Food for Thought: Sustainable Food and the Future of Tourism

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OVERVIEW

• Trends
• Sustainable Tourism
• Sustainable Food
• International context
• Opportunities
• Who is doing it
• Northern Ireland’s comparative advantage
TRENDS

‘Tourist choices are increasingly influenced by sustainability considerations’
UN World Tourism Organisation – 2012

The UN regards food as an ‘intangible cultural asset’

Food is part of a destinations ‘persona’

Source: World Food Travel Association, 2015 FoodTrekking Monitor
SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Use and maintain environmental resources

Respect authenticity, culture and traditional values

Viable, long term operations

Use and maintain environmental resources

Provide social benefits, such as good quality food, safe and healthy products

Contribute to thriving local economies and sustainable livelihoods

World Tourism Organisation 2005
SUSTAIN 2015

SUSTAINABLE FOOD

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INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

Global goals for sustainable development - came into effect in ALL countries in January 2016 with a timeline up to 2030
GOAL 2 - SUSTAINABLE FOOD & AGRICULTURE

By 2030...

safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round

ensure sustainable food production systems...that are:

• Resilient
• Productive
• Maintain ecosystems
• Improve land and soil quality

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GOAL 8 – PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Target 8.9

‘devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products’
GOAL 12 - FOOD WASTE

By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses
OPPORTUNITIES

• Food tourism is here to stay: 1st World Forum on Food Tourism 2015
• Sustainability is here to stay: Global Goals to 2030

Know what you have to offer and why it is special:
Cork Butter Market and Guinness Storehouse – internationally known examples of tourist attractions that preserve food / drink heritage

Carry it from the past and preserve it for future generations:
Comber potatoes, Potato bread, Lough Neagh eel, St George’s Market
WHO IS DOING IT

WELL ESTABLISHED: Peru
World’s Leading Culinary Travel Destination in 2012 & 2013
Indigenous foods with a history – Quinoa, Ceviche, Piso Sours
Established as a culinary tourism destination
Hosting 2nd World Forum on Food Tourism in 2016

CLOSER TO HOME: Ballymaloe, Co. Cork
Cookery school on an organic farm attracts students and visitors from around the world
Sustainability at the core of restaurant, accommodation, cookery school, Litfest
Emphasis on local food, wild food, organic food and drink

Origin Green Bord Bia - promotes sustainability

UP AND COMING: Costa Rica
Not well known for cuisine – but sustainable, green, local farmers
2015 National Plan for Sustainable & Healthy Costa Rican Gastronomy
- food as a cultural expression of the people
- protect and promote the country’s national dishes and produce
- promote Costa Rica as a destination of agricultural and food tourism.

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NORTHERN IRELAND’S COMPARITIVE ADVANTAGE

• Authenticity (traditional, local, typical,)
• Unique local foods and drinks (PGI status)
• Thriving rural communities – experience farm to fork & use food to connect visitors to people and place
• The whole package → local farms, butchers, bakerys, fisheries, distillers, brewers…
• Small farms, green image
• Pristine marine environments – seafood, shellfish
• Sustainability on the rise (Sustainable Northern Ireland)

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THE BENEFITS

• Enhance NI’s comparative advantage / USP
• Adds to the brand – the story – the destination
• Rural business and job creation
• Multiple business opportunities - Restaurants + farms + local food markets + food and drink souvenirs
• Encourages sustainable agriculture and food production
• Safeguards what NI has to offer for future generations (visitor and host)

• Local foods and drinks are an asset to sustainable tourism – they enable host communities to capitalise on visitor’s desire for authenticity*.

* Sims, 2010. Journal of Sustainable Tourism

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INTEGRITY AND TRUST

Hotel 'greenwashing' dirties eco-friendly reputation

Hotels across the globe are increasingly encouraging guests to embrace green practices. Yet while guests think they are supporting the environment by shutting off lights and reusing towels, they may in fact be victims of "greenwashing," a corporation's deceitful practice of promoting environmentally friendly programs while hiding ulterior motives.

Sunday Times, 10 April 2016

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GETTING STARTED

Initiatives for the hospitality sector

The average UK restaurant creates almost half a kg of food waste for every diner that passes through its doors.

The UK hospitality sector could save £2.5 billion a year by tackling food waste / An average restaurant could save between £150 and £1,700 a year

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