



Problems and prospects of cuisine/culinary tourism in Punjab: A case study of Amritsar

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Abstract

The tourism industry has always played a vital role in India's economy ever since covid era, however, there's more to this industry. Every trip is incomplete without its food expeditions and hence culinary tourism is there to serve people. Reynolds (2004) asserts that food, like other elements of travel transportation, accommodation, activities, and attractions plays an essential role in the travel experience. The ultimate motive for people who travel is the rush for the exposure and exploration they would find throughout their outing WE (2013). And one of the exciting expeditions is about the food industry and the specialty of the cuisines that tourists love to try out. The term "culinary tourism" was developed by Lucy Long in 1998 (Wolf, 2002). Long (2004) defined culinary tourism as experiencing and participating in the foodways of other people which include but are not limited to consumption, preparation, and presentation of food items. They make recommendations and suggestions when it comes to food venues, hence it is important to mark a valuable image in the minds of the potential tourist who would do the publicity to the substantial customers or even for their revisit (Gentile *et al.*, 2007). More importantly, food has been recognized as an effective promotional and positioning tool for a destination (Hjalager & Richards, 2002). Tourists are pretty eager to try the local cuisines of the destinations they pay a visit to, it tells them about the taste of the place. Richards (1996) claimed that cultural tourism may include experiencing the cultural attractions as well as sampling the local food. The culinary industry is the quest for exceptional and unforgettable local and international dining and drinking experiences that adds flavor to people's travel (Gentile *et al.*, 2007). Hence, culinary tourism should not be considered as a niche product but as a complete and satisfying experience led by cultural heritage (Ignatov and Smith, 2006). However, there are certain setbacks that businesses need to focus on which would act as an aid to improve their progress in the culinary industry which would be studied in this research paper.

Purpose: The food industry of Punjab seems to attract end numbers of tourist attractions every year but there are several setbacks that the state is dealing with. The ultimate purpose of this study is to explicitly state the problems being faced by the culinary industry of Amritsar and what are the relevant prospects of the gastronomy industry in the following time.

Methodology: The study is conceptual in nature and is review based. The study is review based on secondary data which was extracted and understood by some esteemed journals. The statistical data has also been referred from the same esteemed source which has been used to support the study in an absolute manner

Findings: Certain findings have been gathered based on the study of the culinary industry that points towards issues like, eateries lagging behind due to sanitation issues, issues related to customer management, the chaotic culture of the street foods, security problems, and many others.

Practical implications: Although this study is majorly based on academic study, however, it still corroborates with some implications that could be used in future. Statutory protection towards the authentication of the food could be given to save the local business so that no duplication could take place in the market. Warm gestures including customization of food according to the need of the customer, introducing them while serving the food so that they get familiar with the heritage could be used as a marketing tool. A government initiative for protecting the local eatery owners (dhabas) and introducing training programs for them could improve the image of it, providing them with free technical services would add to the consequent assistance.

Social implications: The study has the potential to raise awareness among the members of the society to be more responsible towards the food and heritage of the Punjab.

Originality: The study is unique and extremely pertinent to all the stakeholders in developing an appropriate strategic framework to enhance consumer experience in the culinary tourism industry.

Keywords: culinary tourism, food tourism, problems and prospects, Amritsar, Punjab paper type: research paper

Introduction

Tourism is taking a dynamic turn in sense of business after the country suffered covid era. The consumption of food in travel is unique because it occurs in a foreign environment (Mak, Lumbers & Eves, 2012). Culinary tourism has been playing a tremendously vital role in generating business for the locals. Culinary tourism is about the tourists exploring the quality of food, exploring the culture behind the taste

and knowing about the heritage of the place making it a part of the tourism industry. Long (2004) suggested that "food can be seen as a subject and medium, that is, as destination and a vehicle for tourism" (p.20). Long (2004) is also credited with proposing the first definition of culinary tourism: Culinary tourism is the intentional exploratory participation in the food ways of another culture – participation includes consumption, preparation, and

presentation of a food item, cuisine, meal system, or eating style considered to belong to a culinary system not one's own. (p. 21). The industry is also called by the names like gastronomy and food tourism. The consumption of food in travel is unique because it occurs in a foreign environment (Mak, Lumbers & Eves, 2012). Tourists spend 40% of their budget on food expeditions (Boyne, Williams, & Hall, 2002) and hence it plays an important role in profit generation. Culinary tourism was not an actual business perspective until people realized the potential in it. The locals saw it growing and gaining popularity among foreign tourists, and hence thought of making money from it, which would benefit the city in helping gaining attraction. Cuisine appreciation is an indelible aspect of the holistic, polysensual experiences that travellers seek these days (Crouch & Desforges, 2003; Everett, 2009). Though in the present scenario, Amritsar is pretty well known for its amazing authentic food, and the spiritual salvation. There's a phrase that goes like, "Atithi devo bhava" which basically aims at making tourists feel welcomed in the sense of tourism. Reynolds (2004) asserts that food, like other elements of travel - transportation, accommodation, activities, and attractions plays an essential role in the travel experience. The phrase is sincerely followed comparatively more in the northern parts of the country. As an attribute of a destination, cuisine bears symbolic meaning and is a determinant of overall travel satisfaction (Henkel, Henkel, Agrusa, Agrusa & Tanner, 2006; Rimmington & Yüksel, 1998). Only recently has the relationship between food, culture, and tourism piqued the interest of researchers and tourism marketers (du Rand & Heath, 2006). And Indians are very well known for serving best food as a gesture of making people feel home and welcomed. Food can be a travel attraction that augments the visitor's experience (Henderson, 2009). That is a warm gesticulation one can offer. For the industry to ensure smooth functioning, the system needs to overcome some of the major problems and come up with a solution to that. Travellers are increasingly seeking holistic experiences that emphasise the destination's culinary heritage (Ab Karim & Chi, 2010; Bessiere, 2009; Kivela & Crofts, 2005; Kivela & Crofts, 2009). On one hand, where the city is all bright and shimmering with the lights of the famous golden temple, on the other hand, the temple is all crowded with clumsy roads that creates inconvenience to the foreign tourists who are not used to it. Long (2004) emphasized that savoring the food of others is the way in which one can really experience and accept different culture without reluctance. They're afraid to explore the streets being such pursuits as a reason. Using Getz and Brown's (2006) application and definition of wine tourism, that implies that culinary tourism can be associated with travelers' interest in the food of a destination. Santini, Cavicchi and Canavari (2011) refer to the trend as "tourism of taste" (p. 168). Further, Hobsbawn & Ranger (1983) argued that cuisines that are highly known for their taste and quality can be developed into tourist products. As a result, with less tourists, there is less income which impacts the overall business of the localities there. Another hurdle that people tend to face is the nonfamiliarity of the taste of the tourists, even if they want to serve them with the authenticity of the culture and taste but the fact that they're

unknown with the preferences in terms of the taste gives them a setback and they need to work upon. A destination's local cuisine provides a window into a destination's cultural heritage (Chuang, 2009). And it's not just the temple, the city has a problem of chaotic roads that not only causes the problem of convenience but then also leads to activities like robbery, pickpocketing, unethical behaviors with women and takes a stake at the security of the tourists as well. And in the process of exploring and experiencing that, people are facing certain setbacks and challenges to make this work. Local cuisine can be a key travel motivator (Fields, 2002). As culinary tourism is still in its developing stage, it hasn't been explored much by the researchers to detect the setbacks to give it a clear road to work upon. The study focuses on implementing suggestions based on the findings of the issue.

Objectives

To know the eating habits and food choices of tourists visiting Amritsar

The food choices of tourists highly depend on the culture they're nurtured with. The study focuses on analyzing the factors and forces affecting their choices and changing their preferences.

To understand the problems faced by the food tourists visiting Amritsar

There are many attractions when tourists visit Amritsar, but with every alluring place to visit comes the setbacks that people face while they're in Punjab. The research tends to focus on understanding the roots of those problems thoroughly.

To investigate the challenges and problems faced by the food vendors in Amritsar

Amritsar is developing as one of the most explored places to visit in India. But there are certain limitations to the approach. The research aims to find out what probable problems are being faced by the vendors of Punjab.

To investigate the prospects of food tourism in Amritsar

Amritsar's culture has plenty of scope to contribute to the country's economy. Gastronomy tourism is about to see growth in the coming years. The prospects are being discussed in the coming literature.

To provide the implications and suggestions for the development of food tourism in Amritsar

Last but not least, the study includes a key discussion regarding how can the issues be sorted and what needful efforts and initiatives are being taken by the authorities to speed up the process. Following it also involves suggestions for customer satisfaction and the ways through which Amritsar could implement it.

Review of literature

Everywhere people travel, food is a huge draw and a crucial component of tourism (Bessiere, 1998). Culinary tourism is a growing trend across the world, where people travel to different destinations to experience the local food and culture. Amritsar, a city in Punjab, India, is known for its

rich cultural heritage and cuisine. Tikkanen (2007) argues that although food is a physiological need, and thus, a necessity for all types of travellers, it tends to occupy a higher order position amongst experienced travellers. The city is famous for its street food, traditional dishes, and sweets. This review examines the problems and prospects of culinary tourism in Amritsar. The review is done on the basis of several objections to be covered in the study.

Food tourism / Gastronomy tourism / Culinary tourism

Lucy Long (2004), in her book titled "Culinary Tourism" was one of the first to articulate food tourism as a distinct market segment. Food tourism refers to "visitation to primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants and specific locations for which food tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of specialist food production region are the primary motivating factor for travel" (Hall and Sharples, 2003, p. 10). Vasudev (2014) notes that culinary tourists also look for real-life stories about the food, in order to show authenticity. Hall (2010) notes that one of the primary factors influencing food tourism in India is the economic climate, and consequently, the destination's location. Despite these challenges, there are several prospects for the growth of culinary tourism in Amritsar. Food expenditures constitute one-thirds of global tourism spending (Meler and Cerovic, 2003; Tikkanen, 2007). So does Laesser and Crouch's (2006) study, in which they found that when the enjoyment of food is at the forefront of the travel experience, it results in significantly higher expenditures. The city's rich culinary heritage and diverse food culture are its biggest strengths, and there is immense potential for the development of culinary tourism. This is a rather utilitarian view of food's place in travel, proposed by Agreiter (2005) and is sharply contrasted by the surrealist Salvador Dali's emphatic declaration. The city has several iconic dishes such as Amritsari fish, tandoori chicken, and paneer tikka, which are famous across the world. Josiam and Monteiro (2004) state, "despite the increasing interest in ethnic foods, there is little research in the area of customer perceptions of food and service in ethnic restaurants" (p. 20). Moreover, the city has a thriving sweets industry, with several shops selling traditional Punjabi sweets such as jalebi, gulab jamun, and rasgulla. These culinary delights are a significant draw for tourists, and there is potential for the development of food tours and food-related events in the city. The media is "without a doubt from associate degree unavoidable and obtrusive an element of culture that has a significant impact on goal and place image, as well as on style," according to Sharples (2003).

Fox (2007) argued that most research has focused on cuisine as an attraction. Another opportunity for the growth of culinary tourism in India is the increasing interest in sustainable and locally sourced food. Cohen and Avieli (2004) have discussed this issue, albeit from a non-empirical perspective. As people become more conscious of the impact of their food choices on the environment and local communities, there is a growing demand for authentic, locally sourced food. India's food culture is based on locally sourced ingredients such as wheat, rice, and spices, and there is potential for the development of sustainable food

tourism in the city. Shah and Dongre (2014) estimate that food accounts for nearly 50% of all visitor spending. When food is the main attraction to a place, the costs are significantly greater. By promoting local farmers and producers and incorporating sustainable practices, India can attract a new generation of tourists interested in sustainable and responsible tourism.

According to Shah and Dongre (2014), about 50% of all visitor spending is on food. The costs are substantially higher when eating becomes the main draw to a destination. In such scenarios, to promote culinary tourism in Amritsar, several measures can be taken. First and foremost, there is a need to improve the city's infrastructure, including transportation and accommodation facilities. This will make it easier for tourists to explore the city's culinary offerings and contribute to the growth of the tourism industry. Additionally, there is a need to address the hygiene and sanitation issues in the street food scene. This can be done by enforcing strict regulations and providing training and resources to small vendors to ensure that they follow proper food safety practices.

Current scenario

Food (including beverages) tourism refers to "visitation to primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants and specific locations for which food tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of specialist food production region are the primary motivating factor for travel" (Hall and Sharples, 2003, p. 10). The most successful food excursion of ones travel is determined by the satisfaction of the tourists in the taste and if that tends to happen, the tourists is bound to remember the place depending on the hospitality and the taste of the eatery, hence the sensual pleasure is given utmost importance.). Visitors are involved in some mode of dining during travel (Chang, Kivela, and Mak, 2011) right from relishing food which is familiar to seeking unique cuisines or local dishes (Cohen and Avieli, 2004). Considering food as an integral part of travel, the tourists anticipate unique and delightful gastronomic experiences regardless of whether these are or are not the main motive of travel (Kivela and Crotts, 2006). Their eating choices could be understood by the following points:

1. They may go and look for the familiar food, the regular food that they eat.
2. They may go around and decide to explore the local dishes and try something unregular. According to the World Food Travel Association (2019)
3. They may look for something specific that has been suggested to them by their knows.

The impact of food on tourism was first mentioned in general tourism publications in the 1970s (Brown, 1974). Belisle (1983) then examined the threshold between tourism and local food production. Tourists look for the authentic taste, local flavors of the ingredients and authenticity of the place wherein all of these are a part of the sensory issues perceived by the five senses and also considered as the physical motivators (Fields, 2002). The local food of a destination cannot be exactly replicated and hence it ensures

a differentiation tool that can be used for destination marketing in Amritsar. (Henderson, 2009).

Prospects of the food industry and tourism

1. It is pretty much of a generalized fact that 100% of the tourists eat when they travel. Hence, every opportunity is a chance to make people introduce them with something authentic and interact with them. Several scholarly articles (Ellis *et al.*, 2019; Everett, 2019; Henderson, 2009; Lee and Scott, 2015)
2. As per a study conducted by the Journal of gastronomy and Tourism, it is stated that eating is one of the top three activities that people enjoy.
3. Engaging in culinary industry includes all the five senses i.e. sight, sound, smell, taste and touch.
4. There has been observed a significant positive correlation between the culinary travelers and the those who are into exploring the cultural attractions. According to the World Food Travel Association (2019)
5. The need for food and desire to experience the cultural heritage through cuisines does not result in any age, gender or ethnic barrier. Hence, there is a wider scope for the prospective customer relationship. Culinary tourism, as suggested by Long (2004) is to express the idea of tourists' experiencing other cultures via food.
6. Culinary tourism is not season bound industry, it has a number of attractions taking all the seasons into considerations, hence it could generate profit throughout the year.

Furthermore, according to Crofts (2010), local cuisine can serve as a major draw for tourists if it is promoted in a way that allows them to experience the local culture. Mith and Xiao (2008) argue that Long's articulation of culinary tourism emphasises "otherness". There is a need to promote the city's culinary culture and heritage through the development of food tours and food-related events. These initiatives will allow tourists to experience the city's culinary offerings and contribute to the growth of the tourism industry. Hall and Sharples (2003) suggest a key consideration with regards to classification of tourism as culinary tourism. Additionally, there is a need to develop sustainable food tourism initiatives that promote local farmers and producers and incorporate sustainable practices. In conclusion, culinary tourism has enormous potential in Amritsar, given the city's rich culinary heritage and diverse food culture.

Challenges and problems of food tourism

Molz (2007) further defined culinary tourism as having knowledge of or exposure to a different heritage and acting with initiative, flexibility, and openness. Wolf (2002), President of the WFTA, defines culinary tourism as "travel in order to search for, and enjoy prepared food and drink...and unique and memorable gastronomic experiences" (cited by Kivela and Crotts, 2006, p. 355). The city's tourism industry is still in its early stages of development, and there is a lack of resources and facilities to cater to the needs of tourists, Ignatov and Smith (2006) citing Getz (2000). For instance, there are only a few hotels

and restaurants that offer authentic Punjabi cuisine, which is one of the main reasons why people visit Amritsar. Moreover, there is a lack of proper transportation facilities, making it difficult for tourists to move around the city and explore its culinary delights.

Another challenge facing culinary tourism in Amritsar is the hygiene and sanitation issues that are prevalent in the city's street food scene. According to Kivela and Crotts (2006), consumers who are motivated by food are frequently interested in interdisciplinary perspectives connected to gastronomy and cuisine, concentrating on the cultural interest of the culinary tourist. According to Updhyay and Sharma (2014), culinary tourism, one of the subcategories of social tourism, is specifically growing as a specialty that supports other attempts to experience a target's way of life. D'Sylva and Beagan (2011) refer to cuisine as "cultural capital". The city is known for its famous street food items such as chole bhature, kulchas, and lassi, which are served on the roadside by small vendors. While these foods are delicious, they are often prepared in unhygienic conditions, which can lead to food poisoning and other health problems (Cornejo Happel, 2012; Harrington, 2005; Sengupta, 2009). As a result, tourists are often hesitant to try street food, which is an essential part of the city's culinary culture.

Study area

Knowing about the golden city of Punjab, the city has a spiritual attraction to serve but apart from that it serves people with its authentic mouth-watering Punjabi food that the city is most renowned for i.e. the rich tradition. Cuisine is a cultural artefact and a central aspect of cultural learning (Cornejo Happel, 2012; Hegarty & O'Mahoney, 2001). Be it the street food or the food being served in top-notch restaurants, the richness of the taste remains the same and hence can see the number of tourists increasing every single year for experiencing the hype of the taste. Cuisine represents an integral element of a destination's intangible heritage (Hassan, 2008).

As the earlier statistics suggest, there exists a symbiotic relationship between food and tourism (Graziani, 2003) the 2004 Restaurant & Foodservice Market Research Handbook states that 50% of restaurants' revenue was generated by travelers. (Hjalager & Richards, 2002) says that culinary tourism has been recognised as the major promotional and positioning tool for a destination. As a result, the development of food industry is becoming a priority for the city of Amritsar as food is becoming an emerging factor in tourism industry.

Food expenditures constitute one-third of global tourism spending (Meler and Cerovic, 2003; Tikkanen, 2007). In addition to direct and indirect job creation, traveler spending on food helps stimulate agriculture and food processing industries (Elmont, 1995; Knowd, 2003; Telfer and Wall, 1996; Torres, 2003) Asking and comprehending the likings of consumer behavior would help the market to serve them better. Jones and Jenkins (2002) recommended that food is not only a basic need for tourists but also a cultural element that can positively present a destination. Also the fact, that foreign tourists have a habit of living in a tidy environment makes them a little uncomfortable when they're exposed to a different environment. Loitered roads and open manholes always act a factor to disgust the tourists which breaks

their willingness to explore the street market. Quan and Wang (2004) noted that food can convey unique experiences and enjoyment to travelers. Customer experience is described as a set of interactions between a customer and any part of an organization (Verhoef *et al.*, 2009). Tourists trends reveal that customization leads to highly fragmented demand (Hjalager and Richards, 2011). Hence analysis and thorough understanding of what the consumer wants is the necessity for the hour. This article will discuss the objectives for the improvement of the culinary industry and how these can be implemented for the system to get better.

Methodology

The research is conceptual in nature and is thoroughly review based on secondary data which was collected from various academic journals in the area of culinary industry in amritsar. Data was also referred from the official website of governmental department of the culinary tourism of punjab. The research paper referred were mainly on the identical topics and a few related topics as well. The statistical data has also been referred from the same source of esteemed journals briefing the importance, scope, context and prospects of the culinary industry.

Discussion and implications

Link B.C. (2006) in their contextualization of the phenomenon acknowledge the educational aspect of culinary tourism, within which unique and memorable experiences may be had. As far as the study, review and research is concerned, the factual information that tourism plays a key role in our country, especially when it comes to the northern region and talking about the amritsar city of punjab state, the city has enormous scope of development and growth, be it, in terms of economic growth, social growth, infrastructural growth or growth as center of destination for tourists. It is argued that Hall and Sharples' (2003) view is reductionist - a traveller may have multiple motivations to travel, each of equivalent importance. This may be particularly so for long-haul destinations, as evidenced in Du Rand and Heath's (2006) study in which they established that about 37% of travellers visiting South Africa considered food as a support attraction. The city has a lot to offer, not only statistically or through its virtues but also through its mouth-watering cuisines, delectable taste and rich culture and history that brings the esteemed richness in the food of people where everybody wants to keep their one foot ahead of others, Indians are well attached with our roots and that's a big flex one can actually make. Hall and Mitchell (2000) define culinary tourism as "visiting food exhibitions, food festivals, restaurants and specific locations for which food tasting and experiencing are the primary factors for 13 travel." But just the fact that the beauty of our inheritance is not going to last forever if attention is stopped paying to it. Lockwood (2008) suggests that there is a differentiation between tourism and culinary tourism. It demands for maintenance, to look after it, and that is what government is focusing on Ignatov and Smith (2006). Preservation of the patrimony is the need of the hour that everybody has to contemplate at this moment or else the beauty would become a history in itself. Srinivas (2007)

contends, "the way in which [food] is caught, farmed, cleaned, processed, cooked, and eaten are symbolic of different kinds of meaning at many different levels" (p. 85). Culinary customs signify a society where cooking and eating transcend mere functionality and symbolise rituals of a developed society (Cornejo Happel, 2012; Harrington, 2005; Sengupta, 2009). And the fact that the authorities are taking charge for that is something appreciable about them because looking after the tourism maintenance is the last thing one would expect from our government to do.

Effect of tourism in local business (Sharma, Kichloo 2021)

Discussing about tackling of the issues that the culinary system is facing now a days, which need to address the need for rejuvenating the dhabas. These roadside eateries are the places that serve the actual taste that tourists are looking for when they visit places like amritsar. A destination's local cuisine is "deeply rooted in a particular place, space, and time, its culinary traditions reveal the character of the society and mentality of its members" (Bessiere, 1998, p. 28) and that is what these eateries serve with.

Dhaba is realised as any place that is not registered as a restaurant, offers catering services, serving meals near or around the highways most probably, it could be inclusive of wayside restaurants where live cooking is displayed. Atkins and Bowler (2001) maintain that "taste is culturally shaped and socially controlled" (p. 5). And most importantly, a dhaba is never a shedded place, it needs to be open for a fact to serve the actual feels of the culture. Tourists love food that they have from dhaba, hence it could be a major source of tourists attraction than it already is. That's the reason why there's demand for 'rejuvenation of dhabas'. Culinary identity incorporates "influences of the environment (geography and climate) and culture (history and ethnic influences) on prevailing taste components, textures, and flavours (Harrington, 2005, p. 130). If the quality service is raised in dhabas and road side eateries are given an absolute upgradation, it could lead to a great business back and forth. Haven-Tang and Jones (2006) maintain that in creating a sense of place, an identity or terroir, the host destination must realise that aspects of their culture and natural heritage that may seem banal to them may be considered exotic by travellers. And therefore, the government introduced PURE that could prove to be a great revolution for the culinary industry.

Initiatives for improving the culture of gastronomy tourism

Dann and Jacobsen (2003) notably explored tourism from an olfactory perspective; they suggest that the smells that characterise a destination, contribute to the idiosyncratic experiences of travellers to that destination. Pure is a government initiative that has been mentioned before that has been acquainted to give a makeover to all the eateries located roadside like dhabas. And the initiative would serve a great cause in order to build a better image of the Amritsar and captivating more tourists and their interests towards these eateries. This is because for many destinations their culinary repertoire represents a primary motivation for travellers to visit (Ab Karim & Chi, 2010; Rimmington & Yüksel, 1998) and a positive, well-developed culinary identity can be a significant marker of a destination's long-

term success (Fox, 2007). The certainty that culinary industry is on the onset of witnessing a great evolution with their traditional locale would also witness a great source of income altogether (Rozin, 1999, p. 13). When one eats, the proximate senses of taste, smell, and touch are engaged as food is incorporated into the body (Gibson, 2007). Also the actuality that Amritsar is in the desperate need for a development phase if discussing its culinary system, pure is undoubtedly a great step taken. Pan and Ryan (2009) claim that in tourism, engagement of the senses results in an experience that is both cognitive and affective. Burusnukul, Binkley, and Sukalakamala (2011) state that “food has surpassed the functionality of satisfying travellers’ physiological needs as part of the basic requirement for tourist consumption” (p. 966). Now, the campaign is introduced but there is a drill for the understanding, implementation, aims, and realising the benefits of the scheme.

Now, why are these eateries so involved in the revolution of their places, what is the catch for them, why do they have to do it. Travellers can appreciate a destination’s culture as they experience new foodways (Chang, Kivela & Mak, 2011; Molz, 2007). Local cuisine offers the traveller a window into a destination’s culture as it introduces new flavours and traditions (Fields, 2002). Its because there are several benefits that they are enjoying and is crucial for them as well which are as follows. Everett (2009) contends that cuisine and tourism are “saturated in meaning and diversity” (p. 340) as it offers travellers a chance to witness the “relationship between place and identity, and the material and symbolic” (p. 338). Firstly the training is free of cost that doesn’t put the owner in any financial burden of actually taking it. Pine and Gilmore (1998) are of the view that in the fastest growing experience economy, consumers are looking for unique, memorable and sensation filled long lasting experiences. Study by Chandralal and Valenzuela’s (2013) indicates that experiencing local culture and food at a destination makes travelling more memorable. Technical support is provided to them that’s a huge assistance in workload. There’s an upgradation in the services of the eateries. Tourist destinations have developed their local food as a tourism product for attracting tourists and offering them abundant culinary options which differentiate them from others (Robinson & Getz, 2014; Chang, Kivela, & Mak, 2010). There’s better sanitation than before. The certification is a proof of the authenticity of their services and the source. Also, there’s a free marketing that these dhabas are receiving. Local food of a place not only satisfies the physiological need but also paves the way to know and understand different cultures, traditions and interactions with the local population (Okumuş and Cetin, 2018) Being selected by a government organization for the betterment and becoming their face is no less than a free marketing. They don’t have to attract customers anymore, being the face of such a campaign helps them gain tourists itself (Kivela and Crotts, 2006).

Eating habits and food choices of tourists in Amritsar

How, what, when, and why tourists eat is strongly tied to culture (Asp, 1999; Chuang 2009; Hjalager & Richards, 2002; Jamal, 1996; Srinivas, 2007, Woolgar, 2010). Eating

habits could be pretty stable and repetitive in nature if mundane living is subject. However, eating habits take a swing once people become tourists. The taste, visual effect and smell of the local food reflects the sensory appeal which further creates motivation for the tourists Kim *et al.* (2009). There are several factors that put an impact on the preferences and routine choices of their eating habits. Experiencing local food at a destination also leads to understanding the living style, behaviour, eating habits and other related cues (Getz, 2000). The resources considered pull factors are cultural and natural attractions, special events and festivals, experiences with food products in the destinations and other opportunities for leisure and entertainment, value, friendliness of residents, gastronomic diversity and variety, attributes or the characteristics of the destination such as proximity etc. (Herranz 8)

1. The eating behavior is examined to be stable but has the potential to be elusive too. Preferences change as the environment of the people changes (Fields, 2002)
2. Cultural impact could be another probable reason, people don’t really use cutlery there to eat. This could change one of their habit during their span of visit. (Skinner P 2000; Van Westering J. Y Poria and N.Liapis 2000).
3. The specialty of Amritsar serves you hardcore spicy chicken as Punjabis have seemed to be crazy about them O’Mahony (2001).
4. The meal choices of Punjabis is a bit heavier in nature than their constituent parts. They prefer dishes like parathas for breakfast which could be a matter of discussion for the tourists. Hjalager and Richards (2002)
5. Then the other choices include dishes like Chole bathure, kulcha, make di roti, sarso da saag, and lassi, which are some of the famous dishes one must try when they are in Amritsar (Surebankar & Hadli, 2010).
6. The eating habits tends to mention the fact that the Indians eat spicy food as a routine. As india is rich in its spices, it comes as a part of the culture. (Surebankar & Hadli, 2010)
7. One of the prominent food behavior analyzed in the eating behavior of Punjabis is the heavy use of butter. (Surebankar & Hadli, 2010)
8. Punjabis tend to practice a distinctive style cooking than the restaurant. Well that’s the core reason behind the authentic taste. (Fields, 2002)

Challenges and problems of food tourism

Molz (2007) further defined culinary tourism as having knowledge of or exposure to a different heritage and acting with initiative, flexibility, and openness. Wolf (2002), President of the WFTA, defines culinary tourism as “travel in order to search for, and enjoy prepared food and drink and unique and memorable gastronomic experiences” (cited by Kivela and Crotts, 2006, p. 355). The city’s tourism industry is still in its early stages of development, and there is a lack of resources and facilities to cater to the needs of tourists, Ignatov and Smith (2006) citing Getz (2000). For instance, there are only a few hotels and restaurants that offer authentic Punjabi cuisine, which is one of the main reasons why people visit Amritsar. Moreover, there is a lack

of proper transportation facilities, making it difficult for tourists to move around the city and explore its culinary delights.

Another challenge facing culinary tourism in Amritsar is the hygiene and sanitation issues that are prevalent in the city's street food scene. According to Kivela and Crofts (2006), consumers who are motivated by food are frequently interested in interdisciplinary perspectives connected to gastronomy and cuisine, concentrating on the cultural interest of the culinary tourist. According to Updhyay and Sharma (2014), culinary tourism, one of the subcategories of social tourism, is specifically growing as a specialty that supports other attempts to experience a target's way of life. D'Sylva and Beagan (2011) refer to cuisine as "cultural capital". The city is known for its famous street food items such as chole bhature, kulchas, and lassi, which are served on the roadside by small vendors. While these foods are delicious, they are often prepared in unhygienic conditions, which can lead to food poisoning and other health problems (Cornejo Happel, 2012; Harrington, 2005; Sengupta, 2009). As a result, tourists are often hesitant to try street food, which is an essential part of the city's culinary culture.

Problems faced by food tourists

Certain setbacks that the tourist experience while their visit in Amritsar are as follows:

1. There is a lack of proper transportation facilities, making it difficult for tourists to move around the city and explore its culinary delights. (Oliver, 1980)
2. Lack of choices of great restaurants that offer authentic Punjabi food. Hobsbawm & Ranger (1983) argued that cuisines that are highly known for their taste and quality can be developed into tourist products.
3. The city does not cooperate well with the tourists when it comes to sanitation and hygiene of the street. (Oliver, 1980)
4. The vendors are not at all concerned about the stalls, hence the presence of mosquitos around disgusts the interest of the tourists. Hobsbawm & Ranger (1983)
5. Also the fact that there is no proper system of traffic leads to crowded and clumsy roads that people don't prefer coming to the local side of the city. (Richards, 1996).
6. The tourists also face problems related to security such as robbery, pickpocketing, and unethical behaviors with the women that lower the interest of the guests. (Oliver, 1980)
7. The choices and preferences of the tourists might be different than that of the locals there. They may not find what they are looking for at times. Hobsbawm & Ranger (1983)
8. Social media shows local places as attractive but the reality of those places hits differently they tourists actually step up in the streets. That's a disappointment and misleading for them. Hence, they find it difficult which content to trust online. (Richards, 1996).
9. The tourists face a great challenge when it comes to communication with the locals, as the locals there speak their native language Punjabi. Hobsbawm & Ranger (1983)

10. After service of several outlets tends to disappoint the tourists. (Oliver, 1980)

Indians are immensely tied to our culture and so whatever is eaten is somewhere has a relevance with our culture (Asp, 1999; Chuang 2009; Hjalager & Richards, 2002; Jamal, 1996; Srinivas, 2007, Woolgar, 2010). Cuisine is a cultural artefact and a core aspect of learning about the cultural and hence it is referred to as 'cultural capital' as stated by (Cornejo Happel, 2012; Hegarty & O'Mahoney, 2001). D'Sylva and Beagan (2011). That's why there are certain rituals and traditions being followed in the culinary system as well, reason being it could share a relation with the religion too. Atkins and bowler (2010) maintains that "taste is culturally shaped and socially controlled". Hence there could be shift in culinary behaviour due to certain cultural factors like "male out migration, inter-class rivalry and imitation, changing caste relation and market condition." (Mintz & Du Bois, 2002). The concept of fasting, feasting, serving food with rituals, traditions and virtues are all derived from religious connotations. Place recognition is a factor that is inextricably associated with the culinary industry. It drives the other factor as well of social, political, economic identity. Overall cuisine plays a vital role in establishing the destination's tourism image (Crofts, 2010; Everett & Aitchison, 2008; Kivela & Crofts, 2005; Lockie, 2001). It is as crucial aspect of cultural distinctiveness as any other form such as dance, music, art, etc (Dawson, 2012). Therefore the decision of selection of destination is as important as any other. There is a model of culinary identity in reference to place which incorporates the "influence of environment" with the culture on preserving the taste components, textures and flavours. From a social standpoint, Dawson (2012) alludes to the significance of food, asserting that "food sustains our social existence and determines social interactions in every sector of human activity."

Expedition of cuisine can never take place if there's no scope of travel. People explore, they move from places to places in search for better food, surroundings. Tourist move in search of better element, which can be offered before them in the face of cuisine. Every distinct destination has a specialty of its own. Travellers can appreciate new places and its culture by experiencing new cuisines (Chang, Kivela & Mak, 2011; Molz, 2007). Urry has maintained that his perspective, which prioritises visual perception and an ocular-centric conceptualization, as the most important aspects of the trip experience, is constrictive. Pan and Ryan (2009) discovered that while New Zealand as a whole appealed to all the senses, some areas had the potential for a "wider sense appeal" than what was being used in their product segmentation approach. These discussions make it clear that travel involves a variety of sensory experiences, at least through the faculty of taste.

Culinary tourism: Face of Amritsar

The experience economy is on an upsurge as customers are no longer looking for basic need attainment but a fulfilled experience (Pine and Gilmore, 1999). The culinary tourism found its true identity as an industry in the year 2003, since it has impeccable potential to bound the tourism industry as

a whole It becomes peremptory of the travel and food industry to enhance their products into higher value experiences (Henderson, 2009). The state realized its flair a little late but it got it's silver lining through the fact that india is still on the onset of the development of its culinary tourism. The global culinary tourism market size is expected to grow by US\$82bn with a compound annual growth rate of over 9% during the period 2019–2023 (Technavio, 2019). It is one of the prospective country that is growing exponentially every year, witnessing many indicators making it evident and is expected to show a growth in its culinary tourism by the year 2026. Tourism related to food is often termed as food tourism, culinary tourism or gastronomy tourism (Ab Karim and Chi, 2010). The number of consumer has immensely shown interest in the subject matter, reason being there's an increase in culinary travel shows on television. There continues to be a strong crossover of these industries as part of their strategic marketing plan. A culinary traveller wishes to experience the local culture via authentic dishes, recipes of the native place (Sohn and Yuan, 2013). As per Shenoy (2005), tourist's activities such as dining, buying food products, visits to food producing and experiencing anything related to food comes under food tourism. According to an article based on prospects of culinary tourism, in recent years, the ICTA (International culinary tourism association) has seen a dramatic surge in the number of destinations exploring culinary tourism (Technavio, 2019). This can entail setting up a lecture or workshop for their members, developing culinary tourism products, or promoting culinary tourism while highlighting it as

an essential component. The ICTA performed independent study on the motivations and behaviours of food travellers in 2008 and 2009. The entire study was carried out online (Ab Karim and Chi, 2010). Almost 11,000 respondents from 19 nations provided their perspectives on culinary experiences during the course of the 15-month research project (Pine and Gilmore, 1999). According to the research, several forms of anticipation rewards influence people's decisions to eat. A major indication of the tourist and food service industries' keen interest is the expansion of the ICTA's product and service offerings (Sohn and Yuan, 2013). The geographical fixity of the product is one of the key factors in culinary tourism. To eat the local cuisine and develop into food tourists, tourists must travel to the region of production

(Sohn and Yuan, 2013). This does not imply that local cuisine is solely eaten there; on the contrary, one of the main benefits of food tourism is the opportunity to export to the destinations of the travellers (Pine and Gilmore, 1999). Food tourism is so essentially the consumption of the local as well as the creation and consumption of place.

Hence, it is evident from the following information that culinary industry is on the go in amritsar, some additional reasons for the same are as follows:

1. 100% of the people eat while they'd be traveling in Amritsar
2. No ethnic barrier as all the ethnic groups pays their visit to Amritsar
3. No age barrier as all age group are fond of eating.
4. Culinary travelers span both the genders

5. Culinary travelers are well educated
6. Culinary travelers have disposable income.

Bilro *et al.* (2018) infer positive customer experience can lead to customer delight, build brand loyalty and brand advocacy. It is not surprising that eating out can have the biggest impact on a vacation experience given that culinary art is the only genre of art that appeals to all five senses (touch, taste, sound, smell, and sight) Okumus *et al.* (2018). Hence, culinary tourism should not be considered as a niche product but as a complete and satisfying experience led by cultural heritage (Ignatov and Smith, 2006). It is about how groups create marketable and appealing identities for the general public by utilising food to "sell" their histories. It is a low-impact, high-yield form of tourism that could serve as a tool for neighbourhood and economic growth in Amritsar. (Ignatov and Smith, 2006). Although being a significant and fundamental component of the experience, spending by tourists on food has only recently attracted the attention of researchers interested in tourism. Just recently has the ability of food to draw tourists been appreciated other than the spiritual expedition and virtues. Okumus *et al.* (2018).

Suggestions and conclusion

Meler & Cerovic (2003) emphasise the strategic importance of food in a nation's economy and maintain, "food has a specific preponderance in the establishment of a quantitatively and qualitatively satisfactory tourism industry" (p. 175). Telfer and Wall (1996) suggests although the finding are not generalized to all the potential tourists in a destination, however through the thorough review and understanding of the published journals and government sites, this study of culinary tourism states the problems and prospects of the gastronomic industry and the solutions and implications associated with the same. Citing Hall (2003), du Rand and Health (2006) also confirm that food tourism is essential to a destination's agriculture and economic development. It is known that the industry is still expected to get developed more with the time in order to market the destination in a more civilized way so as to make the expedition of the travelers worth their time and money. Telfer and Wall (1996) suggest, "increasing the amount of local food used in the tourism industry results in an expansion of backward economic linkages" (p. 635). The authorities of punjab and amritsar understand the cruciality of the need to promote the culinary sector and hence they've come up with the schemes and campaign ideas that are under work in progress and are expected to get implemented by the end of this year. Rimmington and Yüksel (1998) empirically established that culinary experiences are an integral part of the overall travel experience. The PURE campaign would assists the roadside eateries owners in an absolute form which has been discussed in details in the previous headings of the subject paper. In addition to direct and indirect job creation, traveller spending on food helps stimulate agriculture and food processing industries (Elmont, 1995; Knowd, 2003; Telfer and Wall, 1996; Torres, 2003). There has been a rigorous study conducted on the subject and it concludes with the authorities to be consequential about the growth and development of the sector, only then the marketing would be effective. The

significance of the variable of image in determining travellers' attitudes, expectations, satisfaction levels, and ultimately fostering positive word-of-mouth messages has been well established (Hunt, 1975). As such, cuisine plays an important role in establishing the destination's overall tourism image (Crofts, 2010; Everett & Aitchison, 2008; Kivela & Crofts, 2005; Lockie, 2001). This study represents an initial underpinning of the problems and prospects, and it has come up with an understanding of what would contribute to the tourists' cultural and sensory experiences with the local gastronomy of the Amritsar.

Henkel *et al.* (2006) confirm that product marketing initiatives can be more effective when the image or perception that consumers hold of that product is known. Sönmez and Sirakaya (2002) similarly stress, "measuring and mastering image should be placed very high in the order of priorities for planning tourism promotion" (p. 185). The key components of the study reveal that the tourists enjoy their local heritage of the place assisted with the local gastronomy that is generally done by the tasting and experiencing different cuisines and speciality of the places which helps to achieve the proposed agenda of the gastronomic tourism mentioned in the Global report on the food tourism by UNWTO Henkel *et al.* (2006). The study also states that the sensory appeal of the local food leaves a remarkable impression on the tourists and through which they recalls for the next visits too. Hence, culinary tourism should not be considered as a niche product but as a complete and satisfying experience led by cultural heritage (Ignatov and Smith, 2006). The local food of a destination cannot be exactly replicated and hence it ensures a differentiation tool which can be used for destination marketing (Henderson, 2009). More specifically, future research on food tourism can focus on "foodies" (Robinson *et al.*, 2018), food engineering, gastronomy and culinary activities (Aguilera, 2018) and different generational cohorts' demands and perceptions of food tourism (Kim *et al.*, 2018). The study suggests that the eateries should involve more in the live cooking activities as these gestures and initiatives towards the culinary sector pays a high inclination of interest in the tourist.

Several suggestions that the industry and the concerned authority could work on are mentioned below:

1. The eatery owners must focus on the betterment of food, taste and aroma by using the absolute traditional methods and also showing and introducing it to the tourists that could be later used as a marketing tool for showing off the authenticity Kim & Scarles (2009).
2. There are several specialty that the food of amritsar offers and no other state could probably serve the same taste as them. Hence the government must provide them with statutory protection against their authentic taste Kim & Scarles (2009).
3. Engage and train the staff in such a way that they could not only serve the food to the international customers but could also introduce the heritage and history of the india in its food and make them know about it Kim & Scarles (2009).
4. Serve the tourists with a positive gesture as you are happy to serve them and not by the way that it is a daily chore of just work for you. The energy of the staff at

the moment matters and has a deep impact on the tourists (Kivela and Crofts, 2006).

5. A culinary map could be drawn in order to help the tourists to make them know where could they explore the food they want to. (Kivela and Crofts, 2006).
6. An initiative of distributing the preparation memos and behind the scene content could be given to the tourists as a greeting gesture, thus acting as a promoting tool Deborah Edwards *et al.* (2009)
7. Just to boost the marketing, free sampling of food could be done in order to attract the customers. Deborah Edwards *et al.* (2009)
8. Try to involve with the customers on an emotional level by engaging them with the best customer relationship management, because kind words goes a long way. Lemke *et al.* (2010)
9. Keep your pricing strategy as per the competitors and sales volume and don't forget to take the feedback from them Lemke *et al.* (2010)
10. Every customers adds to the venue. Make them feel that. Try to pay equal special to every customers and make them feel cherished Lemke *et al.* (2010)

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