficial cuisines all three perspectives must be present. Lacking in one of the qualities results in a less than suitable cuisine. Figure 2 shows the three different segments a cuisine can achieve as it becomes a culturally-significance cuisine, lost cuisine, emerging cuisine, and intrusive cuisine.

The lost cuisine has both the benefit of a history and support from the community but lacks a high perception and interest from the public. Most notably are the Juneteenth food festivals, which are held to celebrate the emancipation proclamation. While these festivals have a very strong historical grounding and are largely supported throughout the community, the cuisine from the historical era itself receives little attention and is largely replaced with more popular cuisine styles in the area, as well as the evolved cuisine known as soul food. The Australian aboriginal's cuisine is also examples of lost cuisines since the public has little interest through the lack of information and availability.

Food traditions that have the support of community leaders and a high degree of interest and perception among the public may be seen as emerging cuisines. These emerging culinary fares evidently lack the benefit of a historical base on which to build from. Wolfgang Puck and Richard Wing's push of the Fusion cuisine is a prime example of an emerging cuisine. Where this style of cooking did not appear until the 1970s, the style was quickly embraced by the public and many communities pride themselves on being on the leading edge and birthplace of the dishes. The emerging cuisine however must move past the fad stage and stay established to be considered a principal culturally significant cuisine.

Cooking practices that lack the benefit of support from the community or show little importance from the local leaders but have a solid history and interest from the public were labeled as intrusive cuisines. One of the best examples is the fast food craze which has spread across the globe. Fast food chain restaurants, many of which originated in the United States, in foreign countries thousands of miles away is a common sight nowadays. While the cuisine is not originally from the community or shows little importance from the community, it is viewed as an intrusive cuisine that is corrupting the already established cuisines. Eventually, if the intrusive cuisine is accepted into the culture as apart of it then the cuisine will move into the mutually beneficial center of a principal culturally significant cuisine. What is interesting within the United States and the fast food cuisine is that it originated as an emerging cuisine back in the 1940s but instead of making

its way into the sweet spot the cuisine moved into the intrusive cuisine segment from the overly commercialization of the cuisine and losing support from local communities. However fast food companies have incorporate themselves back into the communities with healthier food options and community organizations but again instead of moving into the sweet spot the cuisine has split with the old unhealthy style moving to the lost cuisine segment and with the more popular “food fast” approach and promotion of healthy lifestyles to move to the emerging cuisine (Technomic Inc., 2007). Fast food cuisine has evolved to incorporate new and healthier food items and styles, which result in the industry splitting into the emerging cuisine segment where only time will tell if the new evolved “food fast” cuisine can make it to the sweet spot.

The interviews and focus group provided considerable insight into the ideals and importance of the local cuisine in the New Orleans area. The Creole cuisine was found to be a historic cultural artifact that helped attracted tourists to the area. The cuisine also was shown to be an identifier for individuals from the New Orleans culture since many had passionate views on how dishes should be prepared and family history with specific dishes. Based on the results from the qualitative approach, Creole cuisine was found to be of cultural significance both to the local community and outsiders traveling to the New Orleans area.

#### *Profile of Survey Respondents.*

Descriptive analysis was conducted with the data from the sample of 153 respondents to the online survey as well as the different three subgroups based on

the Foodie score: foodies, semi-foodies and non-foodies. Table 1 displays the characteristics of the sample and of the different segments within the sample including gender, education level, income level, length of stay, group size, and expenditures. The sample was narrowly majority male with 50.9% and 49.1% female. The majority of the sample was college-educated, with only 30.5% not having a college degree but with 29.6% having some post-secondary education. The sample reported household income was generally less than \$80,000 a year, with 26.9% reporting having earned more than that amount. The overall sample reported the average length of stay while in the New Orleans area was 4.7 days with an average of 3.8 persons in each party. Food expenditures and total expenditures were asked. The average for food expenditures while visiting the New Orleans area was \$278 and average total expenditures were \$694.

When asked about the purpose of visit 70.6% responded for pleasure, 13.6% for corporate meeting/event, 11.5% for business travel, and 4.3% responded as hurricane Katrina-related activities. As for the age distribution, the majority of respondents were between the ages of 50 and 64 (35.5%), 35 and 49 (34.1%), and between the ages of 18 and 34 (30.4%). The largest concentration of respondents was from Texas, with 12.3% providing a Texas zip code. The next highest was from Louisiana with 9.4%. California (7.3%) and Florida (6.3%) were the next most common origins of participants.

Demographics	Foodies	Semi Foodies	Non Foodies	Sample
Percent of Sample	17.6% (27)	67.3% (103)	15.1% (23)	100% (153)
Gender	48.2% Female 51.8% Male	48.6% Female 51.4% Male	52.2% Female 47.8% Male	49.1% Female 50.9% Male
Over \$80k a year	42.1%	29.2%	0.0%	26.9%
Length of Stay	4.8 days	5.1 days	5 days	4.7 days
Group Size	3.8 people	4.4 people	2.5 people	3.8 people
Food Expenditure Per Person Per Day	\$52.44	\$58.57	\$28.80	\$57.16
Total Expenditure Per Person Per Day	\$120.00	\$142.86	\$100.00	\$132.37
<b>Education Level</b>				
12th grade or less	---	1.4%	---	0.9%
High School Diploma	---	---	---	---
Some College	---	25.0%	82.3%	29.6%
Associates	42.1%	36.1%	---	31.5%
Bachelors	36.8%	27.8%	1.7%	27.8%
Graduate/Professional	21.1%	9.7%	---	10.2%

Table 1.

When compared to previous visitor profiles for the New Orleans area conducted by the University of New Orleans, the data seems to be consistent. Although there appears to be a slight increase in the amount of total expenditures for the total sample then what was observed in 2007 from the New Orleans area visitor profile conducted by the University of New Orleans where \$624 was the average total expenditure and \$694 from this study. This could simply be from the increased development of the New Orleans area after the disaster Katrina had brought.

#### *Foodie Score*

In the questionnaire a Brief Sensation Seeking Scale adjusted for cuisine tourism was used to identify respondents as foodies, semi foodies, and non foodies. The overall scale showed a Cronbach's alpha of .743. This internal reliability was consistent with previous uses of the 8-item BSSS where each study

adjusted the wording of the items for the topic(s) they were researching. The initial alpha from Hoyle, Stephenson, Palmgreen, Larch, and Donohew's (2002) 8-item brief sensation seeking scale was also 0.74, adding to the validity of this study. While previous studies have shown alpha in the 0.75 range (Eachus, 2004; Foxall, 1993; Litvin, 2008), the alpha of a 0.74 for the food score does present acceptable levels of internal reliability while still providing potential for improvements. The overall scores were divided into three different categories. Table 1 also shows the breakdown of the different segments compared to the overall sample.

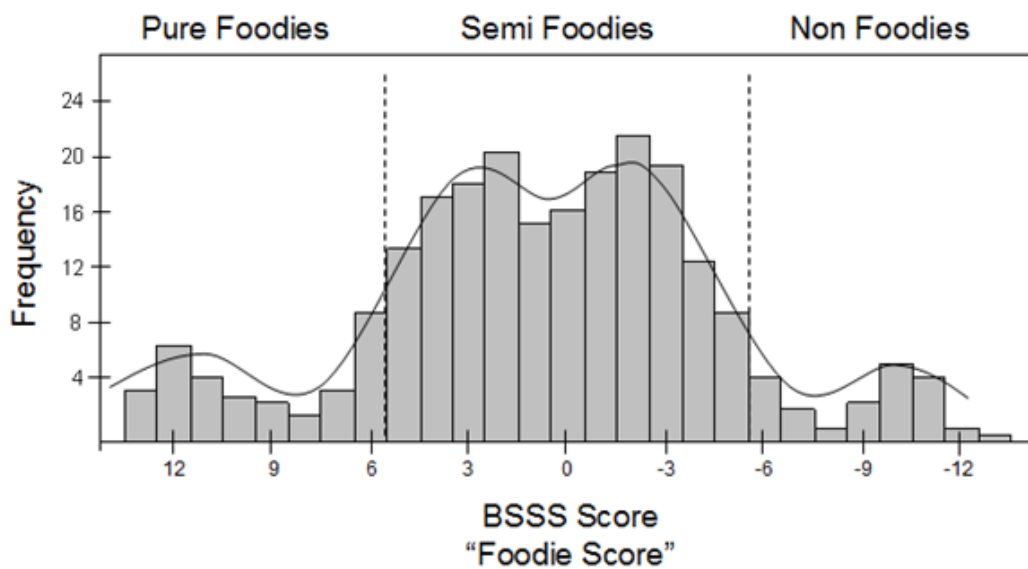


Fig. 3. Foodie cross-section

Figure 3 shows a cross section of the sample population and how they scored on the Brief Sensation Seeking Scale adjusted for food tourism. The different groups were easily identifiable from the total sample scores as they arranged themselves into a multimodal graph. The far right peak encompasses

individuals whose score represents non-foodies (15.1%) and the far left peak encompasses individuals whose score represent that of a foodie (17.6%). Figure 3 also shows two peaks within the semi-foodie area, which was unexpected. These two peaks within the semi-foodie section (67.3%) could represent two sub-groups within the semi-foodie category. However, based on the survey, limited information is available to come to a clear understanding.

As expected, there were considerably more semi-foodies than either of the other categories. This can be explained through McKercher's (2008) study where identification of food tourists was difficult since food was already integrated into the tourism experience, but with the help of the BSSS, isolating the foodie niche group was possible.

The foodie segment was comprised of respondents who reported high scores on the scale, which identified them as individuals who seek out interesting cuisines as a key drive to visit the New Orleans area, comprising 17.6% of the total sample. The foodie segment was shown to be majority female with 52.6% female and 47.4% male and comprised 17.6% of the total sample surveyed. The segment was also highly educated compared to the total sample and were also the highest income earning segment with 100% having some type of college degree, 21.1% having an advance college degree and with 42.1% reporting to make over \$80k a year in household income. The Foodie segment followed the trends of the overall sample on the rest of the demographics, 4.8 days average length of stay, and average of 3.8 people in the party visiting New Orleans. The foodie segment



reported spending the second most amount in average total expenditures (\$120), while at the same time spending the highest percent on average food expenditures (\$52.44) with 43.7% of total expenditures on food.

The largest number of respondents scored in the middle of the BSSS and were identified as semi-foodies, comprising 67.3% of the total sample. This group viewed the Creole cuisine as one incentive to travel to the New Orleans area but may not have been a key drive in choosing the destination. The segment was comprised primarily of males (51.4%) and 48.6% female. The averages of the semi-foodie segment were larger than the other groups as well as the total sample averages with the exception in income and education. The semi-foodies spent more time in the New Orleans area with an average length of stay of 5.1 days and with an average group size of 4.4 individuals. They also spent the most money in New Orleans with an average total expenditure per day of \$142.86 and \$58.57 in average food expenditures per day. While the group did spend more money on food than the foodies the percent of money used for food was less with only 40.9% of funds going towards food purchases.

The semi-foodie segment had the widest range of education with the majority of respondents (36.1%) having an associates degree and the second highest (27.8%) of a bachelors. The semi-foodie segment was also the only group that had respondents who have less than a high school education. The semi-foodie segment also showed the second highest income level with 29.2% respondents reporting a household income of over 80k.

The final segment is the non-foodies, respondents who scored low on the BSSS and showed little to no motivation or interest in Creole cuisine while visiting New Orleans, comprising 15.1% of the total sample. The non-foodies represent 15.7% of the total sample and were mainly male (52.9%) and 47.1% female. The group also showed some of the lowest averages from the other groups. Non-foodies on average stayed for five days and had an average group size of 2.5 people. However, the group spent the least amount in average total expenditures per day (\$100) and with the lowest average food expenditures pre day (\$28.80). None of the non-foodies reported having a household income of over 80k and only 1.7% had a college degree with the rest (82.3%) reporting having some post-secondary education.

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: FoodieScore2

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	598.687 <sup>a</sup>	17	35.217	9.369	0.000
Intercept	2.323	1	2.323	0.618	0.434
NumberOfDays	5.715	1	5.715	1.52	0.221
GroupSize	2.901	1	2.901	0.772	0.382
FoodExpenditure	11.559	1	11.559	3.075	0.083
TotalExpenditure	7.718	1	7.718	2.053	0.156
Gender	14.678	1	14.678	3.905	0.051
Over\$80k	98.244	1	98.244	26.136	0.000
EducationLevel	116.695	3	38.898	10.348	0.000
Gender * Over\$80k	12.701	1	12.701	3.379	0.070
Gender * EducationLevel	5.106	3	1.702	0.453	0.716
Over\$80k * EducationLevel	28.489	2	14.245	3.79	0.027
Gender * Over\$80k * EducationLevel	16.462	2	8.231	2.19	0.118
Error	319.507	85	3.759		
Total	1265	103			
Corrected Total	918.194	102			

a. R Squared = .652 (Adjusted R Squared = .582)

Table 2.

An ANOVA was run on the demographics of the surveyed respondents to show levels of significance based on the “foodie” score. Table 2 displays the

results of this ANOVA. The ANOVA found that only education (.000) and income level of over \$80k a year (.000) were strongly significant, with gender only being slightly significant (.051). This shows that while a “foodie” may stay and spend about the same as regular tourists overall, they are typically more highly educated and have higher levels of discretionary income. This is not too surprising since McKercher, Okumus, and Okumus (2008) stated in their study that identifying food tourists is difficult because of the similarity to regular tourists. McKercher et al also go on to say that while food tourists tend to follow the same paths as regular tourists there are differences between the groups and that further testing is needed. Table 2 identifies potential areas of differentiating foodies from the regular tourists. Education and income level are often interrelated since higher levels of education tend to have higher levels of income. However for foodies it may be a stronger awareness of cultures from their education and the ability to travel and purchase food items more regularly as a result from their high levels of income. While the foodie demographic is not yet complete, the fact that there is a segment of high income tourists not being catered to gives way to further research and marketing adjustments to attract such tourists.

*Foodie Brief Sensation Seeking Scale*

Correlations											
	Red Beans & Rice	Gumbo	Shrimp Creole	Etouffee	Jambalaya	Hamburger	Pasta Dish	Steak Dinner	Pizza	Fajitas	Foodie Score
Red Beans & Rice	1	.669**	.531**	.399**	.658**	.433**	.780**	0.1	0.1	0.089	-.262**
Gumbo		1	.785**	.474**	.893**	-0.043	.759**	.414**	0.155	0.178	0.012
Shrimp Creole			1	.690**	.745**	0.018	.617**	.343**	.339**	0.187	.201*
Etouffee				1	.419**	0.185	.460**	.200*	.315**	.202*	.388**
Jambalaya					1	-0.171	.616**	.313**	-0.027	-0.047	-0.012
Hamburger						1	.458**	0.033	.521**	.241*	-.544**
Pasta Dish							1	.413**	.496**	.415**	-.320**
Steak Dinner								1	.424**	.622**	-0.016
Pizza									1	.569**	-.312**
Fajitas										1	-.143
Foodie Score											1

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 3. Food Items Correlation

Table 3 shows the correlation matrix for the different food items used to identify the creole cuisine and compared to general food items found throughout the United States, the figure also shows the relationship with the foodie score to the food items selected. A quick glance shows that gumbo is highly correlated with many of the creole cuisine dishes such as jambalaya (.893), shrimp creole (.785), red beans and rice (.669), and etouffee (.474) indicating that gumbo maybe the best dish to represent the creole cuisine. Although gumbo is strongly correlated with the other creole cuisine dishes, the dish is also highly correlated with the general pasta dish choice. While gumbo is generally considered more of a stew or soup variant, there are many different interpretations of the dish that have included the use of different pastas. This may account for the high correlation with the general choice of pasta dishes.

The creole dishes are all significant and positively correlated with each other showing that the food items selected supported each other as representatives of the creole cuisine. While the general food items exhibit little to no significance with the creole options while being significant and positively correlated with the other general food options. This shows that the two different food item groupings are significantly different from each other.

Examining the correlations within the pasta dish choice shows that the dish may have been too general of the selection since all of the dishes are significantly correlated with the option. This high correlation can be explained in two different approaches. One, while many of the creole dishes listed are not traditionally made with pasta many of the dishes have variants that include pasta or have a side item which consists of pasta. This lack of account for variation among the dishes resulted in the high correlation of the pasta dish choice with many of the creole cuisine dishes. Two, the pasta dish option is generally a less expensive food item to select on a restaurant's menu, meaning that both non-foodies and foodies alike may see the appeal in selecting the dish, whether for the flavor or for the cost. The correlation of the pasta dish option and the red beans and rice creole option (.780) is also an interesting price indicator since the red beans and rice option was generally the least expensive option of all the other creole options.

An interesting note on figure 3 is the correlations of the foodie score to the food items. While the creole food items do not show strong correlations to being

identified as a foodie with etouffee being the strongest correlation of .388. The general food items were the stronger identifiers of non-foodies. The hamburger options showed the strongest correlation to being a non-foodie (-.544) followed by pasta dishes (-.320) and fajitas (-.312). These correlations could be accounted for from the negative stigmas the hamburger has received from fast food restaurants, the generally cheaper prices of pasta dishes which makes it more appealing to non-foodies from the cost aspect, and the almost opposite cuisine style of the fajitas compared to the creole cuisine. Interesting also is the negative correlation the red beans and rice option is with the foodie score. While this food item is one of the representative dishes of the cuisine, it does not appear to be an indicator of being a foodie food item. This negative correlation is a surprise since the dish is originally from the New Orleans area and is an emblematic dish of the Louisiana Creole cuisine so the expected results were to be positive. The negative correlation may be from the lower price compared to other menu items of the creole cuisine, the traditional aspect of the dish being served only on Mondays, or that the dish is more of a lunch style than a dinner. Further research is needed to understand better the relationship the red beans and rice dish has with foodies.

Correlations

	New Foods	Strange Dishes	Menu Item	Trust People	Childhood Meals	Prepare Own Food	NonRecognize	Familiar Foods
Red Beans & Rice	-0.094	-.195*	-0.165	-.333**	0.023	-0.091	.190*	0.184
Gumbo	.283**	0.106	0.091	-.250**	-0.032	-0.049	-0.171	0.033
Shrimp Creole	.328**	.258**	0.154	-0.109	-0.121	0.091	-0.117	-0.044
Etouffee	0.021	0.169	.338**	-0.168	0.04	0.159	.245*	0.09
Jambalaya	.317**	.199*	0.053	-.244*	-0.027	-0.144	-.193*	-0.018
Hamburger	-.579**	-.613**	-.201*	-0.027	0.009	-0.021	.614**	.211*
Pasta Dish	-.204*	-.355**	0.014	-.343**	0.09	-0.035	.201*	.236*
Steak Dinner	.242*	0.007	0.171	-.226*	0.065	-0.1	-0.104	-0.111
Pizza	-.323**	-.380**	0.18	-0.05	0.062	0.124	.360**	.240*
Fajitas	-0.024	-.201*	0.069	-0.104	0.124	0.178	0.092	-0.007

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4. Food Items vs. “Foodie” Scale Items

Table 4 displays the foodie scales compared to the food items listed on the survey. The first four foodie scales are items which are being tested to support a typical foodie’s values, while the second four foodie scales are items being tested to support a typical non-Foodie’s values. When the food items are compared to the foodie scales they appear to have expected results while still having some unexpected results. Beginning with the pro-foodie scales, the interest to try new foods (New Foods) is significantly correlated with the majority of the Creole cuisine food items. Gumbo, shrimp Creole, and jambalaya were positively correlated with the interest of trying new foods and negatively correlated with the general food items such as hamburgers, pasta dishes, and pizzas. This is to be expected, as based on the literature, foodies are those who seek out specific food items representative of a cuisine(s), so it makes sense that the Creole food items would be positively correlated with a pro-foodie scale item and negative for the general food items. This trend follows for the strange dishes scale item, “I like to

taste strange dishes”, expect to a lesser degree for the creole cuisine food items mainly the red beans and rice dish (-.195). Earlier it was discussed that the red beans and rice dish was unique from the other Creole dishes and that the cost may have a role in its distinctiveness. However from the foodie scale items it seems that the red beans and rice dish could be a popular item for semi-foodies and may be a representative dish for semi-foodies for the Creole cuisine.

The last pro-foodie scale, “I trust others to order for me”, was negative through all of the food items, especially with the red beans and rice (-.333) and pasta dishes (-.343). This is yet another correlation where the two dishes have had similar results but since all the food items had negative correlations it would seem that no matter the person interviewed the majority did not trust others to order food for them. This result is contrary to the foodie persona. The literature shows that food tourists tend to seek out destinations that offer new and interesting culinary creations. This can be viewed as the tourist trusting the chef or member of the serving staff to recommend or order a food item for them, yet from the surveyed individuals this conclusion is inaccurate. This could be explained by the lack of definition of the question, “I trust other people to order for me”, in which “other people” maybe interrupted as other individuals with less culinary or service experience and as such a foodie would be less likely to enjoy the selection.

The non-foodie scales showed little results with nothing significant in childhood meals and preferring to prepare one’s own food. However, the non-recognizable food item scale, “I do not try a food item that has a non-recognizable



ingredient in it”, showed significant correlations, with the general food items such as hamburgers (.614), pizza (.360), and pasta dishes (.201) showing positive correlations for the general food items on the non-foodie scales which is supportive of the non-foodie scale items. Etouffee was one of the food items that was also significant (.245) with a positive correlation towards the non-foodie scales, this is surprising as the dish is representative of the creole cuisine and suppose to be more correlated with the pro-foodie scales. This conflict could be the result of the ambiguity of the dish itself since different seafood meats are used in the preparation of the dish which can also sometimes include chicken meat. Since the term seafood is used in some cases of the dish’s description there may be an unknown ingredient(s) that prevents its being ordered because of medical reasons.

The last non-foodie scale, familiar foods which represent the participant’s desire to eat familiar foods when available, show a significance with hamburger (.211), pasta dishes (.236), and pizza (.240), this again shows a strong support for the non-foodie scales. These correlations are expected as these are some of the most common foods eaten in the United States and can be found anywhere at any time during the day. Since these food items are found throughout the United States generically and without focusing on regional aspects of the food items they are representative of food items a typical foodie would generally avoid.

Correlations

	NewFoods	Strange Dishes	Menu Item	Trust People	Childhood Meals	Prepare Own Food	NonRecognize	Familiar Foods
New Foods	1	.825**	0.168	0.179	-.190*	-0.106	-.728**	-.487**
Strange Dishes		1	.272**	.229*	-0.157	0.022	-.611**	-.472**
Menu Item			1	-0.076	-0.087	0.125	0.09	-0.126
Trust People				1	-0.031	-0.14	-0.101	-0.094
Childhood					1	-.219*	0.107	.252**
Prepare Own Food						1	.190*	-0.117
NonRecognize							1	.409**
Familiar Foods								1

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 5. Foodie Scale Items Correlation

Taking a closer look into the foodie scale items a comparison was run through the use of PASW to test the consistency of the scale items. Table 5 displays the result of the correlations between the individual foodie scale items. The chart displays promising results for the use of the foodie scale items, although some adjustments clearly need to be made.

Comparing the results of the pro-foodie scale items show that each item responds in the desired way with the pro-foodie items being significantly positive with each other and significantly negative with the non-foodie items. The new foods scale item is significantly positive with strange dishes with a correlation of .825, this correlation however is much too high and appears that the two scales will need to be differentiated, or one of them replaced for more consistent results. However the new foods scale item was also significantly negative with childhood meals (-.190), non-recognize food item (-.728), and familiar foods (-.487) demonstrating positive results for a negative correlation of a pro-foodie scale item to the non-foodie scale items.

The strange dishes scale item also showed encouraging results with it being significantly positive correlated with new foods (.825), menu item (.272), and trust people (.229), while the new foods correlation is higher than preferred the positive correlations with the other pro-foodie scale items shows that strange dishes support the other pro-foodie scale items while not overlapping the items. The strange dishes scale item is also significantly negative correlated with the non-foodie scale items non-recognizable food item (-.611) and familiar foods (-.487), this also helps to support the scale item as a strong pro-foodie identifier.

The last two pro-foodie scale items menu item and trust people showed the least significance of all the scale items with both only being significant with strange dishes with a positive correlation of .272 and .229 respectively. While these two scale items are significant with another pro-foodie scale item, neither show any significance with the non-foodie scale items. Because of this these two items should be replaced with better identifying items of pro-foodie statements or perhaps reworded.

Looking onwards to the non-foodie scale items, they show about the same results of the pro-foodie scale items. The first non-foodie scale item, childhood meals, shows a significant correlation with new foods (-.190), prepare own food (-.219), and familiar foods (.252). This is the only foodie scale item to have an opposite correlation than expected, childhood meals vs. prepare own food. This unexpected result may stem from the idea of childhood meals being prepared by a parent or guardian and as such loses significance when prepared by the individual.

Since the childhood meals scale item showed conflicting results with another non-foodie scale item raises concern about its placement within the other items.

Looking at the non-foodie scale item prepare own food shows that the scale item is only significant to childhood meals (-.219) and non-recognizable food item (.190). Since both of these correlations are both within the non-foodie scales this demonstrates that this scale item may not be appropriate for identifying foodies. The opposite correlation with childhood meals only supports the exclusion and replacement of the scale item since the other correlation is fairly weak at .190. As well, in previously examined statistics, prepare own food has had little to no effect during the study, thus supporting the replacement of the item for a better suited one.

The non-recognizable food item and familiar foods scale items demonstrated better significance than the previous non-foodie scale items with non-recognizable food item being significant with new foods (-.728), strange dishes (-.611), prepare own food (.190), and familiar foods (.409). These results demonstrate that the non-recognizable food item scale is appropriate for identifying pro-foodie traits while supporting without overlap of the non-foodie scale items. The familiar foods scale item was significant with new foods (-.487), strange dishes (-.472), childhood meals (.252), and non-recognizable food item (.409). The familiar foods scale item seems to be the best identifier for non-foodies with the negative correlation with the two pro-foodie scale items and positive correlation with two of the non-foodie scale items.

Overall the total foodie scale items showed some promise with the rewording of new foods and childhood meals and the replacement of the trust people and prepare own food items. The strong scale items of strange dishes and familiar foods showed to be the best indicators of foodie potential which is somewhat expected as the food tourist's goal is to seek out strange dishes and the non-food tourist prefers to stick with familiar foods.

#### *Food Item Distribution*

Looking at how the food items were broken up between the different groups of foodies show an interesting and expected result. The foodies tended to order more of the Creole cuisine food items while the non-foodies preferred general food items. Table 6 shows the complete breakdown of the food items by each segment.

Overall most visitors to the New Orleans area surveyed consumed the Creole cuisine food items the majority of the time with red beans and rice being the most popular followed by gumbo and jambalaya. The food items were arranged based on average cost on a menu per serving size, which was established through a selection of twelve popular restaurants in the New Orleans area. For the Creole cuisine food items red beans and rice was found to be the overall less expensive dish on menus, followed by gumbo, jambalaya, shrimp creole, and finally etouffee as the more expensive Creole food item overall. The same was done for the general food items as well with hamburger being the least expensive of the general food items followed by pasta dishes, pizza, fajitas, and steak.

Total		Foodies		Semi Foodies		Non Foodies	
<b>Red Beans &amp; Rice</b>	73.7%	<b>Gumbo</b>	62.5%	<b>Gumbo</b>	84.4%	Pasta	78.2%
<b>Gumbo</b>	70.5%	<b>Jambalaya</b>	62.5%	<b>Red Beans &amp; Rice</b>	79.7%	Hamburger	75.0%
<b>Jambalaya</b>	67.4%	<b>Red Beans &amp; Rice</b>	62.5%	<b>Jambalaya</b>	78.5%	Pizza	75.0%
Hamburger	60.0%	<b>Shrimp Creole</b>	62.5%	<b>Shrimp Creole</b>	65.6%	<b>Red Beans &amp; Rice</b>	72.3%
<b>Shrimp Creole</b>	54.7%	Hamburger	56.2%	Hamburger	60.9%	<b>Gumbo</b>	22.6%
Pasta	53.7%	Pasta	37.5%	Pasta	56.3%	<b>Jambalaya</b>	22.4%
Pizza	50.5%	Steak Dinner	37.5%	Pizza	56.3%	Fajitas	21.7%
Steak Dinner	34.7%	Pizza	30.0%	<b>Etouffee</b>	42.2%	<b>Shrimp Creole</b>	0.0%
<b>Etouffee</b>	31.5%	<b>Etouffee</b>	30.0%	Steak Dinner	42.2%	<b>Etouffee</b>	0.0%
Fajitas	28.4%	Fajitas	30.0%	Fajitas	34.4%	Steak Dinner	0.0%

Table 6. Food Item Distribution

Looking at the food item breakdown for the foodie segment four out of the five Creole cuisine food items are in the top position. This helps support the food items selected not only represent the Creole cuisine but help identify possible foodies. Etouffee is the only dish to not be in the top position with the other Creole cuisine food items, this could be explained by the higher cost of the dish compared to the others and so was ordered less often or that the dish itself does not fully represent what tourists view Creole cuisine as. As for the general food items for the foodie segment it is surprising to see the hamburger option so high up but this outcome can be viewed in many different ways. The relative popularity of the hamburger option may stem from the cheaper option in between the more expensive meals of the Creole cuisine; the sheer supply of the hamburger option may also result in the increased ordering since every menu sampled had a hamburger option; or the increase may have been from the foodie's curiosity to experience a New Orleans-style hamburger. Either way the food item breakdown for the foodie segment was roughly what was expected.

The semi-foodie segment was a more surprising group to examine as their results were not always an in between of the foodies and non-foodies but at times

completely one-sided. The food item breakdown is an example of this. The semi-foodies also have four of the five creole cuisine food items as their top choices mirroring the foodie's segment. The difference between the groups is clearly the cost factor where the more expensive food items both Creole and the general food items are the lowest selected food options for the semi-foodie segment yet the Creole food items are selected more often over the general food items.

Lastly the non-foodies segment performs as expected with the majority of the food items selected being from the general food items. Interestingly the non-foodies appear to focus on the price of the food item with the cheaper option being selected the most and with the most expensive food items not selected. The breakdown also shows that the non-foodie segment selected the general food items first by price, and once they began to reach the more expensive general food items they switched to the cheaper creole cuisine food items. This is evident with pasta dishes, hamburger, and pizza being selected most often followed by the red beans and rice, gumbo, and jambalaya options as each grouping are the cheaper food items from each group and with the selection of fajitas over shrimp creole which is the only segment to do this.

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: FoodieScore2

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	420.384 <sup>a</sup>	10	42.038	8.921	0.000
Intercept	166.017	1	166.017	35.23	0.000
RedBeansRice	2.306	1	2.306	0.489	0.485
Gumbo	4.983	1	4.983	1.057	0.306
ShrimpCreole	0.198	1	0.198	0.042	0.838
Etoufee	135.603	1	135.603	28.776	0.000
Jambalaya	2.624	1	2.624	0.557	0.457
Hamburger	29.416	1	29.416	6.242	0.014
PastaDish	31.145	1	31.145	6.609	0.011
SteakDinner	12.546	1	12.546	2.662	0.105
Pizza	38.581	1	38.581	8.187	0.005
Fajitas	3.431	1	3.431	0.728	0.395
Error	669.159	142	4.712		
Total	1613	153			
Corrected Total	1089.542	152			

a. R Squared = .386 (Adjusted R Squared = .343)

Table 7a

Parameter Estimates

Dependent Variable: FoodieScore2

Parameter	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.	95% Confidence	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Intercept	1.934	0.326	5.935	0	1.29	2.578
RedBeansRice	0.14	0.2	0.7	0.485	-0.256	0.536
Gumbo	0.341	0.332	1.028	0.306	-0.315	0.997
ShrimpCreole	-0.093	0.454	-0.205	0.838	-0.99	0.804
Etoufee	2.031	0.379	5.364	0	1.282	2.779
Jambalaya	-0.194	0.26	-0.746	0.457	-0.707	0.32
Hamburger	-0.771	0.309	-2.498	0.014	-1.381	-0.161
PastaDish	-0.637	0.248	-2.571	0.011	-1.127	-0.147
SteakDinner	-0.81	0.496	-1.632	0.105	-1.791	0.171
Pizza	0.801	0.28	2.861	0.005	0.248	1.355
Fajitas	0.293	0.343	0.853	0.395	-0.386	0.972

Table 7b

An ANOVA was run on the food items selected for the survey against the foodie score of the surveyed respondents. The results are displayed in table 7a.

These results indicate how the food items selected identify with being classified



as a foodie. Table 7a indicates that out of all of the creole cuisine food items, etouffee was the only food item to show significance (0.000). Table 7b indicates the coefficients for each food item and shows etouffee to have one of the highest of all the food items (2.031). This can be interpreted as etouffee being a strong representative of the Creole cuisine in the respects of foodies.

The hamburger (0.014), pasta dish (0.011), and pizza (0.005) food items were found to be significant as well from table 7a but looking at the coefficients from table 7b shows that the general food items have a negative effect towards being classified as a foodie. The general food items, hamburger (-0.771) and pasta dish (-0.637), had a negative influence from table 7b however the pizza food item showed a (0.801) positive influence on the “foodie” score. While this is an unexpected result, it can be looked at differently since the pizza food item can be both viewed as a general food item found across the United States and in many fast food establishments, there are areas in the United States that support the uniqueness of the pizza for that region. For example the Chicago deep dish pizza and the New York thin crust pizza. This is where the positive influence that the pizza food item may have on the “foodie” scale even though it was considered a lackluster general food item during the survey.

*Cuisine Marketing Aspects*

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: FoodieScore2

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	694.092 <sup>a</sup>	20	34.705	12.024	0.000
Intercept	79.604	1	79.604	27.579	0.000
ImportantLocalCuisine	256.723	3	85.574	29.648	0.000
FeaturedRestaurantTV	175.684	4	43.921	15.217	0.000
CelebrityChefDish	172.754	3	57.585	19.951	0.000
RestaurantLocalyAd	20.828	3	6.943	2.405	0.070
AskLocal	10.107	3	3.369	1.167	0.325
ExploringHoleinWall	79.656	4	19.914	6.899	0.000
Error	378.112	131	2.886		
Total	1577	152			
Corrected Total	1072.204	151			

a. R Squared = .647 (Adjusted R Squared = .594)

Table 8

Lastly an ANOVA was run on the marketing aspects of the cuisine. These were questions that asked the respondents how important experiencing these events were and then were compared against the foodie score. The events listed were identified within the literature as activities a foodie would most likely be involved in. From the analysis presented in table 8, all but 2 of the events were shown to have strong significance (0.000) when compared to the “foodie” scale. These events ranged from the level of importance of experiencing the local cuisine and trying a dish created by a celebrity chef to exploring the destination for a one-in-the-wall restaurant. The importance of local cuisine examined how important it was for the respondent to experience the local cuisine when choosing a destination. This was highly correlated with the foodie scale since this event is one of the underlying expressions a foodie has when choosing a destination so it

is no surprise that important local cuisine is strongly significant to the foodie score.

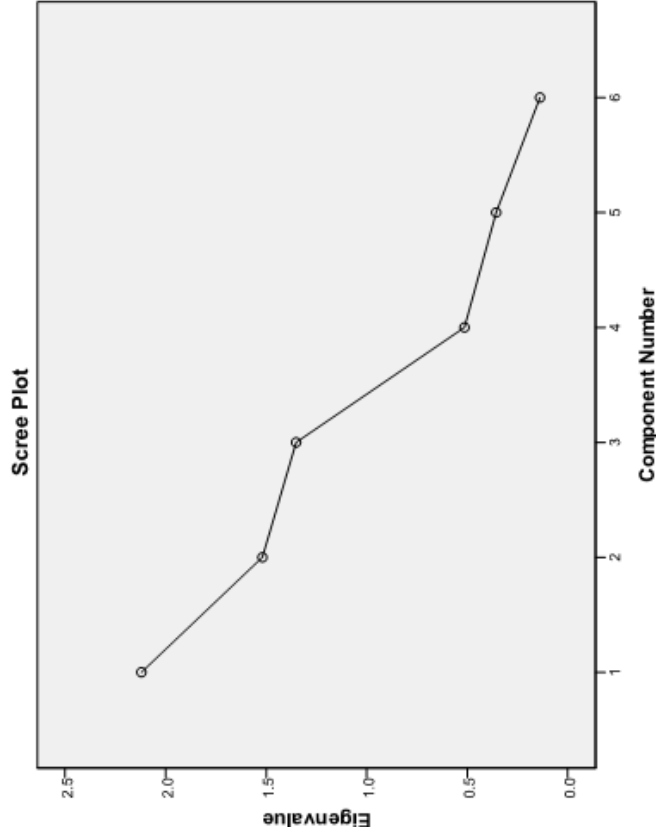
Dining at a restaurant featured on television (FeaturedRestaurantTV) is also a pro-foodie activity along with trying a celebrity chef's dish (CelebrityChefDish), and exploring for a hole-in-the-wall restaurant (ExploringHoleinWall). All three of the events were found to be strongly significant to the foodie score which is supportive of the foodie score in identifying food tourists.

However the "Ask a local or friend where the best place to eat is" (AskLocal) was observed to not be significant. This lack of significance for this event is surprising since it was one of the pro-foodie activities found in the literature. The lack of significance could stem from the "trust others" scale in the foodie score. Since the "trust others" scale item was found to be inappropriate for the scale its effects on trusting what others have to say about a restaurant may have hinder the ask a local aspect. Overall the marketing aspect questions help support the effectiveness of the foodie scale while still identifying areas of improvement in the scale.

Table 9a, 9b, and Fig. 4

Component	Total Variance Explained					
	Initial Eigenvalues		Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings	
	Total	% of Variance	Total	% of Variance	Total	% of Variance
1	2.121	35.347	2.121	35.347	1.812	30.202
2	1.519	25.319	1.519	25.319	1.703	28.39
3	1.351	22.522	1.351	22.522	1.476	24.597
4	0.514	8.568				
5	0.356	5.938				
6	0.138	2.306				
		100				

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.



	Rotated Component Matrix(a)		
	1	2	3
ImportantLocalCuisine	0.832	0.211	-0.19
FeaturedRestaurantTV	0.091	0.907	-0.272
CelebrityChefDish	-0.001	0.797	0.536
RestaurantLocallyAd	0.049	-0.077	0.951
AskLocal	0.777	-0.311	0.103
ExploringHoleinWall	0.711	0.315	0.404

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 4 iterations.

A factor analysis was conducted on the marketing aspect questions to identify better their role within the foodie scale. After the factor analysis was complete there emerged three major factors explaining the 83% of the variation in the foodie variables, a local factor, a renown factor, and a locally advertised factor. These three factors are made up of experiencing the local cuisine (.832), ask a local where the best place to eat is (.777), and exploring for a hole-in-the-wall restaurant (.711) for the local factor; trying a dish created by a celebrity chef (.797) and eating at a restaurant featured on television (.907) for the renown factor; and going to a restaurant locally advertised (.951) for the locally advertised factor.

These three factors can be linked to the cultural cuisine segmentation model, where the local factor is an expression of the history of the cuisine, the renown factor is an expression of the perception/interest of the cuisine, and the locally advertised factor as an expression of the importance/support of the cuisine locally, tying the foodie score back into the importance of a cultural significant unique cuisine.

These three factors also explain the difference in foodies observed in the literature from perspective of the local factor (Boyne, Hall, & Williams, 2003; Everett & Aitchison, 2008; Sharples, 2003; Hjalager & Richards, 2002; Kneafsey & Ilbery, 2001) where the tourists where looked at more for their focus on local aspects, the renown factor (Foxall, 1993; Getz & Brown, 2006; Hall, Sharples, Mitchell, Macionis, & Cambourne, 2003; Hashimoto & Telfer, 2006) where the

tourists were looked at for their decision-making process based on the marketing and popularity of the cuisine/destination, and the locally advertised factor (Fox, 2007; Rand & Heath; 2006; Jones & Jenkins, 2002) where the tourists were looked at for how effective the local restaurant's advertising was. Because of these focused studies there has been a lack in cohesion in the identification of a food tourist and this is where the foodie scale attempts to solidify the other studies into a homogeneous identifier for foodies.

## Chapter 5

### Conclusion

Two important findings have emerged from this study. First is the cultural cuisine segmentation model. This breakdown and evaluation of cuisine(s) within a region provides not only a separate research area but allows for a more in-depth look at the role cuisines play in the development of the tourism community. The cultural cuisine segmentation model also helps identify cuisines to be study for further food tourism studies through the identification of the mutual beneficial center. While the segmentation model promotes the idea of an even-balanced, culturally-significant cuisine, the model does provide areas for cuisines that have not reached an even balance with the inclusion of the lost cuisine, emerging cuisine, and intrusive cuisine categories.

These three side classifications also led to further research for tourists since these classifications are of evolving gastronomy for different regions. This can led to identifying potentially new food destinations, destinations which lack a cultural cuisine the benefit of rediscovering one, or the decline of a food destination.

Secondly the study has established a quantitative model for identifying food tourists or foodies through the use of the predictability of the Brief Sensation Seeking Scale adjusted for food tourism. While the foodie scale still has areas of improvement that need to be address, it is a firm starting point to establish a predictability scale in which the respondent can be recognized as a foodie without

prior knowledge of the participant's previous trips, which has been the major struggle with food tourism in identifying food tourists before rather than after their trip.

The foodie scale also shows promise for the expansion of the semi-foodie segment. Since the scale was able to roughly identify pro-foodie qualities and non-foodie qualities the area between the two resulted in some interesting data yet because of the limited data further analysis was unattainable. The area between the pro-foodie and non-foodie qualities showed promising results for the possibility of two groups within the semi-foodie segment. This is also encouraging from the data in this study that many of the pro-foodie respondents showed great interest in the renown aspect of the restaurants while others were more interested in the locality and homegrown aspect. Further research is warranted for closer examination of the semi-foodie segment.

Based on these two findings the study has laid groundwork for the identification and analysis of food tourism. This work will help to expand upon the new market segment of foodies through the use of the foodie item scale and cultural cuisine segmentation model.

### *Implications*

The factor analysis of the marketing aspects of the Creole cuisine also provided some great insight into the food tourist as three facets became quite clear, the renown of the restaurants, the local aspect, and advertisement aspect. These three qualities show that food tourists are heavily influenced by marketing



campaigns while still very concerned with the ‘natural’ and homegrown qualities of these food destinations. This coupled with the fact that food tourists were spending 1.5 times more than non-foodie while on holiday shows that this growing niche group is primed for marketing campaigns and advertisements.

Looking to the food items used in the study shows that two dishes are incredibly important for the area and further research, red beans and rice and etouffee. While etouffee was clearly a pure-foodie dish, it is almost necessary for restaurants to attract foodies into their restaurants and perhaps greater focus on the dish as a specialty will prompt the restaurant to be featured more. Red beans and rice however, were more of an intro dish for emerging foodies. While still in the lower price ranges the dish was appealing to all groups and its subtle essences provided all a taste of the complexity of the Creole cuisine with the simplicity sought out by those less versed in culinary arts. Gumbo and jambalaya were clearly crowd favorites and the most consumed food item in the study and as such should not be over looked when planning restaurant menus.

For tourism professionals there is a clear gap in marketing towards food tourism for the area. The food tourist segment has high levels of disposable income which does not seem to be being tapped into. The foodies are spending less on total expenditures for great spending on food. This provides hotels and accommodation operators incentive to provide food package deals with local restaurants and food producers. Tours of food ways and even cooking classes will

led to greater spending by these food tourists and increase revenue generation to local businesses.

### *Limitations*

While this study was conducted through the assistance of the New Orleans Convention and Visitors Bureau, a full sampling of the population could not be achieved simply through the fact that the survey was only administered through an online website and those individuals that had contacted the New Orleans CVB previously about visiting New Orleans.

The sample size was also significantly smaller than what is needed for explanations on a broader scale. This lack of response rate may also have had an effect on the type of respondents the survey generated since those who may have only been interested in food tourism may have taken the survey, skewing the results. Also a lack of a question to whether the individual identified him/herself as a food tourist was absent from the survey to compare results from the foodie scale to self-proclaimed foodies.

The validity of the foodie scale used in the study is also problematic. While the scale was compared with other studies and showed an internal reliability of 0.74, the scale was not previously tested before being administered. Further analysis within the study showed areas where the scale needed adjustments in wording. However, the scale performed admirably within the internal correlations with only one minor miscalculation from the miss wording of the item.

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APPENDIX A  
COVER LETTER

**Dear Participant,**

**I am a graduate student at Arizona State University in the School of Community Resources and Development.**

**I am conducting research on food tourism in the New Orleans area.**

**Your participation in this study is voluntary. You can skip questions if you wish. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time there will be no penalty. This survey is intended for those over the age of 18 and is requested that this survey only be filled out by those over the age of 18.**

**Although there are no direct benefits to yourself, you will be contributing to research. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to your participation.**

**Your responses will be anonymous, and to ensure this, you will not be asked to include any personal identifiers. Your answers will only be shared in an aggregated form. The results of this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications but your name will not be known.**

**If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact the researcher: paul.seery@asu.edu**

**If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through ASU Research Compliance Office, at (480) 965-6788**

**Completion of the questionnaire will be considered your consent to participate.**

**Sincerely,**

**Paul Seery**



APPENDIX B  
QUESTIONNAIRE

## New Orleans Food Tourism Survey

Answers marked with a \* are required.

### 1. Primary Purpose of visit

- Business Travel
- Vacation/Pleasure
- Corporate meeting/event
- Other (Please Specify)

### 2. Did one or more of the following information sources help to chose New Orleans as a destination?

- Travel and Leisure
- National Geographic
- Budget Travel
- T Magazine
- Food and Wine
- Bon appetit
- Gourmet
- Southern Living
- Online Source
- Other (Please Specify)

### 3. How important are these items on your trip(s)?

	Very	Somewhat	Netural	Less Important	Not at all
How important is experiencing local cuisine on your trips?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Going to restaurants featured on TV programs like Food Network or Travel Channel?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Trying dishes made by Celebrity Chefs?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Going to restaurants advertised locally on Billboards or Commercials?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Asking a local or friend from the area where the best place to eat is?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Exploring the area looking for a hole-in-the-wall restaurant?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**4. To the best of your recollection how many times did you eat one of the following lunch/dinner dishes during your stay in New Orleans?**

	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9+	Never
Red Beans and Rice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gumbo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shrimp Creole	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Etoufee	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jambalaya	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hamburger and Fries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pasta Dishes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Steak Dinner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pizza	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fajitas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**5. Please Indicate the level of which you agree or disagree with the following statements.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I enjoy trying new foods whenever possible	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Meals from my childhood are still my favorite	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I like to taste strange dishes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I prefer to prepare my own food	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I never change the preparation of a menu item	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I do not try a food item if it has an ingredient that I do not recognize	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I trust other people to order for me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I prefer familiar foods when available	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**6. Gender?**

Male  Female

**7. Please answer these questions to your best ability.**

Your home Zip Code?

What year were you born?

**8. Please answer these questions to the best of your recollection.**

When was your most recent visit New Orleans (MM/DD/YYYY)?

How many day(s) was your stay while in New Orleans?

How many people were in your group when visiting New Orleans most recently?

**9. Please answer these questions to the best of your recollection.**

Is your average household income over \$80,000 a year (Y/N)?

Total Expenditure on food while in New Orleans?

Total Expenditure of all purchases while in New Orleans?

**10. Highest level of education?**

- 12th grade or less (no diploma)
- High school diploma
- Some college, no degree
- Associate or technical degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Graduate degree/professional