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RESEARCH ARTICLE

CULINARY TOURISM: A KEY TO SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN GHANA

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Abstract:

Tourism has now assumed the position as the fastest growing industry in the world and the third foreign exchange earner in Ghana. Culinary tourism is a tourism activity that allows one to experience the food of the community. Culinary tourists are therefore tourists who take part in the new trends of cultural consumption, seeking the authenticity of places they visit through food. Over the years there has been little research on the use of culinary tourism as a means of sustaining tourism in Ghana. The main aim of the study is to look at the potentials of culinary tourism as a means of ensuring sustainable tourism in Ghana. Questionnaires and interviews were the main methods used in gathering data from the respondents. The results of the study indicated that, Ghanaians have the potential of sustaining tourism through the use of culinary tourism. It is recommended that culinary tourism needs to be branded, packaged and promoted to enhance its usage as a key to sustainable tourism in Ghana.

Keywords: Tourism, Sustainable, Culinary tourism, Region.

Introduction

Ghana's tourism potentials based on its natural endowment ranges from ecotourism, through heritage to cultural tourism which encompasses culinary tourism. The changing dynamics of Ghana's tourism in recent times calls for diversification of activities in the district through the regional to the national level for an all year round activities to be performed.

Tourism is the temporary movement of people to the destinations outside their normal places of work and residence including the totality of the activities to be undertaken during their stay in those destinations not only that but also it includes activities created by the host so that the needs of the receivers will be satisfied (Cook and Marqua, 2002). Tourism activities such as transport and culinary activities in a country like Ghana need to be enhanced in order to achieve the maximum benefit to the society.

Ghana with its diverse vegetational zones stretching from coastal savanna through semi rain forest to Guinea savanna comes out with variety of food crops in each area. This makes Ghana a home of different types of dishes ranging from root and tuber crops to grains and vegetables. These can be used to promote culinary tourism in almost every corner of the country. Sustainable tourism practice is an all year round tourism activity which is not only limited to one part of the economy but to all aspects of tourism across the length and breadth of the country. Food tourism has become one of the most dynamic and creative aspect of tourism which can be used as a key to diversify and sustain tourism practices.

Different factors may motivate a tourist to visit Ghana and food is no exception. According to UNWTO report (2010) the coming decade is important for the whole tourism industry and its sustainability, in terms of industrial development and environment for Ghana Tourism Authority there are ten reasons that motivate people to travel to Ghana and these include Cultural tourism which encompasses food tourism.

Statement of the problem

A wider aspect of Ghana's tourism over the years has been limited to sea, sun and sand in addition to heritage tourism which drives many African Americans to come and see the slave forts and castles. Not much attempt has

been made to widen the scope and also diversify the tourism industry with other activities such as culinary tourism in order to have all year round sustainable tourism activities. Would there be a wider scope of tourism activities in Ghana through the promotion of culinary tourism?. This study aims at finding out whether or not culinary tourism could be widened in order to have a sustainable all year round tourism activities in Ghana.

The objectives of the research

The general objective of the study is to add to the body of knowledge in food tourism and tourism in general in Ghana.

Specifically the study aims at:

- Identify and explain the main Ghanaian dishes in each geographical area of the country.
- Find alternative ways of promoting culinary tourism domestically and internationally in Ghana.

Research Questions

The following four research questions constituted the core of the study. These are:

- Where do tourists prefer to eat Ghanaian dishes ?.
- What are the preferred indigenous dishes by foreign tourists in Ghana?.
- What are the reasons for tourist preference of a particular Ghanaian dish?.
- Is it profitable to engage in indigenous dishes business?.
- What are the reasons for tourists visit to Ghana?.

Significance of the research

- Aims at contributing immensely to knowledge in the tourism industry.
- Being a reference material for future researchers in Culinary tourism
- The results of the study could enhance teaching and learning of tourism and hospitality programmes in the Polytechnics and Universities in Ghana.
- Culinary tourism as a way of diversifying tourism activities in Ghana could be promoted based on the results of the study. .

The results of the study could assist personnel in the tourism industry in Ghana to package and promote culinary tourism not only in Ghana but to the outside world.

Limitations of the research

The following were constraints that hindered the study:

Firstly the study covered wide area throughout the country and that became very tedious for the researchers.

Secondly some road networks in Ghana are not fully developed therefore movement from one place to the other was seriously hampered as there are only a few commercial vehicles plying the roads.

Thirdly some respondents did not complete all the questions on the questionnaire that meant some answers were incomplete.

It should however be noted that despite all these challenges the researchers were able to get assistants from tour guides that assisted in the collection of data for the study.

Delimitations of the research

The research and its findings are limited to the culinary tourism in Ghana. However this does not negate the outcome of the research being applicable to other areas of tourism when the need arises

Methodology

The research design for the study was descriptive. Descriptive survey design as pointed out by Sowa(2003) involves collecting data in order to test hypothesis or answer questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study. When we use descriptive statistics ,it is useful to summarize our group of data using combination of tabulated description(ie tables) , graphical description (ie graphs and charts) and statistical commentary(ie discussions of the results).All the above were used in the present study.

Research format

Many research formats are available for a researcher to choose from in the research process .These include exploratory, explanatory and causal formats among others. Exploratory and causal formats were used for the study.

As Exploratory research is conducted for a problem that has not been clearly defined and relies on secondary data alongside primary data among other attributes the researchers adopted the format. When there is the need for a cause and effect relationship in a study causal format is handy and this is applicable to the current study. In this study, description of various indigenous dishes in Ghana are made as well as how it can contribute to the sustainability of an all year round tourism activity.

Study Population

The targeted populations for the study included people engage in culinary tourism business as well as tourists. It also includes knowledgeable people (both males and females) from the tourism industry locally and internationally.

Sample Size

A sample according to Koul (2002) is proportion or a subset of a larger group. It is assumed to be a representative of the entire population if important characteristics are distributed similarly in both groups. A sample is important because it is expected to give a mirror image of the larger population. For the sample size determination, of the study, the researchers adopted the formula propounded by Fisher, Laing, Stroeckel and Townsend(1998) in addition to the formula postulated by Nwana(1992) in some cases. This method would be used in the study because a sample of hotel, restaurants and chop bars practitioners as well as tourists gives a mirror image of the culinary industry in Ghana

Sample size for the purpose of this study consisted of the following: 210 questionnaires were distributed to owners and workers of hotels, restaurants and chop bars in the country and some customers who were met at centers during visitations. Interviews were conducted on 50 respondents who were also owners of hotels, restaurants and chop bars as well as staff who were not given questionnaires. 60 respondents were observed and the focus group members in 10 centers visited in the 10 regions of Ghana totaled 100. In all the sample size for the study was 430 respondents

Research instruments

A Combination of questionnaires, interview guide which include opened ended as well as close ended questions were used in the study. Focus group discussions were also adopted. The key informants interviewed were chefs in restaurants, hotels chop bars and tourists at the major tourist attractions in Ghana. The interviews were held in the hotels, restaurants and various tourist sites. It took an average of 30 minutes to conduct an interview.

Primary data

Field trip was taken to all the 10 regions in Ghana. It was to conduct both formal and informal interviews as well as distribution of questionnaires in hotels, restaurants, chop bars or food joints as well as tourists at tourists' attraction sites in each region as well as focus group discussions. Hotels such as La Palm Royal beach hotel, Labadi beach hotel in Accra, Miklin hotel in Kumasi, Ashanti region, St James hotel in Eastern region, - Jofel restaurant, Kumasi, Ashanti region, Mandela Restaurant, Sunyani, B.A, Hohoe Restaurant, Hohoe Volta region, African pot Restaurant, Elmina, Central region, Linda Door Restaurant, Tafo, Eastern region, -Kings Canteen Services, Ho in the Volta region, Chances Hotel Restaurant, Ho, Volta region, State Transport Corporation Canteen, Tamale, Northern Region among others during the period of study were all visited.

Secondary data

The secondary data were obtained largely through the analysis of the various documents relevant to the study. These include Tourism the business of travel by Cook and Marqua(2002), The consumption of experiences or the experiences of consumption : An introduction to the tourism of taste in food tourism around the world. By Hall and Sharples (2003).The internet was extensively used.

The Concept of Culinary Tourism

Culinary tourism has grown considerably and become one of the most dynamic and creative segments of tourism in the world. It has been referred to as gastronomy tourism. Culinary tourism is experiencing food of the community, region or an area and it is now a vital component of tourism experience. Food tourists are tourists who take part in

the new trends of cultural consumption. They are travellers seeking the authenticity of places they visit through food and therefore, are concerned with origin of food. (Hall & Sharples, 2003)

Culinary, food tourism, or gastronomic tourism is an emerging phenomenon that is being developed as new tourism product due to the fact that over a third of tourist's spending is on food. (Quan and Wang, 2004). The cuisine of a tourism destination is an important aspect of the holiday experience since the link between food and tourism, therefore, serves as a platform for local people to express themselves and at the same time aid their economic empowerment. The World Food Travel Association (WFTA) Report (2010) defined food tourism as the pursuit of unique memorable eating and drinking experiences. The Malaysian Ministry of Tourism (2010) defined food tourism as the travel to specific regions to sample cuisine unique to the area. Hall and Mitchell (2001) defined food tourism as a visitation to primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants and specific location for which food tasting is the primary motivating factor for a traveller to a region.

Food tourism is a subset of cultural tourism. Culture is a set of behaviours, knowledge and customs that shape a society on which a sense of belongingness is based. The design of any food tourism offering will not be viable if it does not take into account the cultural characteristics of the territory. Food tourism is also referred to as indigenous tourism since it involves the use of local dishes. This allows for the growth and involvement of local people in the tourism industry. Food tourism has been beneficial to rural communities which struggled to develop since it allows local communities to generate income, provide jobs and develop the local economy. There are two types of food tourists namely:

- a. Tourists who consumes food as part of their travel experience
- b. Tourists whose activities, behaviours and destinations selection are influenced by their interest in food.

World Culinary Tourism

The world is increasingly becoming a global village, making tourists seek new experiences that are based on unique local identity and culture. Culinary tourism, tries to promote the unique culture through food tourism. All over the world one third of tourists spending is devoted to food (Quan and Wang, 2004). Again according to the same researchers, eating in restaurants is the second favourite activity of foreigners visiting the United States of America and the number one activity for US travellers when they visit destinations in Ghana. The UNWTO report (2011) indicates that Spain receive 56.7 million tourists generating a receipt of 43 billion Euros annually. Out of the 56.7 million international tourists 5 million of them said that they enjoyed the Spanish food and wine and that constituted one of the main reasons why tourists choose Spain as tourism destination. Spanish dishes such as omelet made from eggs and paella which is made from rice are all internationally recognized foods. Every part of the world has a type of food that dominates the culinary tourism activities in that particular geographical area. Azerbaijan's food made of meat, fish and vegetables is very popular among international travellers in the major restaurants and hotels in Eastern Europe .

Again the Azerbaijan's kebab called the Shashlik made from fresh lamb, wild birds and fish with juice is popular in most restaurants in Eastern Europe. The Southern American countries of Brazil and Argentina also have dishes that are attractive to tourists. The Brazilian cuisine of fruits and fish cooked together with vegetables which is a reflection of Portuguese African legacy is very popular in most restaurants in Southern America. The Asian region continues to be dominated by Korean cuisines. Kimchi which is a fermented spicy cabbage and bibimbab, rice mixed with vegetables and meat is a renowned healthy food from North and South Korea. To promote and sustain the food tourism industry tourism organizations have developed a gastronomic tour in Korea in collaboration with celebrities such as top chefs and famous entertainers to go across the country to promote their indigenous foods. Russian traditional porridges, soups, fish, pancakes, pies with drinks such as berry juice and birch juice have also gained a lot of popularity among travellers in Moscow and other cities in that part of the world.

Culinary Tourism in Africa

Africa over 54 countries with diverse cultures and natural resources reflecting its recipes. The Northern African countries have a lot of spicy recipes from the Arabian world. Egyptian dishes such as Baba Ghannoug which is made of egg plants, chickpeas, lemon juice, salt, pepper and oil is very popular in North Africa. Kessiah which is a milk of yoghurt savoury pudding made with flour and sometimes seasoned with fried onions and boiled chicken are very popular for travelers to North Africa. Ethiopian food known as Enjera is very popular in East Africa. It is made of pan cake, leavened bread from corn, sorghum and barley mixed together. Central Africa has most of its food made from heavy starchy tuber crops with a lot of animals meat such as crocodile, antelope and others. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kwanzaa is one of the popular foods and extends to all other regions in central Africa. It is made from okro, black eyed peas and peanut soups eaten with rice or bread. The Southern African region is dominated by South African dishes. Tripe is a traditional dish, made from treated flavoured potatoes and

fried onions. Morogo is a traditional dish made from spinach with butter, braised onions into maize porridge. Another popular food in the Southern African region of Africa is Chakalako. This is a spicy reddish soup made from carrots, green pepper, sliced onions, vinegar chilli and comes with a strong flavour. It is served alongside a main course such as rice.

Culinary Tourism in Ghana

Culinary Tourism in Ghana reflects the types of indigenous dishes that can be packaged and made attractive to both domestic and international tourists to Ghana. Ghana is located in the tropical West African region and has a lot of tuber crops and heavy starchy foods with a lot of meat and fish. The popular staple food in Ghana especially among the Akans is fufu which is crashed cassava and yam or plantain served with soup. Kenkey and banku are made from fermented maize milled and usually served with tomatoes reddish sauce with fried fish. Another common food is jollof rice which is rice cooked with tomatoes sauce and red meat or chicken. However, there are some peculiar foods associated with each region or geographical area in the country.

Greater Accra region is the smallest but the most populous region in Ghana and hosts the capital of the country. It still remains a cosmopolitan region with its indigenous tribe, the Gas representing 12% of the population. The Gas in the region have a traditional food called kenkey, which is very popular in the region. The commonest food in the region is Banku or kenkey made from fermented corn dough eaten with pepper and fried fish or okro stew. Another type of food which is very popular and can be used to attract and sustain culinary tourism in the region is fried yam with turkey tails referred to as ‘choffi’. The coastal regions of Central and Western regions are homes to predominantly Akans and have a vegetation of mixed coastal Savanna and semi rainforest. These make it common for vegetables such as onions, tomatoes, pepper, garden eggs and other fruits such as mangoes, pineapples and oranges to be cultivated in abundance. Also Tuber crops such as cassava, yam and cocoyam in addition to grains such as rice and maize are available. The area is also noted for bush meat such as antelopes and fish from the sea. The Western region also has Akyeke with Avocado pear as one of the traditional dishes in the region. The Central Region has Fante dorkun or Fante kenkey which is made from fermented corn and eaten with fish or gravy. Another popular food is Fante Fante which is palmtree oil stew with fresh fish eaten with either yam or Fante kenkey. All these are very popular foods which can be used to promote culinary tourism in the region.

The middle belt of the country is occupied by three regions namely Ashanti, Eastern and the Brong- Ahafo region. These regions are predominantly inhabited by Akans. It is the forest belt of the country and therefore the home of tropical tuber crops such as yam, cassava and cocoyam. The area is endowed with other natural resources. Fufu with either palm nut soup or light soup or with snails or any bush meat is the most popular and staple food in the region. Another popular food in the area is Ampesi and Palava sauce. This is made from plantain and the green leaves of cocoyam. All these can be used to attract culinary tourist to the region. The eastmost part of the country is covered by the Volta region and due to its geographical area it is noted for the cultivation of grains such as maize and rice. The staple food and popular food that attracts a lot of visitors in the area is Akpele made from corn and eaten with Okro soup.

The Northern, Upper East and upper West regions are noted for their Guinea Savanna vegetation and therefore noted for the production of grains such as millet, maize, sorghum and rice. People in these regions rear animals such as cattle, sheep and goat. Tuo zaafi popularly called TZ made from millet, maize or guinea corn flour and green leaves soup is one of the most popular food that attracts visitors. Another popular food is Tubani, which is made from beans or cowpea with Sheanut butter oil and pepper. A common food mainly eaten as breakfast in the three Northern regions of Ghana is koko which is millet or corn porridge eaten with koose which is beans fried balls. All these can be used to promote culinary tourism in these three regions of Ghana.

Table.1. Ghanaian dishes from various geographical areas and their nutritional values

	Types of Ghanaian dishes	Taste	Geographical area	Nutritional value
1	Banku or kenkey with pepper and fried fish or okro stew	Hot spicy and sour tasty food	Gas and Fante in the Greater Accra and the central regions	Carbohydrates, proteins, fats and oils as well as some vitamins for bone formation
2	Akyeke with avocado pear or vegetable soup	Spicy tasty	Western region of Ghana, Nzima-Fanti – Ahanta, Brong- Ahafo	Carbohydrates, for energy, vitamins and minerals for bone

				formation and proper metabolism
3	Fanti-fanti (fresh fish gravy) with Fanti kenkey	Hot spicy and sour taste	Central and Western regions, Coastal savanna belt of Ghana	Carbohydrate for energy, proteins for repairing body structure and vegetables for vitamins
4	Fufu with palmtree soup or goat light soup	Spicy and delicious taste	Middle belt or forest of Ashanti, Brong Ahafo and Eastern regions.	Carbohydrates, fats and oils for energy, proteins for repair of body tissues and vegetables for vitamins
5	Ampesi and palava sauce from plantain and cocoyam	Tasty and nutritious	Middle belt or forest region of Brong-Ahafo and Eastern regions	Proteins for repair of tissues, fats and oils and carbohydrates for energy
6	Akpele from corn and fresh okro soup	Slippery and delicious	Volta region	Proteins for repair of tissues, fats and oils and carbohydrates for energy
7	Beans stew with fried ripe plantain	Sweet and Spicy taste	Volta region	Proteins for repair of tissues, fats and oils and carbohydrates for energy
8	Tuozafo and sauce	Delicious	Northern, Upper East and West regions (the three Northern regions)	Carbohydrate for energy, proteins for repairing body structure and vegetables for vitamins and mineral elements
9	Kooko and koose	Spicy taste	The three Northern regions	Proteins, fats and oils well as some minerals
10	Tubani	Spicy taste	The three Northern regions	Carbohydrate for energy, proteins for repairing body tissues
11	Dafaduka	Delicious	The three Northern regions	Carbohydrate for energy, proteins for repairing body tissues
12	Wakye, gari, meat gravy shito, with talia (spaghetti)	Spicy taste food	The three Northern regions	Carbohydrate for energy, proteins for repairing body tissues

Sources: Authors' field survey (2013)

Factors militating against the Sustainability of Culinary Tourism in Ghana

Tourism in Ghana has over the years depended on areas such as heritage, eco-tourism and conference tourism without much attention being paid to culinary tourism. This is not because Ghana has not got the potential to develop culinary tourism but the nation has not done a thorough assessment of culinary tourism in its tourism development. Culinary tourism however has quite a lot of factors militating against its growth and sustainability as a core tourism sector of the country.

As of the time of the research, it was clear that, in spite of the fact that a number of restaurants chop bars and hotels served customers with indigenous dishes, there is still no agreed national policy or strategic objectives for the

development of culinary tourism in Ghana. Apart from an attempt in 2007 by the Government to have Valentine Day celebrated with cocoa chocolate in Ghana, there are no plans to use food as a way to boost tourism in Ghana. Ghana continues to rely on its traditional tourists attractions like the Castles and Forts and in some cases the waterfalls.

Secondly, Ghana has not made vigorous attempt to conduct research on consumer market on food tourism in order to support and make an informed decision on the sector. Most of the research has been limited to other areas of tourism in Ghana such as heritage, eco- tourism and technological tourism.(Bempong ,2011).

Stakeholders in culinary tourism in Ghana from hotels, restaurants to chop bars have not made any meaningful attempt at co-ordinating the activities of culinary tourism to know the types of foods that attract tourists in hotels and restaurants or chop bars in various communities of Ghana..

Ghana as a whole is not well vest in sophisticated ways of marketing any of its tourism potentials both internally and externally and culinary tourism is no exception. The vigorous promotional branding of local dishes such as beans and ripe plantain, jollof rice and others are absent internationally. Apart from the normal signboard by Chop bars and restaurants to their locations there are no other means of marketing local dishes.

Another new trend of development in indigenous food supply and marketing which is expensive. This threatens its sustainability compared to foreign subsidized food grown with chemicals from the Western world. The indigenous foods are prepared from naturally grown food that are produced on small scale and therefore tend to be expensive. Local fowls, snails, rice are expensive compared to the ones imported from the Western world.

There are no criteria for assessing the quality levels of food tourism in Ghana. The quality framework for food linked to national development is absent in Ghana. Differences in taste and quality of food in food in some restaurants and chop bars seem not to meet international standards. Although a number of food tourism operators are aware that the Ghana Tourism Authority is supposed to be the supervising agency, the Authority does not have the men on the ground for effective supervision.

Ghana has some delicious foods such as jollof rice, ripe plantain and beans,fufu and palm nut soup but there is still inadequate literature on most foods for both local and international visitors to various destinations to read and get attracted to these foods. Most leaflets, magazines, pamphlets supplied by limited to hotels, car rentals and tourist attraction centres. Most books on indigenous dishes are from foreign countries..

Again there has not been enough training or short courses in the form of seminars among others on Ghanaian dishes for chefs and other practitioners in culinary tourism in Ghana. To upgrade their skills Ghana Tourism Authority organizes training workshops for chefs and other chop bar operators but most training workshops have been limited to continental dishes without looking at ways of training chefs to improve on the preparation of indigenous dishes.

Data collection, Analysis and Findings

Data for the study concentrated on a total of 210 respondents

Table 2. General characteristics of Respondents

Description(Items)	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	74	35
Female	136	65
Total	210	100
Age Group		
< 18	0	0
18-25	3	2

26-30	7	3
31-35	10	5
36 and above	190	90
Total	210	100
Educational Background		
Primary	15	7
Secondary/Vocational	75	36
University	115	55
No formal education	5	2
Total	210	100

A look the gender on table .2 shows that 136 (65%) of the respondents during the period were females whilst 74(35 %)were males. Majority of respondents are the elderly who are above 36 years and that accounts for 190(90%) of respondents. This is an indication that most people working in the food tourism industry as well as those who travel to Ghana as tourist are matured people in the working class on the table.

In terms of the educational background of respondents 5 (2%) of respondents had no formal education 15 (7%) had primary education, 75 (36%) had secondary whilst 115(55%) of respondents have University education. This means that most food tourists have higher level of education. This is because there is need to be educated trained before taking appointment as chefs and hotel managers. Again food tourists to Ghana are those with higher education that make them get good job to enable them travel to Ghana.

Table .3 **Places where International tourists prefer to eat Ghanaian dishes when in Ghana**

Description/Items	Number of Respondents	Percentages
Eating in restaurants	100	48%
Eating in hotels	90	43%
local eating joints/chop bars	20	9%
Totals	210	100%

When the researchers tried to look at the places where international tourists prefer to eat Ghanaian dishes when in Ghana. These were the results from 210 respondents. 100 of the respondents representing 48% preferred to eat in restaurants that are noted for Ghanaian dishes. 90 respondents representing 43% preferred eating Ghanaian dishes in their hotels. 20 respondents representing 9% preferred eating in chop bars in the various localities

Most tourists prefer to eat Ghanaian dishes in restaurants not in the chop bars which because they are concerned with the hygienic conditions under which the food is prepared and also feel that the hotels might be expensive as compared to the restaurants. This is because some of the tourists at the cultural centre in Kumasi indicated that they preferred eating in restaurants than the chop bars because they are concerned with the water used in preparing food in the chop bars which might not be for human consumption. they also raised concerns about sanitary conditions in and around the environment where the food is prepared and rather exclaimed that even though the chop bars have the worse conditions and the hotels have the best environmental conditions for the preparation of local dishes, they tend to be expensive as compared to restaurants and that accounted for his choice of restaurants for indigenous

dishes. The popularization of indigenous food in our restaurants will help in promoting culinary tourism in Ghana. Chop bar operators most equally be educated on hygienic practices in order to meet international standards.

Table.4 Reasons for international tourists visit to Ghana

Description/Items	Number of Respondents	Percentages
Social events such as Panafest,	63	30%
The natural beauty of the country	35	16%
Peaceful nature	27	13%
Culture which include food	38	18%
Ghanaians are friendly	24	12%
The Sea, Sun and sand of Ghana	23	11%
Total	210	100%

The research question sought to find out why tourists visit Ghana. The responses are summarized in the table 4 above from 210 respondents. 63(30%) of respondents comes to Ghana for social events.35(16%) said they come to Ghana of the natural beauty of the country. 27(13%) said is because of the peaceful nature of the country.38(18%) which is third largest reason for tourists visit to Ghana is culture and this includes Ghana's indigenous food.42(12%) says they travel to Ghana because the people are friendly and finally 23(11%) said it is because they want to enjoy the Sea, Sun and Sand of Ghana.

These responses indicate that most tourists come to Ghana for social events but food which is part of culture is the third reason for tourists visit to Ghana. In discussions with some German tourists at the Bonwire kente village, they indicated that culture is the main reason for coming to Ghana.Apart from clothing and textiles another experience is to taste the food of the community , that is Fufu and palmnut soup. When asked about their favourite Ghanaian dishes they answered that ripe plantain and beans as their favourite because of the spicy nature and flavour. They all rated food first, followed by the creative arts industry such as masks, carvings, and dresses and finally the music industry. This support the assertion that food is one of the highest cultural experiences in Ghana by tourists.Culinary tourism therefore has the potential of helping to sustain tourism activity in Ghana.

Table .5 Preferred Ghanaian dishes by tourists when in Ghana

Description/Items	Number of Respondents	Percentages
Jollof rice	63	30%
Beans and fried ripe plantain	43	20%
Fufu and goat light soup.	32	15%
Wakye,	23	11%
Yam and palava sauce,	18	9%
Tuo zaafi (TZ),	16	8%
Banku with fried fish and pepper.	15	7%
Total	210	100%

Responses from respondents from table .5, show that out of the 210 respondents, 63 (30%), representing majority of tourists preferred jollof rice.43(20%) of them said they preferred beans and fried ripe plantain. 32(15%) said fufu and goat light soup. 23(11%) said Wakye, 18 of them representing 9%, said yam and palava sauce, 16(8%) again said Tuo zaafi (TZ), whilst 15(7%) said banku with fried fish and pepper.

This means the preferred Ghanaian dish by tourists is jollof rice. This is well known and prepared in almost all hotels and restaurants in Ghana. When a group of four Canadian Tourists at the country Kitchen Restaurant in Accra was asked why they preferred jollof rice, they explained that the colour is attractive. They again explain that it is spicy with good flavour as well and they also like the taste compared to other dishes. When asked whether their decision was informed by the nutritional value, they answered in the affirmative. They said the jollof rice has the balance diet with rice, vegetables, oils and meat or fish hence his favourite Ghanaian dish. The three best foods preferred by tourists are jollof rice, beans and red plantain and fufu. These can be used as the key elements in the promotion of culinary tourism in Ghana. Luckily these foods are also very common in most parts of Ghana.

Table .6 Reasons for the preference of a Ghanaian dish.

Description/Items	Number of Respondents	Percentages
It tastes very well.	85	41%
The food is nutritious	63	30%
The food is cheaper/affordable	23	11%
The food is safe	18	9%
Curiosity	18	9%
Total	210	100%

The results from table .6 which shows reasons tourist preferred Ghanaian dishes to foreign ones. 85(41%) indicated that it tastes so well, 63(30%) says because it is nutritious,23(11) because is cheap.18(9%) because the food is safe and another 18 (9%) because of curiosity. This means that most people prefer Ghanaian dishes because of the taste and so if our chefs in the hotels and restaurants are well trained to cook food that tastes so well, it will help in the promotion of culinary tourism in Ghana. A tourist eating jollof rice attested that although it is similar to South Africa 's Chakalako rice, Ghana's jollof rice is good and unique in taste. These means that before choosing a particular food to be promoted as culinary tourism in Ghana one need to look at first the taste of the food and its nutritious value .

Table .7 Benefits of engaging in Indigenous dishes.

Description/Items	Number of Respondents	Percentages
Employment	84	40%
Made profit from the business to build houses	44	21%
To take care of their children's education	34	16%
Expand their businesses	29	14%
Other activities	19	9%
Total	210	100%

Culinary tourism which emphasizes on the preparation of indigenous dishes is not done for its sake but it is done to satisfy tourists who have left their homes and are now at different locality. When researchers contacted managers of hotels and restaurants as well as chop bars operators who chose to prepare local dishes.

These were the results as shown on table.7 The results indicated that 84(40%) as a source of employment, 44(21%) make profit from the business to build house,34(16%) use the profit to take care of their children education. 29(14%) use the profit to expand their business. 19(9%) they use the profit for other activities. These means that food tourism business has been a source of employment to many men and women in Ghana, since 40% of respondents indicated that food tourism is a source of employment. The owner of country kitchen, a restaurant in Accra asserted in discussions with the researchers that he employs over twenty five workers and had used his profit to build a house and that is what he has been using to take care of his children's education. He also agreed that other operators have benefited even more than him. The same results were confirmed by the manager of Eusbett Hotel in Sunyani who said he used some of the profit to expand his business. He said a lot of tourists in his hotel prefer the Ghanaian dishes because he uses fresh food items bought from farmers in and around Sunyani.

Conclusion

The dynamics of tourism is now changing from a specific tourism activity to much wider tourism activities. Ghana has the potential of sustaining its tourism growth by using culinary tourism as a tool for all year round tourism activity. This will generate income to stakeholders and the government leading to an overall improvement in the standard of living of the people.

Recommendations for the Sustainability of Culinary Tourism in Ghana

Ghana stretches along three vegetational zones namely Coastal Savanna, Guinea Savanna and Semi rain forest. It has many different ethnic groups living in these vegetational zones with each ethnic group having a staple food. There is the need for Ghana to look at culinary tourism and pick up some local foods and given band names. Develop and promote them by communicating their relevance to the world through rigorous marketing such as developing a special Logo for it.

Quality and value for money are key to any tourism produces. There is the need for the culinary tourism which is an aspect of tourism to stand up for quality and value in order to satisfy visitors. Governmental agencies in charge of quality control should ensure the quality of service offered by key players in the culinary tourism such as chop bars, restaurants and hotels located in both rural and urban areas of the country.

Culinary tourism can also be enhanced through the capacity building of practitioners in the industry. This can be done through training, workshops, seminars and symposia for practitioners such as chefs and cooks in chop bars, hotels and restaurants respectively. There can be collaboration between industrial practitioners in the culinary tourism of Ghana such as workers in hotels, restaurants and bars and those of tourism educational institutions such as universities, polytechnics and vocational institution in order to train practitioners on modern methods of preparing local dishes in order to meet international standards.

Culinary tourism is a new phenomenon in tourism, gaining roots in many tropical countries due to its comparative advantage. Ghana is one of the countries endowed with different vegetation zones. There is the need to group and re-brand culinary tourism based on various foods peculiar to a particular destination which sometimes is referred to as destination dishes

Culinary Food tourism practitioners should be supported financially in terms of loans, free training etc to assist them to expand their businesses. This could help boost their businesses and increase their revenue base. Excess income could be ploughed back for expansion of businesses in hotels, chop bars and restaurants to help in the sustainability of tourism through an all year round Food tourism activity.

. There is the need for the establishment of tourist ‘police ‘system in Ghana as practiced in Egypt to guarantee the safety and protection of tourists including those interested in culinary tourism.

The ministry of Tourism through its policy implementing agencies like Ghana Tourism Authority must form alliances with international tourism agencies such as WTO and Tourism generating countries such as U.S.A and U.K in order to sustain the flow of tourists with diverse interests to Ghana.

Finally public–private partnership in the tourism sector must be encouraged for huge fundraising needed for technological development of the culinary tourism sector in areas of food preservations and preparations. This would help the indigenous dishes to meet the required international standards.

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