

From the institute of Agricultural Economics
at Kiel University

**Memorable culinary tourism experiences -
The role of restoration and
perceived restorative environments**

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Abstract

Vacations are highly experience-based and shaped by various tangible and intangible factors, including a destination's unique environmental attributes. At the same time, restoration and relaxation are primary motivators for travel, influencing tourism activities and contributing to tourists' satisfaction, well-being, and behavioural intentions. The destination, with all its characteristics, is to be seen as the place where the vacation experience takes place, and the desired relaxation effects are expected to occur.

Food plays a vital role in creating memorable experiences and significantly enhances the overall holiday experience. Culinary tourism businesses must therefore focus on creating memorable experiences to strengthen competitiveness, as these experiences ultimately shape customers' behavioural intentions and lifetime value. Understanding what makes culinary experiences successful is crucial for meeting travellers' restorative needs and optimising long-term customer value.

The main objectives of this study are 1) to examine the food marketing strategies employed by destination marketing organisations (DMOs) on their official destination websites and 2) to understand the dimensions of travellers' culinary tourism experiences and their effect on behavioural intentions. Hereby, the mediating role of memorability, satisfaction and restoration shall be analysed. And 3) this study aims to explore the role of restorative environments in specific, perceived biodiversity as one characteristic of the environment.

Content analysis reveals that official tourism destination websites do not extensively promote culinary experiences and their environments, as well as settings that are qualified to provide restorative outcomes. However, they are primary sources of information for potential visitors, and culinary offers are a significant aspect of travel for many people.

Discussions with culinary tourism experts and travellers identified key determinants of memorable culinary tourism experiences that trigger the memorability of such experiences and drive guest satisfaction and potential further behaviours. When examining the role of restoration, it can be concluded that eating and drinking are viewed as highly restorative vacation activities, and culinary tourism settings appear to be highly qualified to address all aspects of restorative environments. It was also shown that outdoor, natural and biophilic designs are preferred in culinary tourism settings, and they are widely regarded as restorative. Various elements that provide a direct and indirect experience of nature enhance memorability and restoration.

An experiment shows that perceived biodiversity as one characteristic of a culinary tourism setting has statistically significant direct and indirect positive effects on restoration and it enhances intended behavioural intentions. Furthermore, it can be seen that the perceived restorative environment (PRE) mediates the effect between perceived biodiversity and restoration significantly and positively. Additionally, as both perceived benefits from nature and connectedness to nature increase, the effect of perceived biodiversity on restoration also strengthens. Integrating biodiversity into culinary tourism contexts could therefore not only address the travellers' restorative needs but also restore a destination in the sense of nature-positive and regenerative tourism.

Finally, quantitative survey results prove that culinary tourism experiences strongly impact behavioural outcomes. The effects of culinary tourism experiences on behaviour are also mediated through three key factors: restoration, satisfaction, and memorability. Besides, the perceived restorativeness of the environment (PRE) as a moderator enhances these effects. Given the strong direct effect of culinary tourism experiences on behaviour, emphasising high-quality and unique culinary offerings can therefore be a key strategy to enhance visitor satisfaction and encourage repeat visits and recommendations. To maximise the positive impact on behaviour, tourism providers should create culinary experiences that also enhance the sense of restoration. This can be achieved by carefully designing the environment according to PRE dimensions.

Zusammenfassung

Die Urlaubserfahrung von Reisenden ist hochgradig erlebnisbasiert und wird von zahlreichen tangiblen und intangiblen Faktoren, einschließlich der Merkmale eines Reiseziels, geprägt. Gleichzeitig sind Erholung und Entspannung primäre Urlaubsmotive, die die touristischen Aktivitäten am Urlaubsziel beeinflussen und wesentlich zu Urlaubszufriedenheit, Wohlbefinden und weiteren Verhaltensabsichten beitragen. Die Urlaubsdestination mit ihren Charakteristiken ist dabei als der Ort zu sehen, wo das Urlaubserlebnis stattfindet und die gewünschten Erholungseffekte eintreten sollen.

Das kulinarische Angebot einer Destination prägt Urlaubserlebnisse entscheidend mit. AnbieterInnen im Bereich des Kulinariktourismus müssen daher den Fokus auf die Schaffung unvergesslicher Erlebnisse legen, um ihre Wettbewerbsfähigkeit zu stärken, da diese Erlebnisse letztlich Verhaltensabsichten und den Customer Lifetime Value klar mitbestimmen. Die Erholungsbedürfnisse von Reisenden zu verstehen und ihnen nachzukommen, kann damit langfristige positive Effekte verstärken.

Die Hauptziele dieser Studie sind: 1) die Analyse der Inhalte in Bezug auf Kulinariktourismus auf offiziellen Destinations-Webseiten und 2) die Dimensionen von kulinarischen Erlebnissen im Urlaub zu identifizieren und deren Einfluss auf Verhaltensabsichten zu bewerten. Dabei soll die Rolle von Erinnerungswürdigkeit, Zufriedenheit und Erholung analysiert werden. 3) Darüber hinaus zielt die Studie darauf ab, die Rolle eines erholsamen Umfelds, insbesondere den Aspekt der wahrgenommenen Biodiversität, zu untersuchen.

Eine Inhaltsanalyse zeigt, dass kulinarische Erlebnisse und ihr Umfeld auf den offiziellen Websites touristischer Destinationen nicht umfassend kommuniziert werden, obwohl diese wichtige Informationsquellen für potenzielle Reisende darstellen und kulinarische Angebote für viele Menschen ein bedeutender Aspekt des Reisens sind. Auch Erlebnisumfelder, die dem Motiv nach Entspannung und Erholung nachkommen, werden überwiegend nicht beworben.

Gespräche mit ExpertInnen im Bereich des kulinarischen Tourismus sowie mit Reisenden identifizierten zentrale Determinanten von erinnerungswürdigen kulinarischen Erlebnissen und ihre Auswirkung auf daraus resultierende Urlaubszufriedenheit sowie mögliche weitere Verhaltensabsichten. In Bezug auf die Rolle des Erholungsmotivs konnte festgestellt werden, dass Essen und Trinken als besonders erholsame Urlaubsaktivitäten betrachtet werden und kulinariktouristische Urlaubsumfelder besonders geeignet sind, alle Aspekte erholsamer Umgebungen zu erfüllen. Weiters kann abgeleitet werden, dass outdoor, natürliche und biophile Umgebungen als kulinariktouristische Settings bevorzugt werden und als besonders erholsam wahrgenommen werden. Verschiedene Elemente, die direkten und indirekten Kontakt mit der Natur ermöglichen, fördern zudem sowohl die Erinnerungswürdigkeit als auch die Erholung.

Ein Experiment belegt, dass die wahrgenommene Biodiversität als ein Gestaltungsaspekt solcher touristischen Settings direkte sowie indirekte Auswirkungen auf Erholungseffekte und das beabsichtigte Verhalten hat. Darüber hinaus verstärkt eine als erholsam wahrgenommene Umgebung (PRE) den Effekt zwischen wahrgenommener Biodiversität und Erholung signifikant und positiv. Weiters intensiviert sich der Effekt der wahrgenommenen Biodiversität auf die Erholung mit den wahrgenommenen Vorteilen des Kontakts mit der Natur, als auch mit steigender Verbundenheit mit der Natur. Biodiversität im Kulinariktourismus könnte damit auch helfen, ein Reiseziel im Sinne eines naturpositiven und regenerativen Tourismus zu revitalisieren.

Abschließend liefern die Ergebnisse einer quantitativen Umfrage Belege dafür, dass kulinariktouristische Erlebnisse einen starken direkten Einfluss auf weitere Verhaltensweisen haben. Die Effekte von kulinariktouristischen Erlebnissen auf nachgelagertes Verhalten werden dabei durch drei Schlüsselfaktoren vermittelt: Erholung, Zufriedenheit und Erinnerungswürdigkeit, wobei die wahrgenommene Erholbarkeit einer Urlaubsumgebung (PRE) als Moderator diese Effekte verstärkt. Basierend auf dem starken direkten Einfluss von kulinariktouristischen Erlebnissen auf das Verhalten kann die Fokussierung auf hochqualitative und einzigartige kulinarische Angebote eine zentrale Strategie sein, um die Zufriedenheit der Besucher zu steigern und Wiederholungsbesuche sowie Weiterempfehlungen zu fördern. Um den positiven Einfluss auf das Verhalten zu maximieren, sollten Tourismusanbieter daher kulinarische Erlebnisse schaffen, die gleichzeitig Erholungseffekte ermöglichen. Dies kann durch eine sorgfältige Gestaltung der Umgebung entsprechend der PRE-Dimensionen erreicht werden.

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"The quality of your ingredients determines the quality of your final product."
Chef Auguste Escoffier

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Table of Contents

Abstract	III
Zusammenfassung	IV
Acknowledgements	V
Table of Contents	VII
List of Illustrations	IX
List of Tables	XI
List of Abbreviations	XIV
1 Introduction.....	1
2 Problem definition.....	2
2.1 Status quo in researching memorable (culinary) tourism experiences.....	2
2.2 Status quo in researching restoration and restorative environments in the tourism area.....	4
2.3 Relevance of the study	6
2.4 Aim of the research and research questions.....	9
2.5 Conceptual model and methodological approaches	9
2.6 Chapter outline.....	11
3 Conceptual background.....	12
3.1 Tourism experiences.....	12
3.1.1 Conceptualising memorable tourism experiences	16
3.1.2 Determinants and dimensions of memorable tourism experiences	19
3.1.3 Outcomes of memorable tourism experiences	23
3.1.4 Designing tourism experiences and environments	26
3.2 Culinary tourism experiences.....	29
3.2.1 Conceptualising culinary tourism and culinary travellers	30
3.2.2 Conceptualising (memorable) culinary tourism experiences	37
3.2.3 Culinary tourism experiences and their environments.....	40
3.3 Restoration theories and restorative tourism experiences	42
3.3.1 Conceptualising restoration and restorativeness.....	43
3.3.2 The role of restorative environments and their qualities	44
3.3.3 Attention Restoration Theory (ART)	46
3.3.4 Biophilia theory.....	47
4 Empirical studies	50
4.1 Content analysis of tourism destination websites (study 1).....	50
4.1.1 Methodological approach	50
4.1.2 Findings.....	55

4.1.3	Discussion	61
4.1.4	Contribution and evaluation of results	65
4.2	Focus group discussions with travellers (study 2).....	66
4.2.1	Methodological approach	66
4.2.2	Findings.....	72
4.2.3	Discussion	84
4.2.4	Contribution and evaluation of results	96
4.3	Expert interviews with culinary tourism professionals and tourism researchers (study 3).....	97
4.3.1	Methodological approach	97
4.3.2	Findings.....	100
4.3.3	Discussion	123
4.3.4	Contribution and evaluation of results	133
4.4	Experiment on the effects of perceived biodiversity of culinary tourism settings (study 4).....	134
4.4.1	Research model and hypotheses	134
4.4.2	Methodological approach	141
4.4.3	Findings.....	149
4.4.4	Validation study (study 4.1)	160
4.4.5	Discussion	167
4.4.6	Contribution and evaluation of results	173
4.5	Online survey among travellers on direct and indirect outcomes of culinary tourism experiences (study 5)	174
4.5.1	Research model and hypotheses	174
4.5.2	Methodological approach	183
4.5.3	Findings.....	193
4.5.4	Discussion	213
4.5.5	Contribution and evaluation of results	228
5	General discussion	230
5.1	Contribution to theory.....	238
5.2	Practical implications and main recommendations for the tourism industry.....	243
5.3	Limitations of the study and directions of further research.....	248
6	List of References.....	255

List of Illustrations

Figure 1: Conceptual model and study background	10
Figure 2: Sequence of studies and methodological approaches	11
Figure 3: Four realms of an experience	13
Figure 4: Key elements of the tourist experience.....	20
Figure 5: Framework for understanding environment-user relationships in service organisations	28
Figure 6: Perspectives in defining food tourism	30
Figure 7: Food as a travel motivation	31
Figure 8: Factors affecting food consumption in tourism	32
Figure 9: Typology of culinary tourism resources	33
Figure 10: Categorisation based on types of food tourism	34
Figure 11: The influence of globalisation and localisation on culinary supply in a destination	35
Figure 12: Two approaches to cooperation between agriculture and tourism	36
Figure 13: Theoretical framework for understanding the wine tourism experience...	39
Figure 14: Types of food tourists and related experiences	39
Figure 15: Wine scape dimensions within the wine region's service scape context .	41
Figure 16: Environments, restorative attributes, and restorative effects	45
Figure 17: Culinary tourism marketing and promotional content on destination websites	57
Figure 18: Types of food promoted on destination websites	58
Figure 19: Types of food experiences, environments, and settings promoted on destination websites	59
Figure 20: Culinary activities promoted on destination websites	60
Figure 21: Culinary tourism settings promoted on destination websites	61
Figure 22: Proposed research model for the experiment.....	135
Figure 23: Perceived biodiversity of culinary tourism environments	150
Figure 24: Restoration outcome in different environments	151
Figure 25: Testing for main and interaction effects of the biodiversity level and setting on restoration outcome	152
Figure 26: Perceived restorative environment dimensions of different environments	153

Figure 27: Purchase intention, word-of-mouth and intention to visit related to different environments	154
Figure 28: Testing for main and interaction effects of the biodiversity level and setting on intended behaviour	155
Figure 29: Testing for moderated mediation (study 4)	159
Figure 30: Testing for moderated mediation (study 4.1)	166
Figure 31: Proposed research model for the survey	176
Figure 32: Johnson-Neyman diagram for the conditional effect of culinary tourism experience on satisfaction through PRE.....	200
Figure 33: Johnson-Neyman diagram for the conditional effect of culinary tourism experience on memorability through PRE	201
Figure 34: Johnson-Neyman diagram for the conditional effect of culinary tourism experience on restoration through PRE.....	202
Figure 35: Testing for moderated parallel mediation (study 5).....	212
Figure 36: Graphical summary of research results and suggested model for memorable culinary tourism experiences and the role of restoration and perceived restorative environment.....	238

List of Tables

Table 1: Summary of major relevant studies on dimensions of memorable tourism experiences	22
Table 2: Summary of major relevant studies on the effects and outcomes of (memorable) tourism experiences	26
Table 3: Criteria covered and coding framework	52
Table 4: Overview of destination websites used for content analysis	54
Table 5: Assessment of inter coder reliability	55
Table 6: Focal constructs and focus group discussion findings	96
Table 7: List of interviewed experts	100
Table 8: Focal constructs and related expert interview findings	132
Table 9: 2 x 2 factorial design.....	143
Table 10: Operationalisation of the experiment's constructs and variables and key statistics.....	148
Table 11: Demographic profile of experiment sample	149
Table 12: Testing for mediation between biodiversity and restoration outcome (study 4)	156
Table 13: Testing for moderated mediation (study 4) with connectedness to nature and perceived benefits from nature as further moderators (W)	158
Table 14: Results of experiment hypotheses tests	160
Table 15: 2x2 factorial design for validation study in the wine tourism context.....	161
Table 16: Operationalisation of experiment variables and key statistics for validation study in the wine tourism context.....	163
Table 17: Demographic profile of experiment sample for validation study in the wine tourism context	164
Table 18: Testing for mediation between biodiversity and restoration outcome for validation study in the wine tourism context (study 4.1).....	165
Table 19: Comparison of test statistics for the main experiment (study 4) and validation study (study 4.1)	167
Table 20: Focal constructs and related findings of the experiment and implications	173
Table 21: Operationalisation of culinary tourism experience and key statistics	187

Table 22: Operationalisation of PRE, restoration, satisfaction and memorability and key statistics	188
Table 23: Operationalisation of loyalty, advocacy and economic impact and key statistics.....	189
Table 24: Demographic profile of survey sample.....	190
Table 25: Tripographics of the survey sample	191
Table 26: Setting of the most recent culinary tourism experience	192
Table 27: Factors determining food experience.....	195
Table 28: Culinary tourism determinants and their effects on memory, satisfaction and restoration in culinary tourism.....	196
Table 29: Culinary tourism determinants and their effects on loyalty, advocacy and economic impact in culinary tourism.....	196
Table 30: PRE dimensions and their effects on memory, satisfaction and recalled restoration in culinary tourism.....	197
Table 31: PRE dimensions and their effects on loyalty, advocacy and economic impact in culinary tourism.....	198
Table 32: Testing for moderated parallel mediation (study 5).....	199
Table 33: Indicator coding using experience type as a multicategorical antecedent (Z)	203
Table 34: Testing for moderated parallel mediation between culinary tourism experiences and behaviour using the experience type as a multicategorical moderator (Z).....	205
Table 35: Indicator coding using destination type as a multicategorical antecedent (Z)	206
Table 36: Testing for moderated parallel mediation between culinary tourism experiences and behaviour using the destination type as a multicategorical moderator (Z).....	208
Table 37: Indicator coding using tourism setting type as a multicategorical antecedent (Z).....	208
Table 38: Testing for moderated parallel mediation between culinary tourism experiences and behaviour using the tourism setting as a multicategorical moderator (Z).....	210
Table 39: Testing correlation between restoration, satisfaction and memory	211

Table 40: Results of survey hypotheses tests	213
Table 41: Focal constructs and related survey findings and implications	228

List of Abbreviations

ART	Attention Restoration Theory
AVE	Average variance extracted
BDIV	Perceived biodiversity
BfN	Perceived benefits from nature
CR	Composite reliability
CtN	Connectedness to nature
CUL_EXP	Culinary tourism experience
DMOs	Destination marketing organisations
M	Mean
MEM	Memorability
MTE	Memorable tourism experience
MDE	Memorable dining experience
MDL	Memory-Dominant Logic
M-R model	Mehrabian-Russell model
PDO	Protected designation of origin
PDRQ	Perceived destination restorative qualities
PGI	Protected geographical indication
PRE	Perceived restorative environment
PRS	Perceived restorativeness scale
REST	Restoration outcome
SAT	Satisfaction
SD	Standard deviation
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
S-O-R	Stimulus-Organism-Response
TCS	Theory of Tourism Consumption Systems
TSG	Traditional speciality guaranteed
USP	Unique Selling Proposition
WOM	Word-of-mouth

1 Introduction

This study is based on the following key assumptions, which will be discussed in greater detail in the subsequent chapters:

- Vacations are highly experience-based, with tourists' perceptions shaped by a wide range of tangible and intangible aspects at a destination. In this context, the unique environmental attributes of a particular destination play a significant role.
- The need for recovery and relaxation is a primary motivator for travel, with the destination and tourism setting serving as the space where restoration occurs. This environment shapes tourists' experiences and their engagement in various activities, playing a crucial role in enhancing tourism satisfaction, well-being, and behavioural intentions. By offering suitable restorative environments, these elements can be effectively addressed.
- Memorable experiences are critical for the competitiveness of tourism destinations as they significantly influence behavioural intentions and the lasting outcomes of a vacation. Experiences impact both short-term and long-term effects. Therefore, tourism managers must consider how experiences affect brand equity and customer lifetime value. Additionally, tourism practitioners must understand what makes a culinary experience successful in meeting travellers' restorative needs and promoting recovery to optimise customer lifetime value.
- Food is essential to the holistic holiday experience, capable of creating unforgettable moments by engaging all the senses. At the same time, local agricultural and food products are regarded as highly authentic and unique, making them highly sought after by travellers. Therefore, the culinary offerings at a destination can greatly contribute to the overall holiday experience of a traveller.
- The preservation and development of strategies for resilient growth are crucial for establishing sustainable tourism destinations. Tourism businesses and operators play a key role in creating tourism experiences that drive this growth. Increasingly, destinations are recognising the value of local agricultural and food products in driving these sustainable and nature-oriented tourism strategies.
- Therefore, developing memorable culinary tourism experiences based on local agricultural and food products can not only satisfy travellers' restoration needs and contribute to a pleasant overall holiday experience but also help ensure the sustainable development of a tourism destination through increased behavioural intentions of travellers. This approach can foster regenerative tourism strategies that trigger economic, ecological, and social benefits for the tourism destination while enhancing tourists' experiences.

This paper provides a detailed overview of the main concepts relevant to this study: memorable tourism experiences, culinary tourism experiences, and restoration and restorative tourism environments. Furthermore, all empirical research results of the exploratory and descriptive phase are presented and discussed.

2 Problem definition

This chapter summarises the state of the art in researching memorable (culinary) tourism experiences and restorative (tourism) environments and the resulting research gaps. Based on this, the relevance of this study, including the intended contribution to theory and practice, the research aim, and overarching research questions, are presented. Finally, the conceptual model and methodological approaches are shown.

2.1 Status quo in researching memorable (culinary) tourism experiences

As tourism is highly experience-based, we could assume a high academic research output focusing on tourism experiences. However, experience-related research remains underrepresented in the tourism literature (Fernandes & Cruz, 2016; Jiang, Ramkissoon, & Mavondo, 2015). Tourism academics and practitioners have long considered how tourism businesses can provide unique activities and services to meet their guests' needs. However, the findings of Chen et al. (2016, p. 146) suggest that the experience matters. Similarly, Klaus & Maklan (2013, p. 227) argue that "[...] experience is replacing quality as the competitive battleground for marketing."

The concept of memorable tourism experiences (MTEs) is a key focus in the field of tourism research and is characterised by four dimensions: affect, expectations, consequentiality, and recollection (Tung & Ritchie, 2011). The last dimension (recollection) is especially relevant for this paper, as it considers all efforts and actions by respondents to remember the tourism experience and/or reflect on the trip, such as positive word-of-mouth, purchasing souvenirs and forming revisit intentions (Tung & Ritchie, 2011, p. 1380). In general, past experiences are highly relevant in the field of tourism as they heavily bias tourists' choices; they often recall these experiences when planning trips and seeking information about destinations (Kerstetter & Cho, 2004). Furthermore, personal memories of earlier purchase experiences significantly influence future decision-making (Hoch & Deighton, 1989).

Several studies have sought to define memorable tourism experiences (MTEs) by exploring the factors contributing to them. Various scales to measure memorable tourism experiences have therefore been developed, and great focus is put on investigating the relationship between MTE and behavioural intentions (Zhong, Busser, & Baloglu, 2017). Considerable work on the dimensions of Memorable Tourism Experiences (MTEs) was conducted by Kim, Ritchie, & McCormick (2012), who proposed that MTEs comprise seven dimensions: hedonism, refreshment, social interaction and local culture, meaningfulness, knowledge, involvement, and novelty and describe MTEs as tourism experiences that are positively remembered and recalled after the event. Similarly, Zhang, Wu, and Buhalis (2018) note that MTEs are selectively constructed and remembered after a trip. Tung and Ritchie (2011) emphasise the subjective evaluation of events related to tourist activities, encompassing affective, cognitive, and behavioural dimensions. Oh, Fiore and Jeoung (2007) suggest that any experience at a destination, whether behavioural, perceptual, cognitive, or emotional, can contribute to an enhanced memory if well-staged. Kruger, Viljoen, and Saayman (2013) add that MTEs are treasured long after the trip, implying beneficial physiological and psychological

outcomes. Further definitions also emphasise the importance of the surrounding environment in defining MTEs, such as the definitions provided by Fossgard & Fredman (2019) and Svabo, Larsen, Haldrup, & Bærenholdt (2013).

The importance of delivering memorable experiences in tourism has been widely acknowledged in earlier studies (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003), and memory, satisfaction and behavioural intentions (e.g., Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2013; Kim, 2018) and even tourists' well-being (e.g., Sthapit & Coudounaris, 2018) as outcomes of MTEs are accepted. Nevertheless, the specific elements that make certain experiences memorable and how industry practitioners can facilitate memorable tourism experiences are still underresearched (Tung & Ritchie, 2011, p. 1368). Similarly, Quan & Wang (2004, p. 297) argue that despite the growth of literature on tourism experiences, the components that make up memorable tourism experiences are underinvestigated. Additionally, the relative importance of different dimensions is not clear (Fernandes & Cruz, 2016).

Similarly, Walls, Okumus, Wang, & Kwun (2011, p. 20) claim that many businesses are trying to design experiences without knowing which experience dimensions to emphasise in order to achieve their goals. They also highlight that besides the positioning strategy of a tourism operator, travel and travellers' characteristics must be considered when designing memorable tourism experiences. Likewise, Saayman & Merwe (2015, p. 373) state that tourism managers need to know what to manage; otherwise, "it becomes a guessing game". Specifically, managers need to have more knowledge of creating memorable tourism experiences to attract loyal visitors (Saayman & Merwe, 2015).

Increasingly, tourism destinations try to position and differentiate themselves by product development based on their natural and cultural resources to create new and memorable visitor experiences, as they are criticised for focusing too much on promoting the physical attributes and the built environment of a destination than on creating memorable experiences that provide fulfillment and rejuvenation (Morgan, Elbe, & Curiel, 2009). Tourism managers must identify and appropriately use elements of the experience scape, which consists of all tangible and intangible aspects of the destination (Fossgard & Fredman, 2019). Designing memorable tourism experiences therefore relies heavily on the surrounding environment and the tourism context (Fossgard & Fredman, 2019). As tourism experiences vary depending on destination types, tourism activities, and cultural backgrounds, components of memorable tourism experiences might also differ. Adding and testing different experiential factors shall help to enhance the understanding of memorable tourism experiences. Furthermore, the impact of influencing factors such as gender and age have to be investigated (Coudounaris & Sthapit, 2017).

In the field of culinary tourism, researching memorable wine and food tourism experiences is still at an early stage (Saayman & Merwe, 2015; Orsolini & Boksberger, 2009; Cole & Chancellor, 2009; Quadri-Felitti & Fiore, 2012; Quadri-Felitti & Fiore, 2013). Studies of food and tourism are often limited to food safety and hygiene issues, culinary events and festivals, supply-side issues, food production and tourism, as well as the impacts of tourism on regional or national cuisines, while developing an understanding of tourists' food consumption and related experiences is underrepresented (Mitchell & Hall, 2003). More specifically, travellers' eating experiences and the dimensions that

characterise them are relatively unexplored (Kauppinen-Räsänen, Gummerus, & Lehtola, 2013).

2.2 Status quo in researching restoration and restorative environments in the tourism area

Restoration can be defined as the renewal of physical and psychological resources depleted by the demands of everyday life (Hartig, 2004) since individuals need to restore their adaptive resources regularly (von Lindern, Bauer, Frick, Hunziker, & Hartig, 2013). Free time and leisure offer significant potential to recover those diminished daily functions and capabilities, according to Han (2018).

Within the field of tourism, it is widely acknowledged that the need for recovery and relaxation are essential motivations for leisure travel (Pearce, 2011; Lehto, 2012), and vacation and adequate tourism environments present a powerful opportunity to improve travellers' well-being (De Bloom et al., 2010).

Studying how tourism generates restorative and well-being outcomes is an emerging field (Backman, Huang, Chen, Lee, & Cheng, 2023), yet the mechanisms behind these outcomes remain under-researched (Lin & Yang, 2024). Lin & Yang (2024) found that one important mechanism driving restoration is the environmental stimulus from tourist destinations. They (ibid.) conclude that stimulation derived from the changed environment enriches the tourism experience, leading to restoration. At the same time, it is broadly acknowledged that vacation is a complex person-environment exchange process, emphasising the relevance of concepts like the perceived restorativeness of a destination or a tourism environment (Lin & Yang, 2024).

Various scales have been created to measure restoration and restorativeness. Scales focusing on restoration typically assess perceived changes in recovery, whereas those focusing on restorativeness emphasise the perceived restorative quality of the environment as a mediating factor (Hartig, 2011). Assessing the perceived restorative qualities of environments is a well-established research area, primarily based on the two leading theories concerning restoration through exposure to nature: Stress Reduction Theory (SRT) by Ulrich (1983), which views restoration as stress reduction and Attention Restoration Theory (ART) by Kaplan (1995), which suggests that prolonged attention leads to fatigue and specific restorative characteristics aid in recovery.

Perceived restorativeness has been assessed in diverse fields in earlier studies, e.g., for school playgrounds (Bagot, Allen, & Toukhsati, 2015), hospital staff break areas (Nejati, Rodiek, & Shepley, 2016), and college and university campuses (Felsten, 2009; Hipp, Gulwadi, Alves, & Sequeira, 2016). Findings confirm that restorative environments can help people renew the psychological resources needed for effective functioning (Hartig, Kaiser, & Bowler, 1997). Restorative qualities and characteristics of environments in tourism contexts have also been investigated, e.g., hotels and resorts (Wang, Tsai, & Tang, 2019; Ojobo, Mohamad, & Said, 2014), destinations (Chen, Huang, & Zhang, 2017; Lehto, 2012), cultural heritage sites (Cho, Um, & Lee, 2016), museums (Kaplan, Bardwell, & Slakter, 1993; Packer & Bond, 2010), zoos (Pals, Steg, Siero, & van der Zee, 2009), monasteries (Ouellette, Kaplan, & Kaplan, 2005), public aquaria (Cracknell, White, Pahl, & Depledge, 2017), gardens (Tenngart & Hagerhall,

2008) and wilderness environments (Cole & Hall, 2010). Findings suggest that specific environments promote restoration, but “[...] further knowledge is needed on how tourism organisations can develop stimulating physical environments that can lead to a stronger positive consumer experience” (Mossberg, 2007, p. 66). Restorative characteristics of different environments such as museums, cities, and other designed environments are still not fully understood and the question of why these environments might be restorative remains (Lehto, 2012; Pals, Steg, Siero, & van der Zee, 2009). Lehto (2012) summarises that knowledge of how different destination settings, attributes and characteristics lead to recuperation and a sense of restoration is poorly understood.

Identifying and understanding the features and characteristics of a vacation destination that can physically and mentally restore vacationers is especially important from a destination marketing perspective (Chen, Huang, & Zhang, 2017). This is because being on vacation does not necessarily lead to restoration if the new environment does not possess related qualities (Kaplan, 1995). Specifically, the experiential benefits of biophilic service scapes are also underresearched (Purani & Kumar, 2018). Despite increased attention to the restorative effect of biophilic service scapes, only a few studies have explored the role of natural or biophilic elements in service scapes, resulting in inconsistent findings regarding the performance and outcomes of biophilic designs (Lee, Tao, Douglas, & Oh, 2022).

So far, the literature has neglected essential questions, such as what types of experiences and vacation destination types and characteristics most effectively contribute to vacationers’ mental recovery and restoration. In contrast to the large body of literature in the area of perceived environmental restorative quality, context-specific research on restorative qualities of travel and tourism settings has been relatively underdeveloped (Chen, Huang, & Zhang, 2017, p. 1115). The knowledge about destination characteristics and attributes and their role in designing restorative visitor experiences and recovery effects is limited (Lehto, 2012).

It is therefore not clear if the different environments are per se restorative or to what extent other factors, such as who is visiting these areas and what activities they are engaging in, are influencing emotional restoration (White, Pahl, Ashbullby, Herbert, & Depledge, 2013, p. 42). Furthermore, differences across different types of environments may be due to visitor characteristics such as group composition, distance travelled, or the types of activity people engage in (Jennings & Weiler, 2006, p. 71; White, Pahl, Ashbullby, Herbert, & Depledge, 2013, p. 41), as for example travelling with children is not necessarily a relaxing/restorative activity (White & Dolan, 2009; White, Pahl, Ashbullby, Herbert, & Depledge, 2013). Besides the qualities of the visited environment, travel and traveller characteristics might therefore influence restoration and need to be considered in this context: research conducted by White, Pahl, Ashbullby, Herbert, & Depledge (2013) has shown various effects of visit duration, vacation activities and travel companions on restoration. The importance of further investigating travellers’ and general travel characteristics as factors that might influence tourism satisfaction and recovery experiences is obvious and was highlighted by Chen, Huang, & Petrick (2016).

To conclude, further research is needed to understand the roles of restoration and perceived restorativeness of an environment on trip satisfaction, as well as the intention to recommend and revisit. This information is crucial for providing managerial and practical implications (Singh & Singh, 2019, p. 550; Chen, Huang, & Zhang, 2017; Lehto, 2012, p. 337).

2.3 Relevance of the study

Scholars and practitioners alike are paying considerable attention to MTEs, as they can be seen as the best predictors of future behaviour (Zhang, Wu, & Buhalis, 2018). Based on the identified research gaps, memorable tourism experiences and their outcomes shall therefore be investigated in the context of culinary tourism and contribute to theory and practice in different ways:

Intended contribution to theory

The intended contribution to the literature is threefold:

Earlier research provided evidence for the importance of tourism experiences and their (behavioural) outcomes (e.g., satisfaction, loyalty, positive word-of-mouth) (e.g., Kozak, 2001; Petrick, Morais, & Norman, 2001), while the recovery dimension is still unexplored (Chen, Petrick, & Shahvali, 2016). Vacation activities, vacation experiences, and their contribution to the vacation “effect” resulting in health and well-being are hardly studied (De Bloom et al., 2009). Kim’s (2010) framework for measuring tourism experience confirmed that refreshment experiences increase the ability to recollect past travel experiences as well as to retrieve tourism experiences vividly. Chen, Petrick, & Shahvali (2016) recognised that the refreshment dimension in the memorable experience model of Kim, Ritchie, & McCormick (2012) has some connections to relaxation. Despite these cues addressing the importance of restoration in the tourism experience context, there is a lack of research on integrating restoration in a conceptual model describing memorable tourism experiences and their outcomes. Therefore, this study’s contribution is firstly to expand the tourism experience literature by investigating the role of restoration in this context.

Secondly, the role of restorative qualities in a tourism setting shall be addressed. Vacation usually involves travelling to an environment that is different from that of the traveller’s place of residence (Kirillova & Lehto, 2016). While it has been highlighted that customer satisfaction is a result of attractive physical environments or service scapes (e.g., Ali & Amin, 2014; Kincaid, Baloglu, Mao, & Busser, 2010; Ryu, Lee, & Kim, 2012), the importance of environments having restorative qualities remains unclear. Vacation restorativeness theories provide insights into why restoration might occur in these settings but do not cover the role of environments where restoration occurs. Designing restorative experiences, therefore implies the provision of restorative activities and, most notably, an understanding of the role of a destination’s environment in the restorative process is needed (Kirillova & Lehto, 2016).

Besides acknowledging that the traveller and the product influence perceived quality of tourism experiences, Nickerson (2006) claims that interactions with the recreational

environment each traveller gets in touch with at the destination affect the ultimate quality of the tourism experience. However, the question of what makes an environment restorative remains (Lehto, 2012). Specifically, the role of biodiversity and biophilic design in creating restorative culinary tourism environments remains an open question.

Ferrari (2019) sees the need for further research on the relationships between a service experience and its surrounding environment to strengthen managing decisions when structuring services. He further highlights the need to investigate service scapes, where customers encounter memorable experiences and rejuvenate away from their daily routines (Ferrari, 2019). Therefore, the role of perceived restorative capacities of an environment in creating memorable, restorative and satisfying tourism experiences shall be investigated as only a few studies exist in this area.

Thirdly, this study investigates the constituents of memorable culinary tourism experiences and their consequences, as the attributes connecting food tourism and memorable experiences have not been clearly described earlier (Stone, Soulard, Migacz, & Wolf, 2018). Additionally, the application of the MTEs scales in new contexts is requested (Zhang, Wu, & Buhalis, 2018) as the relative importance of different experiential dimensions tends to vary in other contexts (Sotiriadis & Gursoy, 2016, p. xvi). Furthermore, visitors' characteristics (e.g., visitor types such as families, foodies, and age groups) are underinvestigated within the context of culinary tourism experiences (Dodds & Jolliffe, 2016; Coudounaris & Sthapit, 2017). Therefore, this study shall also expand the knowledge and understanding of travellers' food-related and culinary tourism experiences while considering certain travellers' characteristics.

To summarise, the literature shall be enriched by specifically incorporating the aspect of restoration into culinary tourism experiences. To date, only a few studies have investigated the role of restoration in culinary experiences. The study investigating hot springs tourists conducted by Lin (2014) shows that cuisine experience and psychological well-being influence revisit intentions, and cuisine experiences affect psychological well-being. In contrast, White, Pahl, Ashbullby, Herbert, & Depledge (2013) investigated the feelings of restoration from nature visits and found little evidence that activity types such as eating/picnicking are associated with differences in restoration. However, this study focused only on the activity and did not consider the experience aspect. A more recent study by Stone, Migacz, & Wolf (2019) surveyed 1,792 leisure travellers from nine countries to study their food activities and resulting satisfaction, intention to return and likelihood to recommend. Findings show that positive food experiences result in positive memories, and these memories can stimulate future trips and encourage travellers to purchase similar food at home. Finally, these authors (ibid., p. 151) claim that "[...] food is no longer just something people do on a trip" but something that impacts trip experiences and makes a trip memorable." Nevertheless, the idea of restoration, as well as the role of the tourism environment, are neglected in their approach.

Practical relevance of the intended study

As mentioned earlier, tourism experiences are not produced by one business only but by several players in a destination, which usually leads to higher complexity (Crouch, 2011). In most cases, private sector suppliers, predominantly small and privately-owned businesses (e.g. accommodation providers, restaurant owners, and agricultural

entrepreneurs in the context of culinary tourism), are the producers and the deliverers of tourism experiences and therefore have a pronounced effect on the distinctiveness and competitiveness of a destination. These businesses often provide moments of surprise and amazement, making the tourists' experiences outstandingly unique and memorable. However, these small enterprises hardly ever have the time and resources to look beyond the immediate day-to-day business needs. But not only small businesses at a destination might struggle in this case. Local managers of larger national organisations are unlikely to have the operational freedom or budgets to collaborate in destination-specific marketing efforts that foster the creation of memorable experiences (Morgan, Elbe, & Curiel, 2009).

When investigating high-profile examples of experience economy concepts such as Disney or Starbucks, the impression might arise that delivering memorable experiences requires heavy investments. However, such investments are usually not within the scope of destination marketing organisations. Therefore, other approaches might be needed, e.g., collaborations between different players at a destination, creating innovative products and services, and memorable tourism experiences (Morgan, Elbe, & Curiel, 2009). Focusing on the antecedents and consequences of experiences can furthermore help marketers optimise customer equity (Brakus et al., 2009, p. 66).

To do so, DMOs and individual suppliers need an understanding of the experiential attributes the destination offers to create satisfying overall tourism experiences. Trying local food is one important activity that can improve overall tourism experiences and that can be covered in destination marketing. However, local food is under-utilised as part of destination promotion (Karayilan & Cetin, 2016, p. 79). A positive culinary experience at a destination creates business and marketing opportunities and fosters regional development. There is often no need for investments in tangible assets and facilities. Still, culinary tourism-related elements must be identified and integrated into a destination's portfolio and incorporated into destination marketing. The culinary tourism potential can be increased significantly if projects and products are planned more collaboratively, efficiently and effectively using a more strategic approach to destination management and marketing (Sotiriadis, 2015).

To sum up, the culinary offer of a destination is of utmost importance in delivering a promising overall holiday experience (UNWTO, 2012). Nowadays, national governments and local destination marketing organisations are putting substantial effort into promoting culinary tourism. Culinary experiences are increasingly seen as a chance to differentiate their products and services and as a vital component of the overall tourism experience, which helps to improve their competitiveness (Maurer, 2019, pp. 27-28).

The study shall therefore help tourism managers understand the nature of memorable and restorative culinary tourism experiences, relevant determinants and their importance in driving specific desired outcomes. A model shall be developed to assist destinations and culinary tourism managers in developing their culinary tourism strategies and designing memorable culinary experiences attractive to different types of travellers and culinary tourism contexts. Furthermore, for destination practitioners, it is essential to know what exactly makes an environment successful in meeting the restorative needs of travellers (Lehto, 2012).

2.4 Aim of the research and research questions

Based on the initial review of the literature and the status quo in researching memorable culinary tourism experiences and restorative tourism environments, this study will address the research gaps addressed in the previous subchapter.

Therefore, the primary objectives of this study are 1) to examine the food marketing strategies employed by destination marketing organisations (DMOs) on their official destination websites and 2) to understand the dimensions of travellers' culinary tourism experiences and their effect on behavioural intentions. Hereby, the mediating role of memorability, satisfaction and restoration shall be analysed. And 3) this study aims to explore the role of restorative environments, specifically focusing on perceived biodiversity.

The study builds upon previous research on tourism experiences and their behavioural outcomes, but it explores a new application field within culinary tourism. While memorability and satisfaction have been recognised as key antecedents of behavioural intentions in tourism, incorporating the restoration concept aims to advance this study area further.

This study therefore positions itself within the established framework of the marketing and tourism literature by applying and further developing existing models and concepts in the context of culinary tourism. By integrating established models into the study of culinary tourism, this research aims to enrich the current understanding of culinary tourism experiences and their determinants, offer new insights and alternative explanations for relationships and behavioural outcomes, and address the aforementioned gaps in the literature. In doing so, it contributes to both the application and advancement of key theoretical constructs, ensuring their relevance and utility in the specific context of culinary tourism experiences.

Consequently, the overarching research questions of this study are:

- How do DMOs promote their culinary offerings to potential visitors through their official destination websites?
- What factors contribute to memorable culinary tourism experiences, and what elements make these experiences restorative?
- What are outcomes of memorable culinary tourism experiences and how are they affected by memorability, satisfaction and restoration?
- What role does the perceived restorative environment (PRE) play in this context, and how does PRE specifically impact the outcomes in various culinary tourism settings? What role do perceived biodiversity and biophilic design play in creating restorative environments in the culinary tourism context?

2.5 Conceptual model and methodological approaches

Based on the literature review, the identified research gaps as well as the guiding research questions, a conceptual model, as shown in Figure 1 is proposed.

The Theory of Tourism Consumption Systems (TCS) developed by Woodside & Dubelaar (2002) serves as the underlying theory for this conceptual model. TCS provides a framework to explain the interconnected decisions and behaviours of travellers before, during, and after their trips, with the aim to help tourism marketers and researchers understand how different elements of a travel experience might be connected. This investigation helps to develop more effective marketing strategies and improve the overall travel experience (Woodside & Dubelaar, 2002). This study tries to link culinary tourism experiences to the immediate outcomes of satisfaction and memorability as well as to subsequent post-travel behaviour. Hereby, the role of restoration and restorative environments shall be investigated while also considering consumer-related and contextual antecedents.

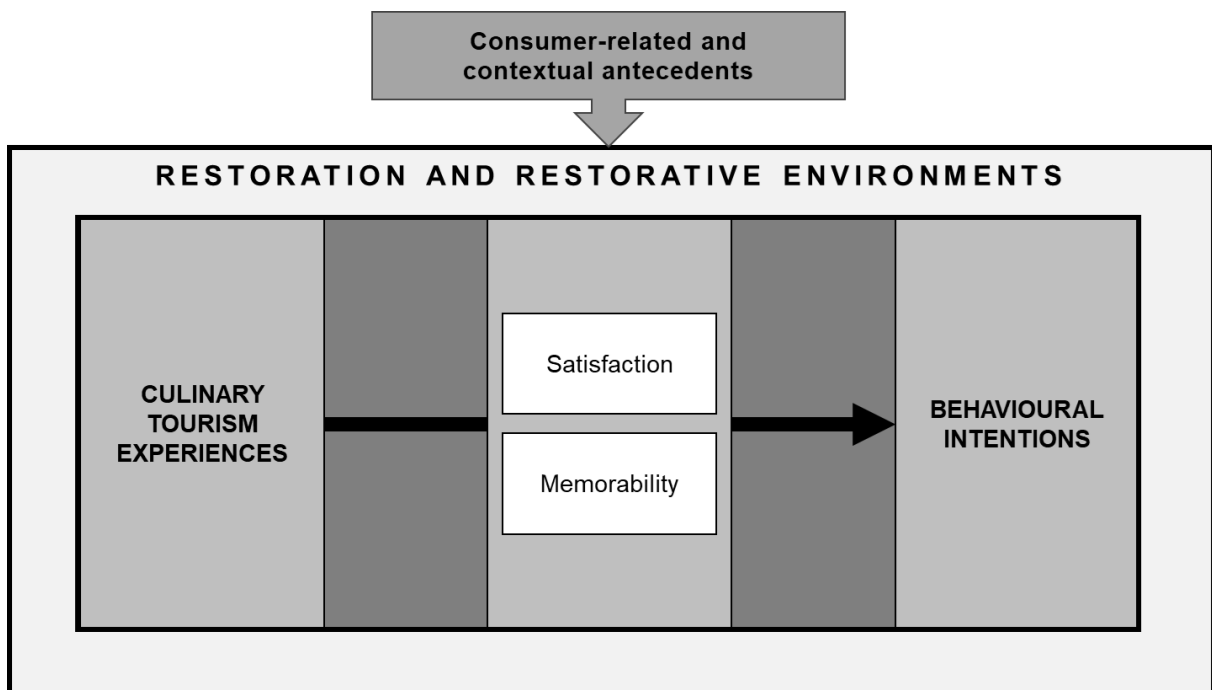


Figure 1: Conceptual model and study background

Building on Prayag's (2023) assertion that post-positivism has become a significant paradigm in tourism research – often characterised by mixed methods where the qualitative phase informs the subsequent quantitative phase – this study adopts a post-positivism approach. It employs diverse methodological strategies at various stages of the research process.

According to Coudounaris & Sthapit (2017), studies exploring experiential factors are encouraged to utilise diverse research instruments, such as surveys, in-depth interviews, and focus groups. Similarly, Hosany, Sthapit, & Björk (2022) call for more integrative and qualitative approaches to study memorable tourism experiences. Accordingly, this study employs multiple methodologies to gather comprehensive data to address the research questions effectively.

Therefore, depending on the phase of empirical research, different methodologies were applied to investigate the concepts, relationships and effects included in the pro-

posed research model. Figure 2 presents an overview of the methodological approaches used for empirical research and their sequence. Each approach will be explained in greater detail in the following subchapters.

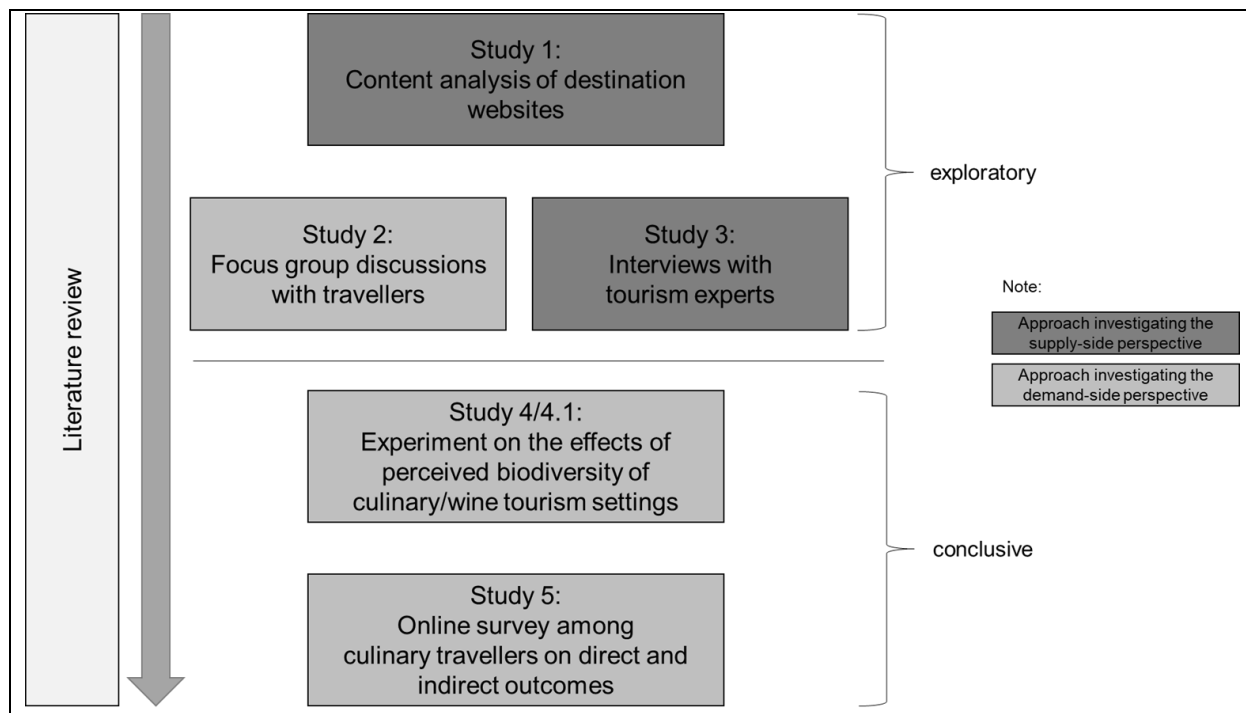


Figure 2: Sequence of studies and methodological approaches

2.6 Chapter outline

Based on the presentation of the research problem and the research aim, chapter 3 presents the literature review on all relevant main concepts for this study, which are memorable tourism experiences, culinary tourism experiences as well as restoration theories and restorative (tourism) environments.

As mentioned, this study positions itself within the established marketing and tourism literature framework, where key concepts have been widely explored. The empirical studies are presented after discussing the relevant theoretical background and the concepts rooted in general marketing, tourism, and restorative literature. The primary focus here is on integrating these established models into the study of culinary tourism, adapting and extending the concepts above to fit the culinary tourism context.

The empirical section describes the exploratory approaches, including content analysis, focus group discussions, expert interviews, and related results. Following this, the descriptive approaches – the experiment and online survey – are presented and discussed. Finally, chapter 5 provides a general discussion, reflecting on the study's theoretical contributions, practical recommendations, limitations, and suggestions for future research.

3 Conceptual background

3.1 Tourism experiences

Cutler & Carmichael (2010) see an evolution of the tourism experience literature resulting in four dominant streams: Tourism experiences have been a research subject since the 1960s (Uriely, 2005). From the 1970s on, tourist experiences have become a popular topic in social sciences (Quan & Wang, 2004), with notable examples such as Csikszentmihalyi (1975) and Cohen (1979). In 1982, Holbrook & Hirschman recognised the importance of experiential aspects in consumption. Consequently, several studies (e.g., Arnould & Price, 1993; Otto & Ritchie, 1996) were published in the 1990s to develop an understanding of the complexity of the tourist experience (Andereck, Bricker, Kerstetter, & Nickerson, 2006).

Based on the classification of Mannell & Iso-Ahola (1987) covering three perspectives in examining tourism experiences, Cutler & Carmichael (2010) reiterated them and added a fourth perspective, resulting in different logic to explore various dimensions of tourism experiences. The definitional approach, which can be seen as the first approach, focuses on the identification of elements and dimensions of tourism experiences and seems well-represented in the tourism literature (Cutler & Carmichael, 2010, p. 4). The second approach – the post-hoc satisfaction approach – is widespread in tourism experience research and focuses on psychological outcomes by examining motivations, elements of satisfaction, and the assessment of experiences (Cutler & Carmichael, 2010, p. 5). The immediate approach, seen as a third stream, tries to capture on-site and real-time experiences. This approach is popular as well. However, there are fewer studies available (Cutler & Carmichael, 2010, p. 5). With the emergence of mobile technologies that allow to tap tourism experiences while they are occurring, new opportunities for validly measuring on-site customer experiences are likely to enrich the literature in this area (Cutler & Carmichael, 2010, p. 21). Finally, Cutler & Carmichael (2010, p. 6) identified a fourth and new stream in reviewing the tourism experience literature. The business or attraction management approach focuses on the product offered and the potential for managers to enhance tourism experiences. The focal point of this research lies in the idea of strategically designing and administering tourism experiences (Cutler & Carmichael, 2010).

The idea of designing experiences goes back to Pine & Gilmore (1998), who claimed a change from a product-based to a service-based and then to an experience-based economy. According to their definition, consumers can be actively or passively involved in the consumption process. Additionally, two different environments must be considered, leading to absorption or immersion. Consequently, an experience can be categorised into four distinct segments (4E): entertainment, educational, escapist and esthetic (Pine & Gilmore, 1998) (see Figure 3). Nevertheless, the model has also been criticised for oversimplifying complex experiences by categorising them into these four realms, and this reduction might not fully capture the diversity of experiential consumption (Mehmetoglu & Engen, 2011).

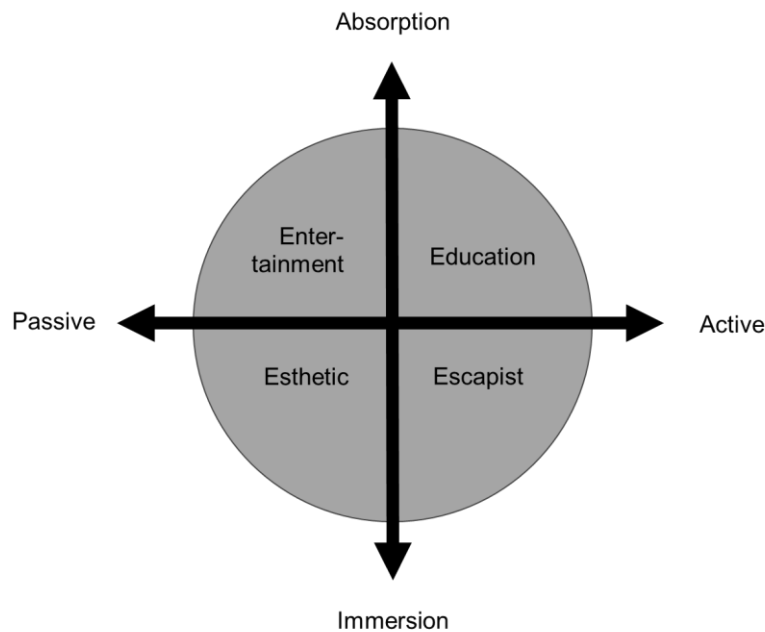


Figure 3: Four realms of an experience
Source: based on Pine & Gilmore, 1998, p. 102

Similar to this change proposed by Pine & Gilmore (1998), Schmitt (1999) claims that businesses need to shift their marketing activities from “features and benefits” to the creation of experiences for their customers. Schmitt (1999) highlights the need for holistic experiences where rational and emotional consumption drivers must be considered. Based on this idea, he suggests five strategic experiential modules that managers can use to create customer experiences: sensory experience, affective experience, creative cognitive experience, physical experience and social-identity experience (Schmitt, 1999). At the same time, Schmitt (1999) critiques that Pine & Gilmore’s (1998) experience economy model might be too focused on staged experiences, highlighting the active role of consumers in shaping their own experiences.

Expanding on this notion, Andereck, Bricker, Kerstetter, & Nickerson (2006, p. 82) suggest that the experience itself is not a snapshot but a complex and evolving process resulting from various interactions. Therefore, it has to be noted that different people will have different experiences because of the varying interactions between the consumer, the environment and the provider, as indicated in Shaw & Ivens (2002, p. 6) proposition that customer experiences consist of all physical and emotional elements and can be defined as “[...] a blend of a company’s physical performance and the emotions evoked, intuitively measured against customer expectations across all moments of contact”. This assessment of motivations and expectations in relation to the actual experience is crucial, as it influences the resulting level of traveller’s satisfaction (Correia, Kozak, & Ferradeira, 2013). Travellers with a satisfaction greater than their expectations might then show further behaviours, e.g., increased spending (see e.g., Mortazavi, 2021). At this point, it should also be mentioned that satisfaction is a highly studied subject within tourism research, with many different perspectives, theories and measurement approaches (see Correia, Kozak, & Ferradeira, 2013). Nevertheless, numerous approaches emphasise the significance of experiential qualities in shaping a traveller’s satisfaction (see e.g., Breiby & Slatten, 2018; Kastenholz, Carneiro,

Marques, & Loureiro, 2018; Sangpikul, 2018; Sotiriadis, 2017; Wu, Li, & Li, 2014 among many others) and post-hoc approaches focusing on the assessment of actual experiences and related dimensions are common in tourism research (Cutler & Carmichael, 2010).

Yet, recent studies challenge the commonly held belief that ensuring visitor satisfaction will inevitably lead to positive future behaviour (see e.g., Kim, 2018). Therefore, new approaches, such as the inclusion of quality-of-life dimensions, are seen as innovative concepts explaining experiences and resulting post-trip behavioural intentions beyond satisfaction-based approaches (see, e.g., Lin, 2014; Hernandez-Mogollon, Di-Clemente, & Campon-Cerro, 2020).

Brand experiences

Understanding how consumers experience brands is critical for developing marketing strategies for branded products and services (Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello, 2009, p. 52). Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello (2009, p. 52) conceptualise brand experiences as “[...] as sensations, feelings, cognitions, and behavioural responses evoked by brand-related stimuli” and highlight that brand experiences arise in a variety of settings and define “[...] brand experience as subjective consumer responses that are evoked by specific brand-related experiential attributes in such settings” (ibid, p. 65).

To understand and measure brand experiences, Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello (2009) provide a model covering four dimensions: sensory, affective, intellectual, and behavioural. Their 12-item brand experience scale can be used to capture these four dimensions. Furthermore, these authors showed that brand experiences have a behavioural impact. They directly affect consumer satisfaction and loyalty, and an indirect effect through brand personality was revealed (see Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello, 2009). As brand experiences, directly and indirectly, affect short-term consequences, such as satisfaction and loyalty, marketers have to consider their impact on brand equity as well as customer lifetime value (Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello, 2009, p. 66). Following the development of the brand experience scale by Brakus et al. (2009), researchers have utilised this scale to measure brand experience across various contexts (Khan & Rahman, 2015, p. 9). Nevertheless, while customer satisfaction and brand loyalty are widely discussed as brand experience outcomes, few studies have focused on other outcomes such as brand equity, brand attitude, brand credibility, and purchase intention (Khan & Rahman, 2015, p. 9). Additionally, these authors claim a need to examine these brand and non-brand-related outcomes in various settings, particularly in services (Khan & Rahman, 2015, p. 9).

Service and tourism experiences

What has to be considered is that service branding is different from product branding as services are intangible, unique (heterogeneous) and co-produced with the customer (inseparable) (Klaus & Maklan, 2007, p. 116). The importance of focusing on customer experiences is particularly emphasised for service industries. As services are intangible, the dimensions of esthetics, entertainment, education and escapism have to be considered more critical here than products (Sharma & Rather, 2015). Kim, Ritchie, & McCormick (2012, p. 13) conclude that “[...] satisfaction and quality alone are no longer

adequate descriptions of the experience that today's tourists seek". However, service quality should not be underestimated as it has been confirmed as a primary driver of tourists' experiences (e.g., Kyle, Absher, & Chancellor, 2005; Palmer & O'Neill, 2003).

Tourism can be seen as a pioneer example of the experience economy (Quan & Wang, 2004, p. 297) as vacations are rich in terms of experiential attributes (Otto & Ritchie, 1996). Focusing on this experience-driven perspective has become a major trend in the tourism sector (Sthapit et al., 2024a). Hence, tourism businesses try to shape, package and sell such experiences (Sternberg, 1997, p. 954). Pizam (2010, p. 343) even states that creating memorable tourism experiences is the essence of the hospitality industry. Tourism can therefore be described as being highly experience-based (Tan, 2017; Barnes, Mattsson, & Sørensen, 2016; Sørensen & Jensen, 2015), and tourists' experiences depend on the attributes to be found at a particular destination (Laing, Wheeler, Reeves, & Frost, 2014). While using Pine & Gilmore's (1998) framework is considered highly appropriate to design tourism experiences, as they can mostly be staged for economic purposes (Mehmetoglu & Engen, 2011), its application was also criticised due to its potential oversimplification (Rossman & Duerden, 2022).

Cutler & Carmichael (2010, p. 8-11) propose a conceptual model of tourism experience, including personal realms (which involve elements within an individual) and influential realms (which include elements outside of an individual) that can impact the experience. The influential realms first cover physical aspects relating to the physical environment and are seen as an essential influential element. Secondly, social aspects cover different social influences such as personal relationships, interactions with personnel and other tourists, and host/guest relationships. Thirdly, products and services influence the overall evaluation of a trip (Cutler & Carmichael, 2010).

Binkhorst & Deeker (2009) suggest viewing tourism experiences as a result of a tourism network. The network approach includes various stakeholders and providers (e.g., travel intermediaries, accommodation providers, event organisers, political bodies, creators of virtual travel experience environments, etc.) who are involved in creating tourism experiences while considering the tourist as the central role in all considerations (Binkhorst & Deeker, 2009). Similarly, Jennings & Weiler (2006, p. 62) claim that all businesses involved in planning and recollection (e.g., travel agents, marketing organisations) as well as in en route and on-site activities (e.g., tour guides, tourism operations and staff) have to be considered as essential mediators of the tourist's experiences.

Experiences are an alternative way of framing and promoting holiday offers, and many tourism providers actively develop experience offers to market their destination. By providing experiences, tourists may consider these aspects first than for example prices or geographical region when selecting their holiday destination (Oppewal, Huybers, & Crouch, 2015, p. 457f).

Quan & Wang (2004) propose a conceptual model of the tourist experience, including peak tourist experiences which are "purified", meaning that the experience "is in sharp contrast or opposing to the daily experience" and which cover the primary motivation of vacations. These peak experiences are accompanied by supporting consumer experiences, e.g., transportation, food, etc. and daily routine experiences. These

routine experiences refer to the concept of McCabe (2002, p. 70), who states that daily experiences cannot be excluded from tourism as everyday life is pervasive even at the vacation destination, e.g., because of following the same routines and referring their experiences to life at home.

Consumer experiences in tourism and hospitality contexts were investigated, for example for cruise tourism experiences (Hosany & Witham, 2010), golf tournament tourists (Hwang & Lyu, 2015), safari park visitors (Barnes, Mattsson, & Sørensen, 2016), wildlife tourists (Ballantyne, Packer, & Sutherland, 2011), music festival attendees (Manthiou, Lee, Tang, & Chiang, 2014), and wetland park visitors (Wang, Chen, Fan, & Lu, 2012). Furthermore, the dimensions of Pine & Gilmore's (1998) 4E model have been validated and widely adopted in tourism research (Hwang & Lyu, 2015). The uni-dimensionality of the four dimensions was tested and validated, for example, by Oh, Fiore, & Jeoung (2007) and Hosany & Witham (2010).

Quadri-Felitti & Fiore (2012) were among the first to apply Pine & Gilmore's 4E model to wine tourism and defined typical wine tourist activities according to the initial model. The main finding was that esthetic experiences have the highest influence on establishing memorable wine tourism experiences. Mason & O'Mahony (2007) identified six dimensions of a memorable culinary tourism experience: cuisine, lifestyle, regionalism, environment, rurality, and health.

Walls, Okumus, Wang, & Kwun (2011, p. 12) argue that experiential research in tourism can follow three directions. First, it can classify experiences; second, it can study the causes of experiences; and third, it can examine relationships between experiences and other constructs (Walls, Okumus, Wang, & Kwun, 2011). The first and third directions are particularly relevant to this study, as it aims to describe determinants of culinary tourism experiences and their relationships with other constructs, as illustrated in the conceptual model (see chapter 2.5).

3.1.1 Conceptualising memorable tourism experiences

After returning home, travellers are very likely to reflect upon travel experiences (Neal, Sirgy, & Uysal, 1999). Furthermore, recalling past experiences is usually the first step of a tourist's information search process. However, not all tourism experiences are memorable and can therefore influence destination choice and future tourism behaviour (Zhang, Wu, & Buhalis, 2018). It is therefore the tourism manager's responsibility to create *memorable* tourism experiences that can help to strengthen a destination's competitiveness (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003) and enhance revisiting intentions of tourists (Tung, & Ritchie, 2011, p. 3). Therefore, following the *Memory-Dominant Logic* (MDL), as described by Harrington, Hammond, Ottenbacher, Chathoth, & Marlowe (2019), the creation of memorable experiences requires the involvement of service providers as well as customers.

Making tourism experiences memorable is thus receiving significant recognition from tourism researchers and professionals (e.g., Hosany & Witham, 2010; Kim, Ritchie, & McCormick, 2012; Kim, 2010). As the tourism industry is a competitive business environment, experiences can help enormously to differentiate a company's offer (Walls, Okumus, Wang, & Kwun, 2011).

Defining memorable tourism experiences

Several studies have explored the factors that contribute to memorable tourism experiences and tried to define them:

Memorable tourism experiences (MTE) can be defined as “a tourism experience positively remembered and recalled after the event has occurred” (Kim, Ritchie, & McCormick, 2012, p. 13). Therefore, memorable tourism experiences “[...] are those experiences that are selectively constructed from tourism experiences and can be remembered and recalled after a trip” (Zhang, Wu, & Buhalis, 2018, p. 327). Tung & Ritchie (2011, p. 1369) define memorable tourism experiences as “an individual’s subjective evaluation and undergoing (i.e., affective, cognitive, and behavioural) of events related to his/her tourist activities [...]”. Similarly, Oh, Fiore, & Jeoung (2007, p. 120) suggest that everything a “tourist goes through at a destination is an experience, be it behavioural or perceptual, cognitive or emotional, expressed or implied”, and well-staged experiences lead to enhanced memory. According to Kruger, Viljoen, & Saayman (2013, p. 148), a memorable tourism experience is “one that the visitor not only remembers but also treasures long after the trip is over, which implies an experience that has beneficial physiological and psychological outcomes.” Slocum & Curtis (2018, p. 120) even state that “[...] travel experiences become a part of one’s life story” underlining the need for highly positive experiences while avoiding negative ones.

To summarise, memorable tourism experiences (MTEs) represent a multidimensional concept, which covers cognitive, emotional, and behavioural elements that tourists evaluate and recollect after their journey. The literature highlights the importance of well-designed and meaningful experiences at destinations as they significantly influence memory retention and contribute to both psychological and physiological well-being. This aspect of well-being, particularly restorativeness, can be significantly shaped by the surrounding environment (see chapter 3.3.2), underscoring the relevance of considering the experiential setting when defining tourism experiences.

The importance of the surrounding environment when defining tourism experiences was also highlighted by e.g., Fossgard & Fredman (2019) and Svabo, Larsen, Haldrup, & Bærenholdt (2013, p. 316). The latter authors define an experience as “a process where people undergo the influence of things, environments, situations and events, and a wide range of materials play active roles as mediators of experience” (Svabo, Larsen, Haldrup, & Bærenholdt, 2013, p. 316). Consequently, tourism experiences must be seen within the specific context and setting in which they are constructed (Jennings, 2006, p. 1). As an example, Knutson, Beck, Kim, & Cha (2009) proved that the hotel experience of tourists consists of four factors: accessibility, benefit, incentive and the environment, which should be “[...] stimulating, entertaining, and motivating, as well as interactive.” (ibid, p. 50). As the tangible dimension of the tourism experience, the environment can bring hotel guests into the experience, which should be based on a consistent theme (Knutson, Beck, Kim, & Cha, 2009). Similarly, Walls, Okumus, Wang, & Kwun (2011, p. 17) propose that the tourism consumer experience is influenced by individual characteristics, situational factors, human interaction elements, as well as physical experience elements, leading to a unique and multidimensional experience. As a result, they highlighted that “[...] organizations can create only

the environment and the circumstances in which consumers could have an experience.” (ibid, p. 19).

Memory and memorability

For the field of tourism, the “Memory-Dominant Logic (MDL)”, as described by Harrington, Hammond, Ottenbacher, Chathoth, & Marlowe (2019), highlights the role of memories in shaping behavioural intentions and decision-making. Following Harrington, Hammond, Ottenbacher, Chathoth, & Marlowe (2019), tourism and hospitality services contribute to both individual and collective well-being and should, therefore, focus on developing strategies that enrich consumer experiences while fostering the creation of positive memories beyond immediate tourist satisfaction.

In the tourism context, visitors’ memory or knowledge of destinations can be characterised as *semantic* memory, while an individual’s memory of their experience is episodic or autobiographic (Kim, 2014, p. 35). Episodic memory refers to autobiographical events (Tulving, 1983 as cited in Braun-LaTour, Grinley, & Loftus, 2006, p. 362) and therefore consists of a collection of information and memories which a person has accumulated since birth. These memories allow the individual to construct a feeling of identity and continuity (Piolino, Desgranges, Benali, & Eustache, 2002, p. 239). According to Tung & Ritchie (2011, p. 1375), “[...] the formation and recall of autobiographical memory is a non-uniform process that is influenced by the demographic background of an individual”, e.g., gender and age. In contrast, semantic memory classifies general knowledge of the world (Tulving, 1983, as cited in Braun-LaTour, Grinley, & Loftus, 2006, p. 362). Although the individual’s memory of tourism experiences is mainly autobiographical, both semantic and autobiographic memory can be important drivers of the memorability of earlier experiences (Kim, 2014, p. 35).

Based on the studies of Kim, Hallab, & Kim (2012) as well as Kim, Ritchie, & McCormick (2012), Kim (2014, p. 35) concludes that “[...] not all tourism experiences are ultimately transformed into one’s memories”, but it is essential to know which factors affect memory. Kim (2014, p. 35f) further deduces that – based on memory research – the experiences recalled most frequently are usually emotional, while contextual information is remembered less with time. Additionally, “unfamiliar, atypical, or distinctive” experiences are remembered more vividly. Based on this, he proposes that travellers best remember destinations under three conditions (ibid, p. 36):

- “(a) familiar destinations that individuals visited with strangers or with people with whom they had no close ties,
- (b) exotic destinations that individuals travelled to with friends or family, and
- (c) destinations that contain a mixture of familiar and distinctive attributes and thus provide various experiences”.

For tourism managers, it is therefore essential to know that positive memories can be used to influence intentions and decisions (Kuwabara & Pillemer, 2010). Memorable experiences and trip satisfaction can even contribute to long-term adoption in everyday behaviour, as Ballantyne, Packer, & Sutherland (2011) suggested. Pleasure and memories are usually the remaining outcomes of prior vacation experiences (Pine & Gilmore, 1999; Sundbo & Sørensen, 2013; Braun-LaTour, Grinley, & Loftus, 2006).

These memories can influence beliefs (Bluck, 2003) and have a conscious and unconscious directive effect on future decisions (Pillemer, 2003). Mody, Suess, & Lehto (2017) confirmed that the memorability of a tourism experience positively influences customers' behavioural intentions. In the study of Ali, Hussain, & Ragavan (2014) all four experience dimensions following the 4E concept were significant to memory. Quadri-Felitti & Fiore (2013) found that the esthetic and educational experience highly influence memory. Experiences involving all five senses, e.g., food and drink experiences (Sutton, 2010), have been identified as especially significant to memory. By the same token, Tsai (2016) confirmed that consuming local cuisines enables tourists to create positive and unforgettable memories.

3.1.2 Determinants and dimensions of memorable tourism experiences

The quality of a customer's experience has to be determined based on the total experience, not just on the services provided by a particular service provider (Kim & Choi, 2013, p. 323), which is particularly relevant for the service and tourism sector, where numerous providers collaborate to craft a visitor's experience. Grove, Fisk, & Dorsch (1998, p. 116) argue that the service experience consists of four key components: the actors (service personnel), the audience (consumers), the setting in which the service occurs and finally, the performance or the service enactment itself.

Therefore, the determinants of memorable tourism experiences can be categorised as follows:

- People and their engagement with others: People often engage with others who serve and mediate their experiences. Within the tourism context, the traveller, other tourists, tourist providers, governments, service providers, communities, and indigenous groups must be considered as personal mediators of the tourism experience (Jennings & Weiler, 2006, p. 57). Social aspects of an experience significantly contribute to perceived experience quality; especially interactions with friends and family are seen as significant aspects of the tourism experience. Furthermore, support services and customer services are essential aspects of service quality (Andereck, Bricker, Kerstetter, & Nickerson, 2006, p. 87).
- Non-personal mediators: Different non-human elements such as settings, activities, and experience scapes and esthetics contribute to creating experiences (Jennings & Weiler, 2006, p. 57).

Tourism experiences emerge based on various contributing dimensions such as sensory inputs, affective reactions, cognitive abilities, actions undertaken and relevant relationships (Pearce, 2011, p. 3) (see Figure 4).

Sensory elements	Affective components	Cognitive elements	Behavioural components	Relationships
• Sight • Hearing • Smell • Touch • Taste	• States including emotional categories	• Perceiving • Thinking • Choosing • Learning	• Technology linked behaviours • Movement in space and over time • Specific behaviours • Sustainable behaviours	• Intimate relationships • Further social relationships

Figure 4: Key elements of the tourist experience

Source: modified after Pearce, 2011, p. 4

In the same vein, based on their comprehensive literature review, Gentile, Spiller, & Noci (2007, p. 398) deduced six components of customer experiences:

- The sensorial component which stimulates all human's senses.
- The emotional component which generates moods, feelings and emotions.
- The cognitive component which is connected with thinking or conscious mental processes.
- The pragmatic component which comes from the practical act of doing something.
- The lifestyle component which comes from the affirmation of the system of values and beliefs of a person.
- The relational component which involves the person, their social context and their relationships with other people.

Sipe (2018) also provides an overview of the dimensions of memorable experiences. She highlights that renewal and escapism, surprises and novelty (such as experiencing new places, trying something new, or eating unique food), and social interaction make travel experiences more memorable (Sipe, 2018).

Substantial work on developing a scale to measure memorable experiences in the field of tourism was done by Kim (2010), Kim, Ritchie, & McCormick (2012) as well as Kim (2013), who developed a 24-item memorable tourism experience scale covering seven dimensions: hedonism, refreshment, local culture, meaningfulness, knowledge, involvement, and novelty. The study of Chandralal & Valenzuela (2015) confirmed the dimensions of earlier MTE studies and added new dimensions, such as local guides and engaging in surprising activities. The review of Quadri-Felitti & Fiore (2012) confirmed that many studies use the underlying dimensions of the 4E model to measure tourism experiences.

According to a qualitative study using in-depth interviews conducted by Tung & Ritchie (2011, p. 1377ff), memorable experiences meet four dimensions: affect, expectations, consequentiality and recollection. Regarding affect, positive emotions and feelings are critical to a memorable tourism experience. Fulfilled or exceeded expectations are furthermore crucial to creating memorable experiences. Consequentiality refers to a

high perceived importance of the outcome of the trip (e.g., intellectual development, self-discovery, overcoming physical challenges). Finally, recollection describes the “efforts made and actions taken” by travellers “to remember the tourism experience and/or reflect on the trip” (Tung & Ritchie, 2011, p. 1380).

Hosany, Sthapit, & Björk (2022) propose classifying the dimensions of memorable tourism experiences into two groups: 1) generic dimensions such as hedonism, novelty, refreshment, and learning, and 2) context-specific dimensions such as attributes of a winery when considering wine tourism or ethnic interaction in ethnic tourism (Hosany, Sthapit, & Björk, 2022).

Earlier studies on MTEs highlight the importance of sensory dimensions for creating memorable experiences (e.g., Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello, 2009; Gentile, Spiller, & Noci, 2007) and especially for tourism experiences (e.g., Agapito, Valle, & Mendes, 2014, p. 225). Research on the determinants of memorable tourism experiences has also partially focused on the physical environment and specific settings in which they take place (Bai, Lai, & Wong, 2023), with examples such as the studies of Akhoondnejad (2024), Hosany & Witham (2010), and Singh & Singh (2019). Currently, there is a call to further examine the perspective of destination management, as research on MTE dimensions can function as a strategic tool for evaluating business efficiency and implementing effective practices to enhance positive behavioural intentions of travellers (Hosseini, Macias, & Garcia, 2023).

Table 1 summarises major earlier studies proposing various dimensions of memorable tourism experiences:

Author(s) (Year)	Research objective	Study material	Proposed dimensions
Gunter (1987)	To systematically examine the leisure experience	Essays of 140 undergraduate students on the single most memorable leisure experience	Separation, choice, pleasure, spontaneity, timelessness, fantasy, adventure, and self-realisation
Otto & Ritchie (1996)	To enhance the understanding of the service experience (study done in three different tourism sectors: airlines, hotels, tours & attractions)	Questionnaires were distributed to 339 visitors of the Tourism Vancouver Info-Centre in Vancouver	Hedonics, peace of mind, involvement, recognition
Oh, Fiore, & Jeoung (2007)	To provide scales for measuring experience economy concepts and to empirically test the predictive validity of experience economy concepts applied to the B&B lodging experience	Self-administered guest surveys in 58 B&B facilities in the U.S. (419 questionnaires in total)	Education, esthetics, entertainment, escapism, arousal, memory
Knutson, Beck, Kim, & Cha (2007)	To identify and measure the dimensions of the experience construct	A web-based survey using 397 samples from three Internet distribution channels	Environment, benefit, accessibility, convenience, utility, incentive, and trust
Knutson, Beck, Kim, & Cha (2009)	To identify the underlying dimensions of a guest's hotel experience	Web-based survey of guests at a mid-western hotel and conference centre	Environment, accessibility, driving benefit, and incentive
Hosany & Witham (2010)	Identifying the underlying dimensions of cruisers' experiences and investigating the relationship among cruisers' experiences, satisfaction, and intention to recommend	Survey among 169 tourists on a two-week cruise vacation	Education, entertainment, esthetics, escapism

Table 1 Continued			
Author(s) (Year)	Research objective	Study material	Proposed dimensions
Tung & Ritchie (2011)	To explore the essence of MEs based on research from the field of psychology	In-depth interviews with 208 respondents	Affect, expectations, consequentiality and recollection
Kim, Ritchie, & McCormick (2012)	To contribute to an increasing body of literature on MTE by developing a measurement tool to assess the constituents of MTE	536 U.S. college students	Hedonism, novelty, local culture, refreshment, meaningfulness, involvement, knowledge
Chandralal, & Valenzuela (2015)	Developing a measurement instrument for memorable tourism experiences from the perspectives of more regular and typical leisure-oriented travellers	100 travel blog narratives, 35 in-depth interviews and 700 survey respondents (Australian tourists)	Authentic local experiences, novel experiences, self-beneficial experiences, significant travel experiences, serendipitous and surprising experiences, local hospitality, social interactions, impressive local guides and tour operators, fulfilment of personal travel interests, affective emotions
Coelho, Gosling, & Almeida (2018)	To propose a theoretical framework by identifying the core processes that are sense-making and meaningful in a Memorable Tourism Experience (MTE)	Travel narratives of 76 Brazilian tourists	Environment and culture, interpersonal relationships, individual/psychological
Thanh & Kirova (2018)	To examine the wine tourism experience using the experience economy model (4Es)	825 original reviews posted on TripAdvisor by tourists who visited Cognac (France)	Education, entertainment, esthetics, escapism
Seyfi, Hall, & Rasoolimanesh (2020)	To enhance the understanding of the nature of cultural tourism experiences and the process by which they are formed	In-depth face-to-face interviews with 29 tourists in the cultural sites of Paris	Six key factors affecting cultural tourist experiences in a destination: prior perceived significance of the experience, authenticity, engagement, cultural exchange, culinary attraction and quality of service
Tsaur & Lo (2020)	To develop and validate a scale to measure positive MDE sources in customers at fine dining restaurants from a restaurant attribute perspective	Critical incident technique (138 cases), student samples (340 + 347) and customers of fine dining restaurants (393)	Excellent service behaviour, exquisite and delicious cuisine, amazing physical environment and unique atmosphere, and high perceived value
Akhoondnejad (2024)	To identify the determinants of positive and negative memorable experiences in different contexts of food tourism	Survey with open-ended questions among 374 tourists in New Zealand	25 factors contribute to positive memorable experiences, whereas the lack of seven of them leads to negative memorable experiences, food quality is the most dominant determinant of both positive and negative memorable experiences

Table 1: Summary of major relevant studies on dimensions of memorable tourism experiences

As shown in Table 1, a broad variety of dimensions characterising memorable tourism experiences is suggested, leading to potential inconsistencies in their conceptualisation. In the same vein, Godovykh & Tasci (2020) conclude that previous research has defined experience for various consumption contexts, identifying multiple components that contribute to it. Nevertheless, the conceptualisation and operationalisation of memorable experiences require a thorough understanding of their key components, antecedents, outcomes, and measurement methods (Godovykh & Tasci, 2020). For the context of tourism and hospitality experiences, they (ibid.) specifically recommend viewing an experience as “[...] the totality of cognitive, affective, sensory, and conative responses, on a spectrum of negative to positive, evoked by all stimuli encountered in pre, during, and post phases of consumption [...]” and they highlight that memorable tourism experiences will result in different consumer- and brand-related outcomes for different contexts (Godovykh & Tasci, 2020, p. 8).

At the same time, it can be seen that many studies focus solely on the positive dimensions of memorable experiences. Considering the negative dimensions in conceptualising memorable tourism experiences and consequent outcomes also seems relevant but is at the beginning (Hosany, Sthapit, & Björk, 2022).

3.1.3 Outcomes of memorable tourism experiences

Creating memorable experiences is critical for the success of tourism providers, as they are an essential antecedent of behavioural intentions, e.g., revisiting the destination and spreading positive word-of-mouth (Coudounaris & Sthapit, 2017). Godovykh & Tasci (2020, p. 6) identified two outcomes of tourism experiences: 1) *consumer-related outcomes* such as emotions, cognition, conation, value, utility and transformation and 2) *brand-related outcomes* such as brand equity (image, quality), loyalty, brand trust, brand commitment, customer involvement, purchase decision and evangelising. Many of these concepts form the elements of consumer/customer-based brand equity, which is also suggested to be influenced by customer experiences (Godovykh & Tasci, 2020). In their review, Hosany, Sthapit, & Björk (2022) broadly classified three outcome areas of memorable tourism experiences: 1) cognitive outcomes such as destination image, 2) affective outcomes such as place attachment, satisfaction and well-being, and 3) behavioural outcomes such as revisit intention, loyalty, intention to recommend and word of mouth intention (Hosany, Sthapit, & Björk, 2022).

Several studies confirmed the impact of memorable tourism experiences on specific aspects such as satisfaction, destination image, place attachment as well as behavioural intentions (see Table 2). A review of studies conducted by Sotiriadis & Gursoy (2016, p. xvi) confirms the strong correlation between experience dimensions and the outcomes of memory, arousal, perceived quality and satisfaction. Esthetics were the main determinants of tourism experiences in predicting satisfaction (Hosany & Witham, 2010; Oh, Fiore, & Jeoung, 2007). According to Kim's study (2018), memory mediates consumer behaviour by influencing the consumer's choice processes and creating conditions for future purchase intentions. Additionally, tourists' experiences are supposed to positively contribute to learning and educational aspects (e.g., Ritchie, Carr, & Cooper, 2003; Ballantyne, Packer, & Sutherland, 2011). More recently, research on memorable tourism experiences has also recognised their impact on tourists' psychological well-being and behaviours, such as environmentally responsible actions (Bai, Lai, & Wong, 2023), such as Knobloch, Robertson, & Aitken (2017) and Vada, Prentice, Filep, & King (2022).

Table 2 provides an overview of significant studies examining memorable tourism experiences and their outcomes.

Author(s) (Year)	Research objective	Study material	Effects and outcomes
Wirtz, Kruger, Scollon, & Diener (2003)	To compare students' predicted, online, and remembered spring-break experiences, as well as the influence of these factors on students' desire to take a similar vacation in the future	41 students	Remembered experience predicts the desire to take a similar vacation in the future

Table 2 Continued			
Author(s) (Year)	Research objective	Study material	Effects and outcomes
Oh, Fiore, & Jeoung (2007)	To provide scales for measuring experience economy concepts and to empirically test the predictive validity of experience economy concepts applied to the B&B lodging experience	Self-administered guest surveys in 58 B&B facilities in the U.S. (419 questionnaires in total)	The esthetic dimension of the B&B experience accounted for the most variance in the model predicting the tourist's arousal, memory, overall quality, and satisfaction
Kim, Ritchie, & Tung (2010)	Developing and testing a model to investigate the effects of memorable tourism experiences on future behavioural intentions (e.g., revisiting)	n.a.	Memorable experiential components of involvement, hedonism, and local culture positively affect behavioural intention to revisit the same destination, repractice the same tourist activities, and generate positive word-of-mouth publicity
Alegre & Garau (2010)	To examine the impact of the satisfaction- and dissatisfaction-based evaluations on both the tourists' overall satisfaction and their intention to return to the destination	2423 tourists belonging to the three main nationalities that visit the Balearic Islands	Negative travel experiences reduce satisfaction, frequency of consumption and purchasing behaviour
Hosany & Witham (2010)	Identifying the underlying dimensions of cruisers' experiences and investigating the relationship among cruisers' experiences, satisfaction, and intention to recommend	Survey among 169 tourists on a two-week cruise vacation	Experience dimensions have a direct effect on the intention to recommend; satisfaction mediates the relationship between cruisers' experiences and intention to recommend
Wang, Chen, Fan, & Lu (2012)	To disentangle the factors influencing tourist experiences in wetland parks and to test the causal relationships among service quality, tourist experience, and revisit intention	On-site visitor survey among 267 visitors of three wetland parks	Five dimensions of service quality (resource conditions, recreational activities, tourism facilities, integrated management, related personnel) and three dimensions of tourist experience (esthetic, emotional and action experience); tourist experience is a mediator between service quality and revisit intention
Quadri-Felitti & Fiore (2013)	To inaugurate measurement of the 4Es among tourists across their entire destination experience	970 tourists to the Lake Erie wine region	Esthetic experience predicts positive memories and destination loyalty in the wine tourism context; education plays a significant role in creating memories and satisfaction but not in destination loyalty
Ali, Hussain, & Ragavan (2014)	To examine the influence of four facets of customer experience on their memories and loyalty	450 to two tourist spots in Malaysia	All four dimensions of customer experience influence their memories and loyalty
Sharma & Rather (2015)	Examining the interrelationships among the customer experience, customer satisfaction and customer commitment in the context of "A" category hotels	175 customers of "A" category hotels in Jammu and Kashmir, India	All four dimensions of customer experience (esthetic, entertainment, educational and escapism) contribute significantly to satisfaction
Barnes, Mattsson, & Sorensen (2016)	Examining the impact of positive affect tourist experiences on the development of revisit intentions	172 visitors to the Knuthenborg Safari park	Longer-term remembered experiences have the most substantial impact on revisiting intentions
Tsai (2016)	To model memorable travel experiences, place attachment and behavioural intentions for consuming local food	78 tourists visiting Tainan, Taiwan	Experiences of consuming local cuisines enable tourists to create positive and unforgettable memories; positive memories enhance their identification with or strong attachment to local attractions and behavioural intention; place identity under place attachment also revealed mediating effects between memorable travel experiences and behavioural intentions
Ali, Ryu, & Hussain (2016)	Examining the effect of creative tourists' experience on their memories, satisfaction, and behavioural intentions	96 creative tourists at selected resort hotels in the Malaysian states of Terengganu and Kedah	Creative tourists' experiences are significant predictors of their memories, satisfaction, and behavioural intentions

Table 2 Continued			
Author(s) (Year)	Research objective	Study material	Effects and outcomes
Fernandes & Cruz (2016)	To validate a higher-order model of experience quality, applied to the tourism industry and using the customer's perspective, and its impact on marketing outcomes	A self-administered survey among 290 visitors of three Port wineries	Six dimensions of experience quality (environment, service providers, learning, entertainment, functional benefits, trust) were validated, with functional benefits and environment having the most significant contribution to experience quality
Knobloch, Robertson, & Aitken (2017)	To explore the nature of individual experiences, particularly with regard to personal outcomes, emotions and meanings	In-depth interview with 21 free and independent travellers in New Zealand	Tourist experiences go beyond hedonic enjoyment of the moment and have a broader implication on well-being and quality of life
Sotiriadis (2017)	To investigate customers' experience in nature-based attractions and its influence on post-consumption behaviour	Survey among 400 visitors to nature-based and wildlife attractions	Experiential dimensions influencing the perceived service quality and customer satisfaction are escapism and esthetics; a strong correlation between wildlife experience and post-consumption behavioural intentions, especially for word-of-mouth and repurchase intention.
Kastenholz, Carneiro, Marques, & Loureiro (2018)	To analyse the rural tourism experience of Portuguese tourists and the relationships between the experience, arousal, memory, and satisfaction	252 Portuguese tourists	Rural tourism experience dimensions of education and esthetics positively predict rural tourists' arousal, escapism, and esthetics determine memorability
Kim (2018)	Developing a theoretical model of the effect of memorable tourism experiences (MTEs) on behavioural intentions by examining the structural relationships between destination image (DI), tourist satisfaction, revisit intention, and word-of-mouth (WOM) publicity	301 international tourists from key generating markets of Taiwan	MTEs influence future behavioural intentions both directly and indirectly through destination image and tourist satisfaction; MTEs are found to be the most influential determinant of behavioural intentions
Singh, & Singh (2019)	Developing a scale that measures the destination attributes associated with tourists' revisit intention	Personal interviews with 264 local people in Dehli (19+ yrs.)	10-dimensional construct that affects tourists' revisit intention (hospitality, local culture, infrastructure, superstructure, mix of activities, ease to access, environment management, physical geography, place attachment, service quality)
Sthapit, Coudounaris, & Björk (2019)	To test a new model of memorable local food experiences by examining the effect of the service scape, novelty seeking, experience co-creation, choice overload and experience intensification on memories of local food experiences	321 international tourist	A local culinary experience's memorability exerts a significant direct effect on hedonic well-being
Vada, Prentice, & Hsiao (2019)	To examine how memorable tourism experiences and well-being influences destination attachment	430 recent travellers	Memorable tourism experiences significantly influence place attachment, and hedonic and eudaimonic well-being fully mediate this relationship
Lee, Jeong, & Qu (2020)	To investigate how different types of experience influence visitors' satisfaction with the theme park and their intention to revisit	530 theme park visitors	Educational and esthetic experiences in theme parks significantly influence visitors' satisfaction; escapism is the only significant experience that led to the intention to revisit
Wong, Lai, & Tao (2020)	To examine the relationship between sharing memorable ethnic minority tourism experiences (MEMTEs) on mobile social media and intentions to visit other ethnic destinations	Survey data from 279 tourists	Three dimensions of MEMTEs (scenery, entertainment, and interaction) affect tourists' sharing behaviour and sharing behaviour during trips mediates the effects of during-trip experiences (scenery and interaction) on tourists' post-trip intentions to visit other destinations

Table 2 Continued			
Author(s) (Year)	Research objective	Study material	Effects and outcomes
Melon, Fandos-Herrera, & Sarasa (2021)	To explore the MTE concept by proposing a model that includes antecedents as well as consequences of the tourist experience	Online survey with 328 clients of a Spanish hotel chain	Destination image and tourist engagement positively influence the creation of memorable tourist experiences and, in turn, MTE positively influences tourist satisfaction, revisit intentions and recommendation intentions for the destination
Rasoolimanesh, Seyfi, Rather, & Hall (2022)	To investigate the interplay of memorable tourism experience (MTE) dimensions in driving the behavioural intentions of heritage tourists through the mediating role of satisfaction	350 tourists in the heritage city of Kashan, Iran	Three dimensions of MTE (local culture, involvement and knowledge) significantly directly or indirectly influence tourists' behavioural intention toward a destination

Table 2: Summary of major relevant studies on the effects and outcomes of (memorable) tourism experiences

As shown in Table 2, many different outcomes of memorable tourism experiences have been identified. As suggested by Godovykh & Tasci (2020, p. 6) two clusters of outcomes can be determined: consumer-related outcomes and brand-related outcomes. Nevertheless, many studies seem to neglect potential differences based on individual and situational backgrounds. When applying Pine & Gilmore's (1998) framework in the context of music festival and museum experiences to assess potential outcomes, Mehmetoglu & Engen (2011) found, for example, that different experiential dimensions influence the visitors' overall satisfaction in different contexts.

At the same time, many studies rely on self-reported studies, where tourists retrospectively assess their experiences and related outcomes, potentially introducing biases. While many tourism researchers appreciate the low cost and quick turnaround of self-report measures, this method may especially limit capturing immediate emotional responses (Li, Scott, & Walters, 2015).

3.1.4 Designing tourism experiences and environments

Customer experiences can help to generate long-term competitive advantages (Shaw & Ivens, 2002, p. 210). In destination management, creating and delivering unique, extraordinary and memorable tourism experiences is essential to maintain a sustainable competitive advantage (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003; Hudson & Ritchie, 2009). In this context, Dwyer & Kim, 2003 (p. 374) define destination competitiveness as "the ability of a destination to deliver goods and services that perform better than other destinations on those aspects of the tourism experience considered important by tourists".

Stamboulis & Skayannis (2003, p. 41) claim that experiences emerge from the interaction between destinations and tourists, "[...] with destinations as 'theatres' at which experience takes place, and tourists as 'actors' who have to play their role (depending on the extent of their immersion)". Destinations can be seen as the core of the tourism system (Agapito, Valle, & Mendes, 2014, p. 225; Fyall & Leask, 2007) and comprise different products and services such as lodging, food, transportation, leisure activities etc. (Agapito, 2014, p. 225; Buhalis, 2000). The tourism product therefore consists of a range of attributes that can be experienced in a destination (Crouch, 2011). Tourism experience can thus be described as a global consumption experience of a destination (Agapito, Valle, & Mendes, 2014, p. 225; Andersson, 2007; Crouch, Perdue,

Timmermans, & Uysal, 2004; Ritchie & Crouch, 2009). Destination marketing organisations (DMOs) can make numerous contributions to tourists' experiences, as they "[...] are not just providing infrastructure and super-structure but also coordinate the efforts related to the tourist experience scapes and involve tourists as active participants for the creation of their own experiences in the destination" (Karayilan & Cetin, 2016, p. 74). This is also reflected in Godovykh & Tasci's (2020, p. 6) framework of antecedents of a tourism experience, suggesting that *consumer-related* antecedents (such as sociodemographics, psychographics, past experiences and group characteristics), *brand-related* antecedents (such as the marketing mix, the experience scape and authenticity) and *situational* antecedents (such as consumption context and macro-environmental factors) shape a traveller's total experience at the destination (Godovykh & Tasci, 2020).

Singh & Singh (2019, p. 566) emphasise that the destination's benefits (e.g., natural beauty) influence tourists' experiences and satisfaction. All characteristics of the tourism destination shape tourists' experiences (Singh & Singh, 2019) as they create the experience scape, which consists of "[...] all tangible and intangible elements of the physical, social and cultural contexts relevant to the tourist experience, including natural resources" (Fossgard & Fredman, 2019, p. 3). Consequently, memorable experiences can derive from all these tangible and intangible attributes of a place (Pizam, 2010). Transforming these aspects into experiences in a destination is usually more complex, as several players are involved (Crouch, 2011, p. 27). At the same time, many types of tourist destinations exist, ranging from a city to a region or even a whole country (Zhang, Wu, & Buhalis, 2018). Regardless of the geographical scope, tourism destinations generally consist of several suppliers, "but they do not perform as a single unity" (Morgan, Elbe, & Curiel, 2009, p. 206). Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are usually the leading suppliers at a destination. Therefore, the responsibility of a destination marketing organisation is to develop a coordinated approach among the different stakeholders (Morgan, Elbe, & Curiel, 2009).

3.1.4.1 The role of tourism environments

The Mehrabian-Russell model connects environmental stimuli to behavioural responses, illustrating how physical environments impact human behaviour. Using a Stimulus–Organism–Response (S–O–R) framework, it suggests that external stimuli (S) evoke emotional reactions in an individual (O), which then lead to approach or avoidance behaviours towards the environment (R) (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). Following Mehrabian & Russell (1974), Bitner (1992, p. 59f) summarises that individuals can exhibit two opposite reactions to places: approach (such as the desire to stay) or avoidance (not desiring to stay at a place). These two behaviours are primarily determined by individual internal responses (cognitive, emotional, and physiological) to the surrounding environment, which influences the nature and quality of any social interactions (e.g., with employees and among a customer group) (Bitner, 1992) (see Figure 5).

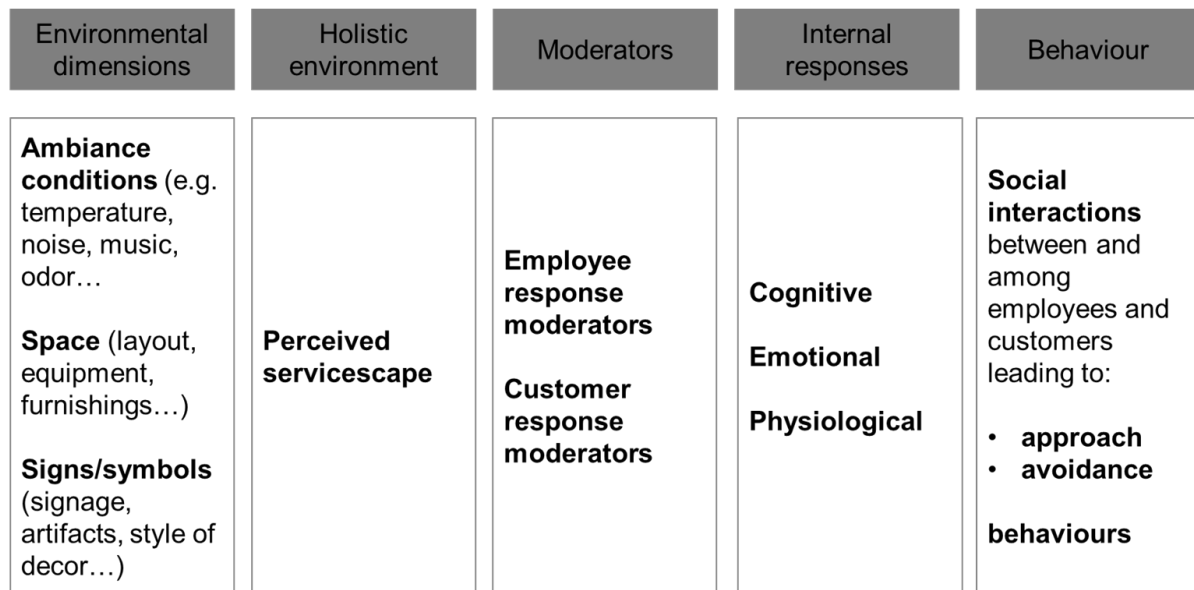


Figure 5: Framework for understanding environment-user relationships in service organisations

Source: modified after Bitner, 1992, p. 60

In the context of tourism, it can be seen that travellers are constantly looking for settings where they can have positive experiences (Chen, Suntikul, & King, 2020). At the same time, Andereck, Bricker, Kerstetter, & Nickerson (2006, p. 96) also acknowledge that in the tourism context, experiences are created not only by the visitor and their expectations but also by the setting. Many scholars have already highlighted the importance of the environment and environmental factors such as esthetics in the context of tourism settings and has been identified as being a key element in defining outcome variables such as memory, satisfaction and intention to recommend (see Table 1 and Table 2). In the same vein, Morgan (2006) highlighted the importance of “[...] the setting, the design and ambience of the service environment” when creating unique and memorable experiences. The role of the tourism environment in customers’ experiences was also highlighted by Knutson, Beck, Kim, & Cha (2007), who developed a seven-factor model consisting of environment, benefit, accessibility, convenience, utility, incentive and trust. Walls, Okumus, Wang, & Kwun (2011) highlight the multidimensional facets of the consumer experience and claim that experiences are highly affected by the environment in which the interaction occurs. Schmitt (1999) argues that marketers need to design a suitable setting and environment to stimulate desired consumer experiences, paving the path for the idea of designing experience scapes.

3.1.4.2 Tourism settings as *experience scapes*

Service scapes can be seen as a system that includes all physical elements and where the interaction between the environment and the customer takes place (Ferrari, 2019, p. 166). While service scapes therefore focus on “[...] the ability of the physical environment to influence behaviours [...] for service businesses [...]” (Bitner, 1992, p. 57), the experience scape is often interpreted as a more complex extension of the service scape, where components and environments might be beyond the control of the tourism provider (Fossgard & Fredman, 2019; Chen, Suntikul, & King, 2020). Because of

this, the service scape concept was also expanded to include less palpable dimensions beyond the physical setting. Rosenbaum & Massiah (2011) suggested including social, socially symbolic, and natural environmental dimensions to advance Bitner's (1992) framework. Similarly, Kwortnik (2008) suggested including atmospheric and social effects.

With the evolution of the “-scape”-related concepts (Chen, Suntikul, & King, 2020), the role of service scapes and its dimensions are core topics in the service marketing literature (e.g., Bitner, 1992; Zeithaml & Bitner, 2003; Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2011; Orth, Heinrich, & Malkewitz, 2012; Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen, 2013) as well as in the field of tourism (e.g., Wakefield & Blodgett, 1996; Ryu & Jang, 2007; Sobal & Wansink, 2007; Lee, Wang, & Cai, 2015). Nevertheless, designing vacation environments capable of creating positive tourism experiences is discussed in the literature to a rather limited extent (e.g., Mossberg, 2007; Heide & Grønhaug, 2006). Moosberg (2007) proposes that every tourism experience results from the experience scape, which is influenced by personnel, other tourists, physical environments, products/souvenirs and themes/stories. Given the importance of creating tourism environments that can promote well-being, enjoyment and satisfaction (Sharma & Rather, 2015), the idea of designing service environments accordingly becomes crucial when aiming to deliver memorable customer experiences. Similarly, Sigala (2022) emphasised the importance of service scape elements and their design in influencing customer engagement and well-being, including psychological, social, behavioural, emotional, and spiritual/transformational aspects.

Nevertheless, critical issues related to the approach of developing and designing vacation environments and experience scapes have been raised: Concerns related to commodification of a place, specifically related to the role of nature and culture of a place (Young & Markham, 2019), cultural homogenisation (Hall & Mitchell, 2002; Reisinger & Dimanche, 2009), loss of authenticity of places (Tiberghien, Bremner, & Milne, 2020), and experience scapes as idealised versions of culture with curated narratives (Rickly, 2009) highlight the need for careful planning.

3.2 Culinary tourism experiences

According to different studies (see e.g., UNWTO, 2012; Everett, 2016, p. 21), approx. a third of tourism spendings are devoted to food. Because every tourist needs to drink and eat, all travellers have to be regarded as culinary tourists to some extent (World Food Travel Association, 2020). Similarly, Hall & Sharples (2003, p. 3) state, “*Everybody needs to eat!*” therefore, all travellers at a destination engage in culinary activities. By the same token, Kalkstein-Silkes, Cai, & Lehto (2008, p. 66) define culinary tourism “as experiencing food and food-related elements at a destination”. Therefore, food does not only serve as a “biological necessity” but also forms an experiential aspect of a destination's cultural appeal (Agyeiwaah, Otoo, Suntikul, & Huang, 2019, p. 295).

Consequently, food-related experiences significantly contribute to the holistic holiday experience (Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2016). Similarly, McKercher, Okumus, & Okumus (2008) claim that a holistic approach is needed to examine the value of food tourism within the context of a destination's offering. Additionally, Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen (2014) highlight that local food is not only a tourist attraction but also a key

element of the whole tourism experience. Also, it is emphasised that this is true for both highly interested and involved food travellers as well as for those “who have a more casual attitude to food and eating” (ibid, p. 304). Consequently, Williams, Yuan, & Williams (2019) conclude that it is necessary to develop adequate promotional strategies for deliberate culinary travellers as well as incidental gastro-travellers.

3.2.1 Conceptualising culinary tourism and culinary travellers

Long (2004, p. 20) coined the term culinary tourism, which is “[...] about food as a subject and medium, destination and vehicle, for tourism.” She emphasises that the motivation to engage in culinary tourism activities is largely driven by an individual's curiosity, and exploring new food is a way to discover a new culture and way of life (Long, 2004).

Ellis, Park, Kim, & Yeoman (2018, p. 254) propose two different perspectives to define culinary tourism: the tourist-oriented perspectives covering activity- and motivation-based as well as mixed definitions “[...] which are linked to the tourists as the research scope [...]”, and destination-oriented perspectives with a clear focus on the destination context covering research issues related to developing and managing a destination (see Figure 6).

The activity-based perspective of culinary tourism centres on tourists engaging in food-related experiences, while motivation-based definitions highlight the desire to explore cuisine or food-related offerings as a significant factor influencing destination choices (Ellis, Park, Kim, & Yeoman, 2018, p. 254f). Hereby, it must be considered that – following Su (2013) – food is one motivating factor but is often not the main one. Mixed approaches consider both aspects following the classification of Ellis, Park, Kim, & Yeoman (2018, p. 255). Finally, the destination-oriented definitions consider “[...] food as a unique element that contributes to the tourism industry in a destination” (Ellis, Park, Kim, & Yeoman, 2018, p. 255).

Tourist-oriented	Destination-oriented
Activity-based Motivation-based Mixed perspective	Forms of tourism Destination resources Tourism products Destination marketing

Figure 6: Perspectives in defining food tourism

Source: based on Ellis, Park, Kim, & Yeoman, 2018, p. 255

The culinary offer is usually not the most critical decision criterion when choosing a holiday destination, but it is increasingly occupying a substantial role as a secondary or partial motivation (UNWTO, 2012). The classification of Hall & Sharples (2003)

describes different types of travellers based on their interest in food as a travel motivation (see Figure 7).

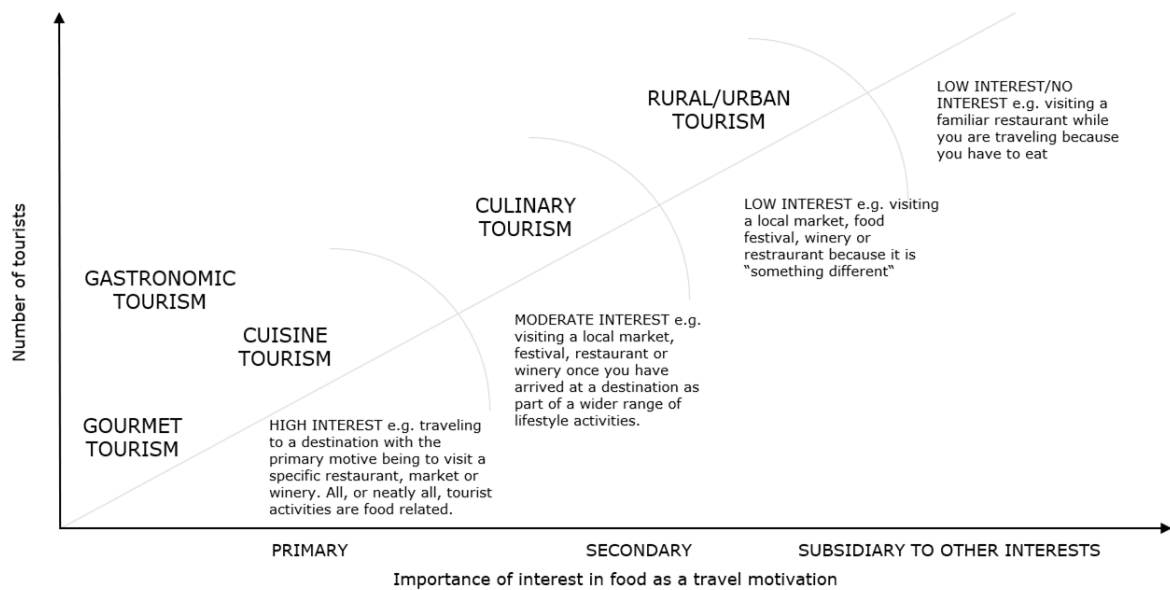


Figure 7: Food as a travel motivation

Source: based on Hall & Sharples, 2003, p. 11

In general, there is no single "food tourist" archetype; instead, food tourists exist on a spectrum, varying in their level of interest and degree of engagement in culinary tourism activities (Everett, 2016). Similarly, Everett & Slocum (2013) emphasise that the diverse range of food tourism initiatives and encounters complicates the definition of culinary and food tourism. Common conceptualisations show a broad variety of culinary tourism definitions and culinary tourist types. While some definitions emphasise a certain gastronomic intent and motivation, aligning with *gourmet tourism* (see e.g., Fusté-Forné & Leer, 2025; Stone, 2023), others take a broader approach. *Culinary tourism* is considered a more inclusive term and refers to all food, drink, and culinary experiences during vacations (see e.g., Hall & Mitchell, 2005). Finally, some definitions simply focus on the idea of tourists consuming local foods (see e.g., Frisvoll, Forbord, & Blekesaune, 2016). At the same time, completely new traveller types emerged in this field, such as those engaging in *foodstagramming* with completely different motivations centred on taking pictures and sharing photos of food travel experiences (see e.g. Fathy, Salem, Zidan, & Abdien, 2024; Goktepe, Cifci, & Sahin, 2022).

Based on the idea of food consumption in tourism, Mak, Lumbers, Eves, & Chang (2012, p. 930) identified three influencing factors: those related to the tourist, the food available at the destination, and the overall environment of the destination (see Figure 8). Regarding tourists, factors such as cultural and religious influences, socio-demographic characteristics, food-related personality traits, exposure effects from past experiences, and motivational factors are assumed to influence their food consumption habits. In contrast, the food in the destination and the destination's environment can be seen as an "attraction" in this context (Mak, Lumbers, Eves, & Chang, 2012).

Food consumption in tourism

Tourist	Food in the destination	Destination environment
- Cultural influences - Socio-demographic factors - Food-related personality traits - Exposure effect - Past experiences - Motivational factors - Physiological factors	- Sensory attributes - Food content - Preparation and cooking methods - Food type - Food availability - Food price, value and quality	- Gastronomic image/identity - Marketing communications - Contextual influences and seasonality - Service encounters - Service scape

Figure 8: Factors affecting food consumption in tourism

Source: modified after Mak, Lumbers, Eves, & Chang, 2012, p. 930 based on Randall & Sanjur, 1981

Nevertheless, with viewing food at a destination as an "attraction", ongoing debates regarding the meanings of locality and authenticity emerged (see e.g., Sims, 2009). Local food serves as a cultural experience tied to authenticity and heritage (Ellis, Park, Kim, & Yeoman, 2018), and tourists are increasingly seeking such authentic tourism experiences (Agarwal & Singh, 2022). Consequently, research on authenticity through food and beverage experiences has gained growing attention (Okumus, 2021), with authenticity now widely recognised as a key determinant in shaping memorable food tourism experiences (see e.g., Sims, 2009; Sthapit, Coudounaris, & Björk, 2019; Zhang, Chen, & Hu, 2019). Nevertheless, concerns such as over-commercialisation and loss of authenticity (Yolal, 2016), especially in overtourism destinations (Sharma, Chhikara, & Singh, 2025), remain pressing. They seem especially relevant in the context of food consumption in tourism, where the balance between authenticity and commercialisation appears to be a key challenge.

Additionally, the question of localness arises when defining *local* food consumption and its authenticity. The distinctions between the concepts of authenticity and localness often remain blurred because the authenticity of a food product is also tied to its place of origin (Skinner, Chatzopoulou, & Gorton, 2020, p. 158). At the same time, there is no universally accepted definition of what qualifies as a local food product (Sims, 2010). Beyond the concept of food-miles, there are no established metrics to measure the localness of food products (Schmitt, Dominique, & Six, 2018). In the context of food tourism, *local* could be interpreted as a defined region where products are produced and sold and could be used flexibly for specific locations, regions and even countries as suggested by Morris & Buller (2003). In any case, it is important to recognise that the consumption of local food encompasses not only produce grown within the area but also includes items that, while requiring raw materials from outside, are processed locally and thus acquire a local or regional identity (Nummedal & Hall, 2006).

Finally, it has to be noted that research on food consumption experiences has mostly focused on tourists' positive experiences (Stone & Sthapit, 2024). However, factors

contributing to negative food consumption experiences have been highlighted and are just beginning to be explored. Stone & Sthapit (2024) identified issues related to food/drink quality, sanitation/food safety, cultural differences, dietary/menu restrictions, service attributes, price/perceived value, and a destination's lack of food or restaurant availability as important factors that can lead to negative food tourism experiences. Bertella (2020) highlighted travellers' concerns related to animal welfare for animal-derived food, and Varzakas & Antoniadou (2024) raised the issue of food waste and related ethical and sustainable concerns within food chains. All these aspects might also influence food consumption experiences in tourism. Similarly, Cohen & Avieli (2004) challenge the notion of food at a destination as an "attraction", considering the concept of neophobia. They point out that local food can also create challenges and obstacles for tourists in unfamiliar destinations due to communication barriers, health concerns, and limited knowledge (Cohen & Avieli, 2004).

When viewing food as an attraction at the destination, Su & Horng (2012) suggest that investigating the gastronomic resources of a destination is the first step to exploring the relationship between food and the image of a destination (see Figure 9) and it can influence this connection in four ways: complementary, inventory, superficial or disconnected (Hjalager & Corigliano, 2000).

Culinary tourism resources			
Facilities	Consumption	Events	Organizations
- Buildings/ structures (e.g. wineries, breweries, markets, food stores, food museums, restaurants...) - Land uses (e.g. farms, orchards, vineyards...) - Routes (e.g. wine/food routes, gourmet trails...)	- Dining - Picknicking - Purchasing - Touring - Education/ observation - Cooking schools - Wine tasting - Reading food, beverage magazines and books - ...	- Consumers shows (e.g. wine shows, product launches...) - Festivals (e.g. food festivals, harvest festivals...)	- Restaurant classification/ certification systems - Food/wine classification systems - Associations

Figure 9: Typology of culinary tourism resources

Source: modified after Su & Horng, 2012, p. 101 based on Ignatov & Smith, 2006, p. 240

Culinary tourism resources should therefore be regarded as the foundation of any culinary tourism activity. Historically considered a niche tourism offer (Hall & Mitchell, 2005), culinary tourism has, over the past decade, evolved into a primary motivation for travellers when choosing a destination, with travellers spending more time and money on culinary tourism experiences (World Food Travel Association, 2020; Schnell, 2011; Stone, Soulard, Migacz, & Wolf, 2018; Stone & Migacz, 2016; Stanley & Stanley, 2015). The culinary offer of a destination has therefore become a key factor in shaping the overall quality of the holiday experience (UNWTO, 2012). At the same time,

Sanchez-Canizares & Castillo-Canalejo (2015) highlight that culinary tourism can serve as an alternative for destinations that do not benefit from sun, sea, and sand tourism or lack other historical or natural attractions, while also enhancing the overall tourism experience for any traveller.

Slocum & Curtis (2018, p. 45) classify a range of facilities, events, activities, and products within the scope of food tourism and emphasise that various food tourism experiences often overlap across multiple categories (see Figure 10).

Categorisation based on types of food tourism			
Facilities	Events	Activities	Products
- Restaurants/hotels - Wineries/breweries - Farm facilities - Urban food districts	- Food & drink festivals - Farmers' markets - Harvest festivals - U-pick	- Dining - Tasting - Cooking schools - Overnight farm stays	- Food souvenirs - Picnics (locally sourced) - Meals - Fresh produce

Figure 10: Categorisation based on types of food tourism

Source: modified after Slocum & Curtis, 2018, p. 46 based on Everett & Slocum, 2013

Ritchie & Crouch (2003) specifically highlighted gastronomy's importance in promoting destination attractiveness. Memorable culinary experiences can increase travel satisfaction and positive word-of-mouth and are therefore crucial to destinations (Stone & Migacz, 2016). Furthermore, they substantially shape the destination's image (Harrington & Ottenbacher, 2013; Hjalager & Corigliano, 2000; Duarte Alonso, 2010; Pestek & Nikolic, 2011; Suntikul, 2019). Finally, Brochado, Silva, & Paulino (2014) also address the economic perspective of tourism experiences, as they help to create value for businesses and regions; e.g., Saayman & Merwe (2015) concluded that memorable wine tourism experiences can help to generate higher wine sales as well as visitor numbers. Everett & Aitchison (2008) propose that food tourism helps to increase tourist spending in a destination and to extend the tourist season. Furthermore, the authors argue that the increasing demand for unique local products can be a driver for reviving traditional festivals and creating new visitor attractions. Besides, it can foster the development of culinary and agricultural skills and help traditional industries and small businesses to prosper. In their view, food tourism is therefore "[...] clearly able to contribute to the *triple bottom line* of environmental, economic and social sustainability" (Everett & Aitchison, 2008, p. 164).

At the same time, the experience of tasting local food in its original/local setting has great potential to leave a lasting impression on tourists (Badu-Baiden & Kim, 2022). Culinary experiences are therefore increasingly seen as a point of differentiation in destinations worldwide (Maurer, 2019, p. 27; Chang, Kivela, & Mak, 2010) and have become an integral part of their marketing efforts (Hall & Sharples, 2003; Timothy & Ron, 2013; Robinson & Getz, 2014). Usually, promotional and marketing material for destinations refers to its food and drink offerings (Everett, 2016, p. 136). Food is seen as an element of regional culture (Everett, 2016) and as an essential component for

creating memorable tourism experiences (Hjalager & Richards, 2002; Quan & Wang, 2004; Adongo, Anuga, & Dayour, 2015).

In this context, Mak, Lumbers, & Eves (2012) highlight the globalisation of food consumption and tourism, emphasising its potential threat to local gastronomic offerings. However, they acknowledge that globalisation's impact on food supply and cuisine is not novel, and it opens up new opportunities for the reinvention of local gastronomic products and identities. They summarise that the tension between globalisation and localisation influences culinary supply in destinations, as globalisation tends to homogenise culinary supply, and the tension between globalisation and localisation fosters diversity (see Figure 11). Nevertheless, promoting local delicacies alongside international offerings in global tourism marketing can foster the significance of local culinary offers and traditions (Mak, Lumbers, & Eves, 2012).

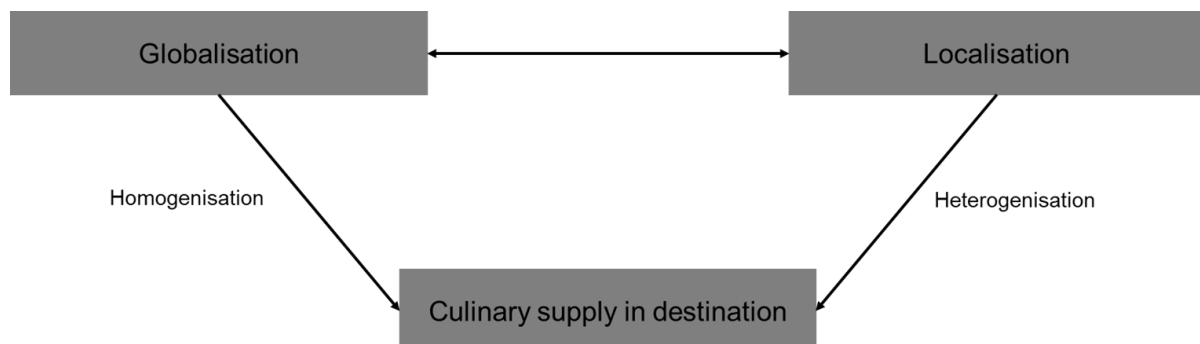


Figure 11: The influence of globalisation and localisation on culinary supply in a destination
Source: based on Mak, Lumbers, & Eves, 2012, p. 179

Local agricultural food products and their role in culinary tourism

The relationship between agriculture and (culinary) tourism can be studied from two different perspectives: 1) business diversification and 2) food-sourcing commercial cooperation. Business diversification strategies have led to the development of various initiatives such as agri-tourism and food markets. Besides, the agriculture-tourism relationship can be examined from the angle of commercial cooperation, viewing farmers and agricultural entrepreneurs as suppliers of food to local hotels and restaurants (Di-Clemente, Hernandez-Mogollon, & Lopez-Guzman, 2020, p. 3) (see Figure 12).

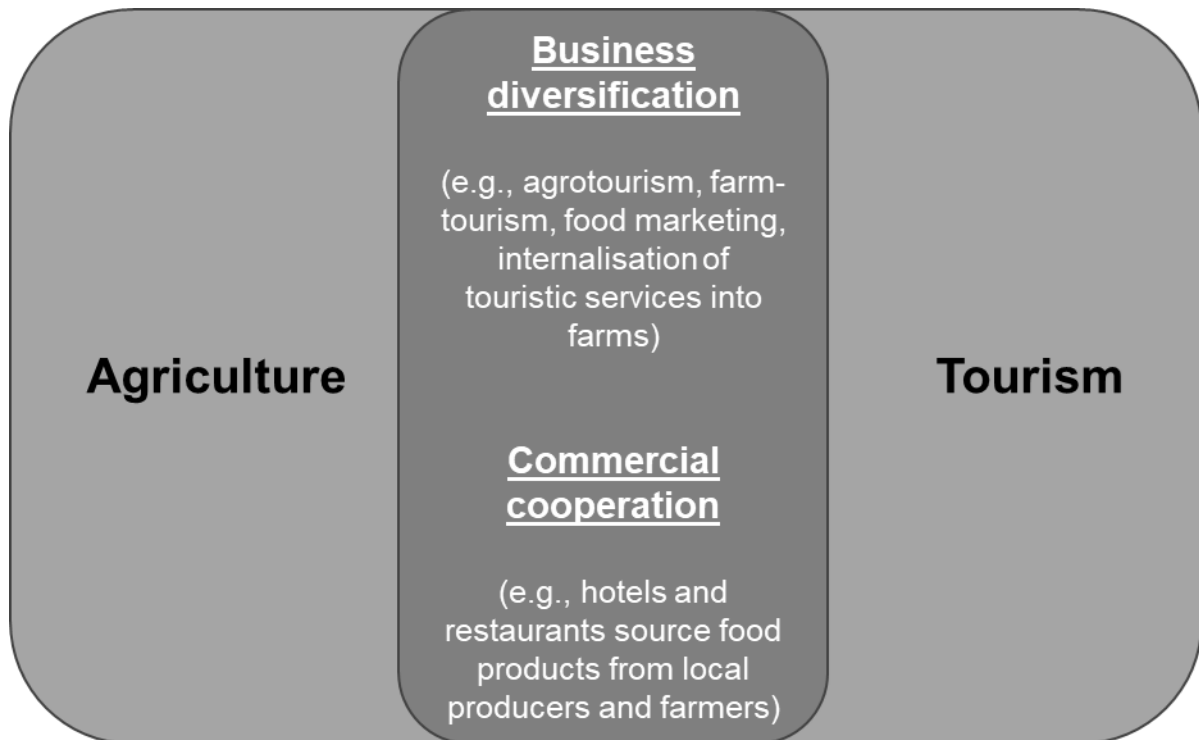


Figure 12: Two approaches to cooperation between agriculture and tourism

Source: modified after Di-Clemente, Hernandez-Mogollon, & Lopez-Guzman, 2020, p. 3

Based on these approaches, using local agricultural food products can foster the development of high-quality culinary tourism products that enhance regional value chains and sustainable tourism strategies (Berto, 2006). Additionally, the visibility, promotion and tourism appeal of local agricultural food products and resulting economic benefits can be significantly enhanced by incorporating them into unique experiences around the products such as farm-to-fork experiences, food festivals/events and farmers' markets (see e.g., Brown & Miller, 2008; Elshaer, Azazz, Hassan, & Fayyad, 2023; Garner & Ayala, 2019; Silkes, 2012; Star, Rolfe, & Brown, 2020).

Rural tourism destinations, in particular, have a great opportunity to boost the local economy by offering tourists locally sourced agricultural food products for both purchase and consumption (Boyne, Williams, & Hall, 2002; Star, Rolfe, & Brown, 2020). Agricultural food products can even trigger (tourism) benefits in regions with unique geographical and climatic disadvantages, such as mountainous areas (Duglio, Bonadonna, & Letey, 2022), as examples like the *Alpine cuisine* show (see e.g., Bauer-Krösbacher, Tischler, & Baumgartner, 2020; Scheuch, 2012). Similarly, Hüller, Heiny, & Leonhäuser (2017) conclude that strengthening the linkages between agricultural food production and rural tourism improves the livelihoods of local small-scale producers and contributes to sustainable regional economic development. However, they identified major bottlenecks in agri-food chains when linking them to rural tourism, such as small production quantities, lack of storage facilities, inadequate packing and limited sales options to tourists. Therefore, they recommend leveraging direct marketing options such as establishing cooperative farmers' shops, marketplaces, and cafés/kiosks. Additionally, they suggest designing (non-perishable) food souvenirs, developing local food/agri-tourism maps and informational materials, and creating opportunities for tourists to participate in food production (Hüller, Heiny, & Leonhäuser, 2017).

Based on their study on the contribution of local food products in fostering tourism, Duglio, Bonadonna, & Letey (2022) summarise that the agricultural sector supports local communities by generating income, especially for farmers and hospitality operators, thereby establishing local agricultural food products as integral components of the destination's tourism offerings. At the same time, local agricultural food products are perceived as highly authentic and cater to the growing demand among tourists for authenticity within their holiday experience (Sims, 2009), setting them apart from conventional food products (Duglio, Bonadonna, & Letey, 2022). Agri-tourism strategies increasingly promote visits to farms, wineries, farmers' markets, and regional food festivals as ways for travellers to experience authentic local culture (Schnell, 2011). This enhanced authenticity and individualisation of the local food experience lead to a more personalised selling channel and de-commercialised venues, e.g., through farm outlets, to greater differentiation as well as higher memorability and helps establish new networks between agriculture, society and also travellers (Sidali, Kastenholz, & Bianchi, 2015).

Similarly, Slocum & Curtis (2018, p. 29) highlight that food tourism can serve as a method for environmental conservation. They argue that local agriculture, particularly small-scale farms, minimises environmental impacts by providing a more seasonally diverse and shorter supply chain. Additionally, protecting farmland helps maintain open spaces, which not only enhances the quality of life for community members but also boosts the attractiveness of the area as a tourist destination (Slocum & Curtis, 2018).

Therefore, basing culinary tourism strategies on local agricultural food products can benefit both local communities and visitors to the destination. This can greatly foster the idea of developing regenerative tourism strategies that prioritise place and community, where tourism is seen as a contributor to overall quality of life and well-being within a broader social-ecological system (Bellato & Pollock, 2023).

3.2.2 Conceptualising (memorable) culinary tourism experiences

Culinary experiences may be the most memorable aspect of travelling, as they are usually extraordinary and novel (Stone, Soulard, Migacz, & Wolf, 2018). In the same vein, Hall & Mitchell (2005, pp. 86-87) claim that culinary experiences provide substantial opportunities for visitor recollection, as "[...] there are few other forms of tourism, if any, in which travel memories can be so easily revisited – just by opening a bottle of wine or tasting a slice of cheese". Additionally, culinary tourism offers "[...] one of the ultimate sensual tourism experiences which engages all of the senses [...]" (Everett, 2016, p. 46). Even though sensory experiences might be the most powerful among all elements of the tourism experience, it should be considered that the totality of food experiences will also include affective, behavioural, cognitive and relationship elements (Pearce, 2011, p. 3). Vignolles & Pichon (2014) highlight in this context that food consumption engages all five senses, particularly the senses of smell and taste, leaving memorable and vivid imprints on consumers' minds. Chandralal & Valenzuela (2013) as well as Adongo, Anuga, & Dayour (2015) found that local food bears excellent potential to make an experience memorable. Culinary experiences are competent to foster positive memorable experiences as they can appeal to all senses (Morgan, 2006; Everett, 2016, p. 46). Especially odour information is stored in the long-term memory (Jacobsen, 2008).

Correia, Cunha, Matos, & Fernandes (2019) emphasise the importance of the experiential perspective to wine tourism development based on the earlier work of Dodd & Bigotte (1997), as wine tourism usually includes different activities and encounters. According to Correia, Cunha, Matos, & Fernandes (2019), focusing on this experiential view helps to better understand visitor motivations as well as the creation of memorable wine and culinary tourism experiences. Quan & Wang (2004) posit that food experiences during travels can be either a highlight of the tourist experience (peak experiences) or merely a supplementary or supporting aspect (based on its relationships to the daily experience). Based on certain conditions (e.g., the novelty of food experiences and how food is delivered or consumed), food tourism experiences have the potential to become highly memorable peak experiences.

Following the general concept of memorable experiences in tourism, Cao, Li, DiPietro, & So (2019) developed a framework for the *Memorable Dining Experience* (MDE) suggesting that “[...] in a restaurant context, it is proposed that MDE focuses on the positive aspects of a dining experience that can occur and be related to the product consumed, but acknowledges the subjective and holistic features of the overall dining experience” (ibid, p. 309). They conclude that MDEs have high vividness and detail, influenced by consumers' emotional reactions and can significantly impact consumers' decision-making processes and behavioural intentions, leading to greater competitive advantages (Cao, Li, DiPietro, & So, 2019).

For wine tourism, the review of Quadri-Felitti & Fiore (2012) identified several studies investigating wine tourists' experiences, partly following and covering the dimensions of the 4E model. These authors provide evidence that the experience economy model is highly suitable for the field of wine and culinary tourism, as it effectively explains and enhances understanding of the experiential nature of these activities (Quadri-Felitti & Fiore, 2012).

Building on this concept, Thanh & Kirova (2018) applied the sweet spot framework for tourism experiences in the wine tourism context following the idea of Pine & Gilmore (1998) and highlighted that “[...] the richest experiences are those encompassing aspects of all four realms [...]” (Thanh & Kirova, 2018, p. 31) and they are consequently able to boost customer value significantly in wine tourism. The authors claim that a sweet spot can be reached when travellers experience satisfying activities from different dimensions according to the 4E model (Thanh & Kirova, 2018) (see Figure 13).

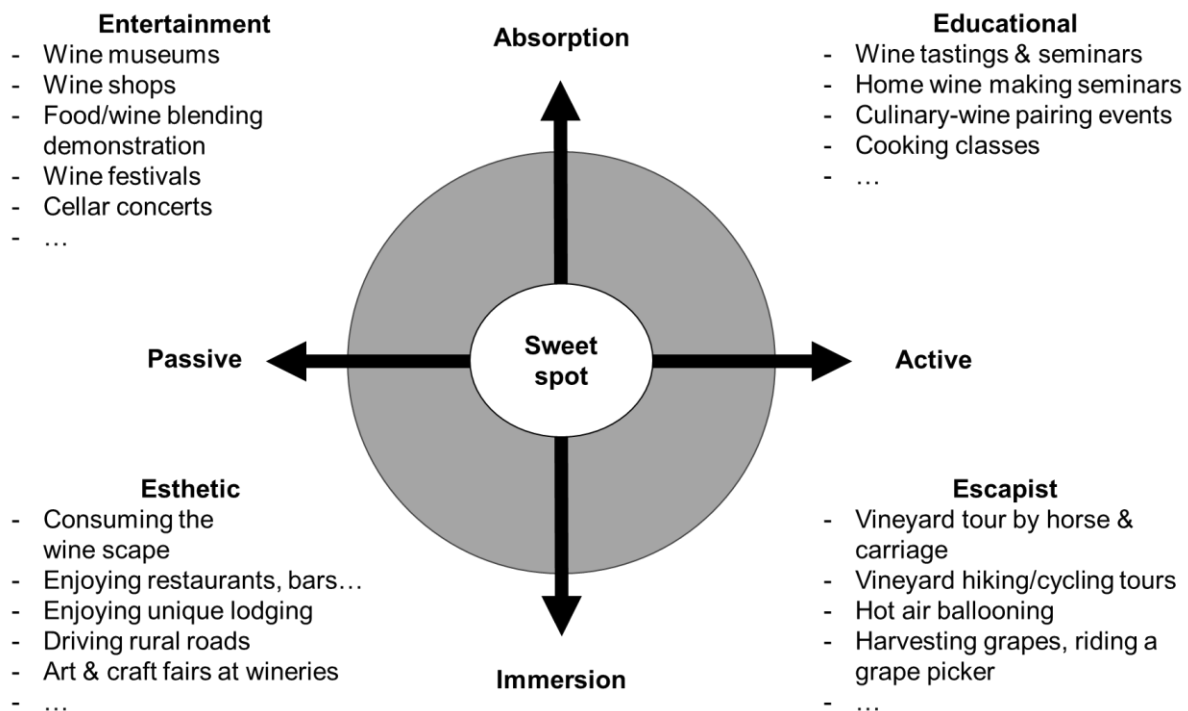


Figure 13: Theoretical framework for understanding the wine tourism experience

Source: modified after Thanh & Kirova, 2018, p. 31 based on Quadri-Felitti & Fiore, 2012

Nevertheless, applying experience economy concepts to culinary tourism is an underused approach. Studies in the field of memorable food tourism experiences remain scarce. Major works in this field are those by Stone, Soulard, Migacz, & Wolf (2018), Tsai (2016), Quadri-Felitti & Fiore (2012), Suat (2021) and Hoang (2023), all of which emphasise that a combination of elements typically makes a culinary tourism experience memorable.

Types of culinary experiences

Food and agricultural activities might be undertaken at home (e.g., gardening, trying new recipes, eating ethnic food) as well as while on vacation (Slocum & Curtis, 2018). According to Slocum & Curtis (2018, p. 149) activities while travelling might be related to food tourism (e.g., trying new foods, buying food-related gifts), agri-tourism (e.g., visiting farms and spending a night there, agri-tourism activities), and to local food (e.g., buying local food, cooking, shopping at farmers' markets). Such activities can lead to three different types of culinary experiences, as the classification of Agyeiwaah, Otoo, Suntikul, & Huang (2019) suggests (see Figure 14):

Travel to see and observe	Travel to taste and indulge	Travel to participate
Observational food tourists (e.g. food exhibition)	Experiential food tourists (e.g. wine tourists)	Participative food tourists (e.g. cooking class tourist)

Figure 14: Types of food tourists and related experiences

Source: based on Agyeiwaah, Otoo, Suntikul, & Huang, 2019, p. 297

According to Agyeiwaah, Otoo, Suntikul, & Huang's (2019) framework, there are three categories of food tourists: experiential/consumption-driven food tourists, observational/"wow-factor" food tourists and participatory/"hands-on" food tourists. Observational food tourists aim to be amazed, and their travel motivation is usually a specific event, object, or place. Experiential food tourists intend to experience or consume the cuisine of a destination. Finally, participatory culinary tourists wish "[...] to learn by participating in indigenous cooking styles and ingredients used" (Agyeiwaah, Otoo, Suntikul, & Huang, 2019, p. 297). Rachao, Breda, Fernandes, & Joukes (2021b, p. 1-4) claim that food and wine tourists typically prefer passive and less technical experiences. However, active participation and co-created experiences are currently more and more demanded by culinary travellers (Rachao, Breda, Fernandes, & Joukes, 2021b, p. 1). Here, it has to be noted that besides the immediate culinary experiences at a destination, offering food souvenirs and creating takeaway gastronomic products can generate additional economic value and further commercial benefits (Lin & Mao, 2015, p. 27).

3.2.3 Culinary tourism experiences and their environments

As tourism occurs outside the home environment, a key element of any tourist experience is its location. Travellers often emphasise how the environment shaped their memories (Stone, Soulard, Migacz, & Wolf, 2018, p. 1126). Therefore, the tourist experience is also shaped by how the tourist interacts and connects with these external environments (Tomej & Xiang, 2020). When focusing on the culinary tourism context, it can be seen that the eating experience itself is not only influenced by the eater and individual characteristics but also by external factors such as the setting (Jacobsen, 2008). Such culinary tourism settings like restaurants, unique venues like bars or wineries, or other distinctive locations are highly capable of creating memorable experiences (Stone, Soulard, Migacz, & Wolf, 2018, p. 1126). Similarly, Meiselman, Mastroianni, Buller, & Edwards (1999) state that three areas should be considered when investigating food consumption: the individual person, the food itself and the environment.

Pezenka and Weismayer (2020) found that tourists tend to pay more attention to contextual factors than locals, highlighting the importance of creating memorable (culinary) tourism settings and environments. Based on a qualitative approach, Stone, Soulard, Migacz, & Wolf (2018) suggest a framework of possible determinants of memorable culinary tourism experiences based on food/drink, location/setting, companions, occasion, and touristic elements. Tsai (2016) investigated the experiences of consuming local cuisines and their role in creating positive and unforgettable memories. Correia, Cunha, Matos, & Fernandes (2019, p. 206) identified a broad variety of aspects influencing wine tourism experiences, such as wine quality, regional gastronomy, variety of events and activities, accommodation, architecture and heritage, staff and service attributes, setting/surroundings, product offerings, interior/exterior attributes, etc. Based on their evaluation, they argue that wine tourism experiences evolve by focusing on the wine product itself as well as the immediate surroundings and addressing all senses (Correia, Cunha, Matos, & Fernandes, 2019, p. 206). Park & Widyanta (2022) claim that food experiences occur beyond the boundaries of service scapes and experience scapes as co-created activities. These experiences are characterised by their "[...] inseparable nature that exists between tourism activities and social, cultural and physical dimensions of a destination and its

foodscape.” (Park & Widyanta, 2022, p. 9). For the wine tourism context, Bruwer & Lesschaeve (2011) identified eight wine scape dimensions based on a study in a Canadian wine region, suggesting that the most critical dimension is the region’s natural beauty/setting (landscape), where the dynamic between first-time and repeat visitation significantly influences visitors' wine tourism behaviour and their perception of the winescape (see Figure 15).

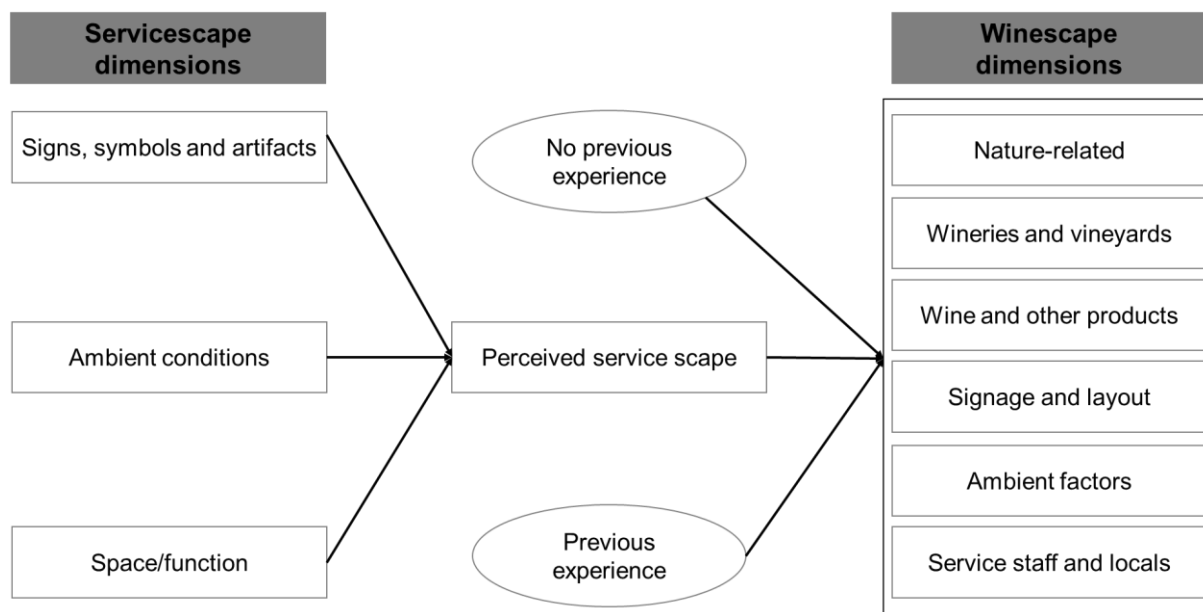


Figure 15: Wine scape dimensions within the wine region’s service scape context

Source: based on Bruwer & Lesschaeve, 2011, p. 624

When focusing on specific culinary tourism settings, Stone, Soulard, Migacz, & Wolf (2018) discovered that restaurants known for being iconic, famous, or perceived as local and authentic are particularly memorable. Nevertheless, Rachao, Breda, Fernandes, & Joukes (2021b, p. 1) highlight that food experiences extend beyond restaurant settings. Stone, Soulard, Migacz, & Wolf (2018) claimed that specific settings, views, and outdoor elements can be just as (or even more) memorable than the food itself and also highlighted that food and drink experiences should extend beyond traditional dining venues, as environments like street food markets and local homes also hold significant potential for creating memorable experiences (Stone, Soulard, Migacz, & Wolf, 2018). Similarly, Slocum & Curtis (2018) underline the importance of offering opportunities for food experiences outside of the traditional restaurant setting, e.g., food festivals and farmers’ markets can encourage deeper engagement from visitors, while food and drink trails provide opportunities to explore and compare a variety of foods, beverages, cooking techniques, or local specialties. At the same time, it has to be noted that many studies focus on high-end culinary experiences such as gourmet dining and Michelin-starred restaurants (see e.g., Aktas-Polat & Polat, 2022; Cassar & Caruana, 2020; Chen, Tsui, Chen, Tseng, & Lee, 2020; Tsaur & Lo, 2020). However, a broad spectrum of more casual culinary tourism settings exists and is still under-researched (e.g., u-pick locations, orchards, picnic places).

For the scope of this paper, all interactions with food and drink during travel are collectively referred to as *culinary tourism experiences*, regardless of factors such as e.g., travellers' motivations, the experience and activity type, or the setting.

3.3 Restoration theories and restorative tourism experiences

Mannell & Iso-Ahola (1987) highlighted that the psychological benefits of tourism experiences are based on the desire to break away from routine and stressful environments while seeking recreational opportunities for intrinsic rewards. Travellers can achieve their optimal level of arousal through vacations, mostly to escape over-stimulation but also under-stimulation (Mannell & Iso-Ahola, 1987). Packer (2014) also emphasises that even early studies on tourism motivation (e.g., Hill, 1965; Crompton, 1979) confirm that restoration is a primary motive for vacation. Nevertheless, it should not be expected that all visitors seek restorative experiences or that all providers offer purely restorative experiences, as this is not the ultimate goal of all tourism businesses. Instead, different providers might be confronted with numerous types of travellers and therefore varying needs and interests, eventually with other kinds of experiences. In fact, even travellers seeking novelty and stimulation might also feel the need for relaxation at a specific point in their vacation (Packer, 2014).

However, within the field of tourism, it is widely acknowledged that the need for recovery, relaxation, and refreshment are essential drivers of leisure travel (e.g., Pearce & Lee, 2005; Pearce, 2011, p. 113; Morgan & Xu, 2009; Lehto, 2012; Boo & Jones, 2009; Snepenger, King, Marshall, & Uysal, 2006; Singh & Singh, 2019; Swarbrooke & Horner, 1999). Singh & Singh (2019, p. 554) see refreshment as one of the essential components defining tourism activities, creating a main contrast between people's daily lives and activities. According to Blichfeldt (2007), escape and relaxation motives become even more critical during the travel career. Prebensen, Woo, & Uysal (2014, p. 913) even argue that well-being is the primary purpose of tourist travel regardless of their reasons or motivations to travel.

Besides the positive relationship between tourism satisfaction and behavioural intentions such as destination loyalty (e.g., McDowall, 2010), intention to revisit (e.g., Wang & Hsu, 2010) and positive word-of-mouth (e.g., Williams & Soutar, 2009), tourism satisfaction is nowadays also seen as an essential contributor to life satisfaction (Chen, Huang, & Petrick, 2016). Vacation does not only increase individual happiness (Chen, Huang, & Petrick, 2016) but can also contribute to tourists' well-being and quality of life (e.g., McCabe & Johnson, 2013; Dolnicar, Yanamandram, & Cliff, 2012).

Here, it needs to be emphasised that well-being is the broader concept, often simply defined as "[...] a positive state experienced by individuals and societies" (World Health Organization, 2025). This encompasses the quality of life and the capacity of individuals and communities to make meaningful contributions to the world, fostering a sense of purpose (World Health Organization, 2025). This led to the conclusion that the terms quality of life and well-being are often used interchangeably (Uysal, Sirgy, Woo, & Kim, 2015). However, different conceptualisations of well-being exist in tourism research, encompassing both hedonic and eudaimonic perspectives (see Smith & Diekmann, 2017). Smith & Diekmann (2017, p. 10) characterise restoration, relaxation, pleasure and hedonism as one aspect of integrative well-being tourism experiences, alongside

meaningful experiences (e.g., self-fulfillment and education) and altruistic activities (e.g., being environmentally-friendly or benefiting local communities). Finally, they conclude that there is broad agreement that tourist experiences typically influence both short-term and long-term mental and physical well-being effects (Smith & Diekmann, 2017).

In reviewing 35 studies, Uysal, Sirgy, Woo, & Kim (2015) confirm that tourists' experiences and tourism activities contribute positively to different domains of life satisfaction, well-being and restoration. Nevertheless, while there is large evidence that vacation alleviates feelings of exhaustion and enhances life satisfaction (Hartig, Catalano, Ong, & Syme, 2013), De Bloom et al. (2009) see many of these effects fade out within weeks after a vacation.

3.3.1 Conceptualising restoration and restorativeness

The concept of restoration is highly significant in the environmental psychology literature. It focuses on the human need for rest and recuperation (Packer, 2014). In this context, mental restoration can be defined as “the recovery of those mental resources used by the individual to face daily life tasks” (Carrus et al., 2017, p. 2). Similarly, Sonnentag & Fritz (2007, p. 205) define recovery as “a process during which individual functional systems that have been called upon during a stressful experience return to their prestressor levels”. Finally, Hartig (2004, p. 273) describes restoration as “the process of renewing, recovering, or reestablishing physical, psychological, and social resources or capabilities diminished in ongoing efforts to meet adaptive demands”. Here, it has to be noted that “[...] restoration occurs in the course of some activity, and all activity occurs in some environment” (Hartig, 2004, p. 274). Bornioli & Subiza-Perez (2023, p. 156) propose that there are two types of restoration, which are linked to specific features and experiences. Firstly, passive restoration can be achieved through green and blue infrastructure, biophilic design, and moderate multisensory stimulation. In this case, individuals do not actively contribute to the restorative experience through top-down processes and associations but rather receive bottom-up environmental characteristics, leading to stress reduction, decreased negative affect, enhanced positive affect, and attention restoration. Secondly, active restoration is achieved through personal engagement, relying on the traveller's input, such as interaction with the cultural landscape and social interactions (Bornioli & Subiza-Perez, 2023).

According to Scopelliti & Giuliani (2004, p. 426), restorativeness can be seen “[...] as the result of a complex place experience, in which cognitive, affective, social and behavioural components are considered together with the physical aspects of the environment.” Traditionally, the literature on restorativeness focused on the importance of relaxation, while the role of excitement is underinvestigated (Scopelliti & Giuliani, 2004, p. 425). However, restorative activities and experiences are not necessarily unexciting. Restorative experiences are “[...] those that facilitate recovery from mental fatigue and help us continue to meet the demands of everyday life” (Packer, 2014, p. 202). Vacation enables recovery of a great variety of resources depleted (Hartig, Catalano, Ong, & Syme, 2013). Experiences in tourism and leisure contexts and environments have great potential to be restorative and are therefore likely to foster well-being (Packer, 2014). Consequently, it has to be considered that all vacation activities and social relations, as well as the company of others, may help to satisfy restoration needs (Hartig, Catalano, Ong, & Syme, 2013).

Vacation can therefore be seen as a powerful opportunity for restoration (Kirillova & Lehto, 2016) and seems to provide this desired “sense of escape and freedom” (Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004, p. 104). Most often, travellers expect to become refreshed and recover from the exhaustion caused by their regular lives when engaging in tourism activities (Wang, Tsai, & Tang, 2019). Being away is a necessary condition for restoration and usually implies movement to another situation (Hartig, Kaiser, & Bowler, 1997). Therefore, a significant pull factor for tourists is the potential of a tourism destination to fulfill restoration needs (Kirillova & Lehto, 2016). Lin & Yang (2024) identified six key mechanisms of the restorative process for the tourism context: 1) being away from the daily environment, 2) environmental stimuli from tourist destinations, 3) emotional regulation, 4) mental adjustment, 5) physiological improvement and 6) negative factors that impede the restorative potential of a trip. They (ibid.) propose that these mechanisms facilitate physical, psychological, spiritual and social restoration in travellers while highlighting that the changes in the environment and sensory experiences during travel greatly shape behavioural, emotional, and cognitive reactions, ultimately resulting in restoration (Lin & Yang, 2024).

Nevertheless, assessing the link between taking a vacation and recovery is still a relatively new field of research. Researchers have only recently started to examine the relationship between vacation taking and restoration (Lehto, 2012, p. 325).

Additionally, Kirillova & Lehto (2016) claimed that various vacation restorativeness theories, such as the Effort-Recovery Theory (Meijman & Mulder, 1998) and the Allostatic Load Theory (McEwen, 1998), can explain how and why restoration occurs, but the vacation setting in which recovery occurs is treated as a “black box” (Kirillova & Lehto, 2016). Therefore, the role of restorative environments and restoration theories considering the vacation setting are the main focal points of this study and are presented in the following subchapters.

3.3.2 The role of restorative environments and their qualities

How restoration proceeds is not only a characteristic of the person but also of the environment available for restoration (Hartig & Staats, 2003). Being away is a necessary condition for restoration and usually implies movement to some other environment (Hartig, Kaiser, & Bowler, 1997; Hartig, 2004). However, this does not necessarily lead to restoration if this new environment does not possess related qualities (Kaplan, 1995).

Hartig (2004) noted that restorative processes are not necessarily specific to a particular environment, but they may occur more easily during some activities and environments compared to others. Therefore, these environments can be described as “restorative environments” (Hartig, 2004, p. 274). This idea can even be applied in a virtual tourism context, as shown by Walters, Gill, Pham, & Filep (2024). Even though environments might not be perceived as being restorative per se (e.g., museums), people visit them because they seek restoration (Packer & Bond, 2010; Ballantyne, Packer, & Hughes, 2008). Restorative service scapes provide stimuli that enable customers to engage in an internal process of mental or physical restoration (Rosenbaum, Otalora, & Ramirez, 2016). Environments can support restoration in two ways: either

because of the absence of perceived social and physical demands (e.g., noise, obligations...) or because of the qualities of the environment that promote restoration (von Lindern, Lymeus, & Hartig, 2017).

Subiza-Pérez et al. (2021, p. 2) describe the perceived restorative potential as "[...] an individual's appraisal of the restorative qualities of a given place (e.g., whether it exhibits the four qualities described in Attention Restoration Theory, and/or would be likely to result in a restorative experience)." The *restorative outcome* itself is then characterised by the "[...] achieved physiological and/or psychological recovery through contact with an environment" (Subiza-Pérez et al., 2021, p. 2).

Consequently, a restorative environment can be defined as "an environment that promotes (and not merely permits) restoration" (Hartig, 2004, p. 273). Concomitantly, restorative qualities can be described "[...] as the potential of the environment to refresh cognitive abilities related to human information processing" (Wang, Tsai, & Tang, 2019, p. 1679). Restorative environments help people to renew the psychological resources needed for effective functioning (Hartig, Kaiser, & Bowler, 1997). According to Scopelliti & Giuliani (2004, p. 436), experiences are especially restorative when the environment fits the individual's purposes and inclinations.

For the tourism context, destination restorative qualities can be described as "a 'borrowed' concept from environmental behaviour studies [...], which is conceptualised in the travel and tourism context as the restorative properties of a specific destination as perceived by tourists" (Chen, Huang, & Zhang, 2017, p. 1118). Wang, Tsai, & Tang (2019) propose that the greater the restorative quality of an environment, the more can travellers experience recovery.

Consequently, tourism providers must understand, design, and manage the environmental attributes that support or encourage restorative experiences (Packer, 2014) and eliminate those attributes and conditions that cause unwanted ones (Hartig & Staats, 2003). Based on Packer's (2014) qualitative study, which covered 40 in-depth interviews with visitors of Botanic Gardens in Australia, different features of the environment are considered to support restoration (Packer, 2014) (see Figure 16).

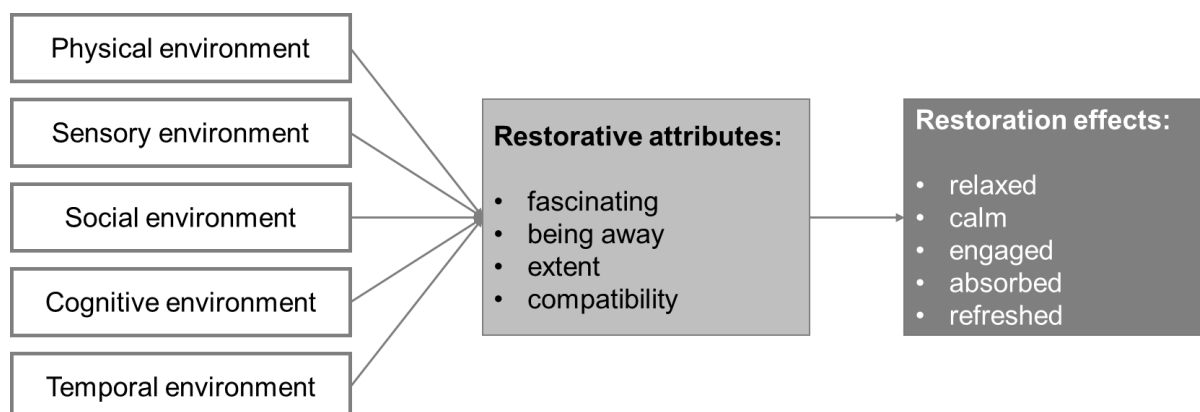


Figure 16: Environments, restorative attributes, and restorative effects
Source: Packer, 2014, p. 205

What has to be noted in this context is that restorative environments and resulting experiences do not only lead to satisfied visitors on the micro level of the tourism business (Packer, 2014) but also to “[...] positive effects on the health of the population as a whole” (Hartig, 2004).

3.3.3 Attention Restoration Theory (ART)

Physical environments with certain qualities can therefore help individuals to cope with stress. Environmental psychology specifically offers several theoretical frameworks to explain the positive impact of green spaces on well-being and provides strong evidence that exposure to natural settings promotes recovery from both physical stress and mental fatigue (Berto, 2014).

Kaplan’s (1995) Attention Restoration Theory (ART) is the basis of most existing research in this area (Packer, 2014). According to the attention restoration theory, two forms of attention exist: involuntary attention and directed attention (Kaplan, 1995, p. 172). Involuntary attention does not require any effort. Consequently, it cannot suffer from fatigue (Kaplan, 1995). In contrast, direct attention is “[...] an attentional mechanism that requires effort, that can be brought under voluntary control” (Kaplan, 1995, p. 170) and which can suffer from fatigue. To restore direct attention, a person has to find an alternative focus where to apply involuntary attention (e.g., fascination) and be free from strained mental activity (e.g., being away) (Kaplan, 1995, pp. 172-173). Furthermore, the environment in which mental restoration takes place needs to be rich in scope (e.g., extent) and must be compatible with the person’s purpose (e.g., compatibility) (Kaplan, 1995, p. 173).

According to Kaplan (1995, p. 174), restorative environments therefore include aspects of the following components:

- Being away: This aspect does not necessarily require a distant setting. However, natural environments are often the preferred destinations. Therefore, easily accessible natural environments can be seen as important settings for resting one’s direct attention.
- Fascination: Natural environments offer a variety of fascinating objects. Many can be seen as “soft” fascinations (e.g., clouds, sunset) and are effortless to attend.
- Extent: The geographical scope does not necessarily need to be large; even small areas can provide a sense of extent. The extent can also be described on a more conceptual level, e.g., by giving a feeling of being in a different world, although the area itself is not extensive.
- Compatibility: Natural environments seem to allow a better fit between the natural setting and human inclinations.

ART has found applications across various research domains, including environmental psychology, landscape design, education, and architecture (Lehto, 2012). As summarised by Lehto (2012), leisure vacations have the potential to offer various restorative experiences based on ART, calling for instruments to assess how and why a destination facilitates vacationers’ recovery from mental fatigue. For the tourism context, the PDRQ concept (Perceived Destination Restorative Quality), which was developed by

Lehto (2012), provides an instrument that allows the systematic and comprehensive investigation of restorative qualities of a tourism environment related to six dimensions: compatibility, extent, mentally away, discord, physically away and fascination. The PDRQ concept was adopted and applied in many tourism sectors, such as health tourism (Roostika & Mumpuni, 2023) and coastal tourism (Lin & Yang, 2024), and also validated in cross-cultural contexts (Lehto, Kirillova, Li, & Wu, 2017; Chen, Huang, & Zhang, 2017). Furthermore, the perceived restorativeness scale (PRS), as developed by Hartig, Korpela, Evans, & Gärling (1996), is a commonly used measure to investigate the restorative characteristics of a space (Young, Hofmann, Frey, Moretti, & Bauer, 2020). Qiu, Jin, & Scott (2021) adapted and tested it for the context of tourism when studying restoration and quality of life effects of sound scape and visual scape characteristics in nature-based tourism, resulting in their PRE (perceived restorative environment) scale.

3.3.4 Biophilia theory

Attention Restoration Theory (ART) provides a solid explanation for the various benefits of biophilic environments. According to ART, immersion in natural or nature-like environments offers essential cues that help the human nervous system transition back to relaxed, diffuse attention states, thereby reducing the body's stress load (Bilgic & Ebbini, 2023).

The biophilia hypothesis was introduced by Wilson in 1984, suggesting that humans possess an innate affinity for the natural world and their tendency to seek connections with nature and other forms of life. He defines biophilia as the "inherent human inclination to affiliate with life and other life forms" (Wilson, 1984, p. 1). Research indicates that exposure to natural features and environments leads to enhanced psychological well-being, supporting the notion of humans' intrinsic connection with nature (Gullone, 2000). Studies demonstrating the esthetic and restorative effects of such environments are often seen as supporting evidence (Kellert & Wilson, 1993). The field of *biophilic architecture* (Joye, Willems, Brengman, & Wolf, 2010) and the integration of *biophilic design* principles into various environments, including tourism settings, aims to meet humans' need for exposure to nature (Lee, 2019). As people increasingly spend their time in indoor built environments (approx. 90% of the time), the necessity for beneficial interaction with nature remains crucial for maintaining overall health and well-being (Kellert & Calabrese, 2015). Especially in urbanised and industrialised settings, people often experience limited interaction with nature (Gillis & Gatersleben, 2015). Biophilic design has therefore garnered popularity in environmental psychology, workplace design, marketing, and health studies due to its recognised benefits (Lee, Tao, Douglas, & Oh, 2022). Research suggests that biophilic environments elicit human responses, resulting in approach or avoidance behaviour according to the M-R model (Lee, 2019). Biophilic design as a concept explores why certain buildings are perceived to excel over others in terms of their nature-connectedness (Berkebile, Fox, & Hartley, 2008). It examines how incorporating elements of nature into architectural and interior design can enhance benefits such as well-being and performance in living, working, learning, entertainment, and medical environments (Zhong, Schröder, & Bekkering, 2022).

In the tourism context, the idea of integrating a biophilic design is especially prominent in the fields of hotel design, eco, and rural tourism as well as health/wellness tourism (e.g., Khozaei, Carbon, Nia, & Kim, 2022; Lee, 2019; Guzzo, Suess, & Legendre, 2022;

Nanu, Ali, Berezina, & Cobanoglu, 2020; Song, Ali, Cobanoglu, Nanu, & Lee, 2022). Biophilic design integrates natural elements into the built environment, promoting a connection to nature within spaces (Gillis & Gatersleben, 2015). The attributes of biophilic design are related to the direct experience of nature (e.g., plants, animals), the indirect experience of nature (e.g., natural materials, natural colours), and the experience of space and place (e.g., complexity, wayfinding) (Kellert & Calabrese, 2015). For the context of wine tourism, Sigala (2022, p. 21f) specifically highlights that incorporating biophilic elements such as greenery, natural light, earthy colors and materials, simulations of natural air and sounds, as well as glass windows that create a connection between the interior and the surrounding vineyards and landscape, allows visitors to reconnect with nature. This approach fosters a sense of immersion and can drive further benefits, including restoration, relaxation, and enhanced well-being (Sigala, 2022). Purani & Kumar (2018) found that consumers are more responsive to the restorative effects of biophilic elements in settings where they prioritise emotional and experiential value over rational and functional value, making this particularly significant in the context of tourism.

Korpela, Hartig, Kaiser, & Fuhrer (2001) found that natural settings clearly predominate among favorite places, and restorative outcomes characterise natural favorite places in particular. Natural environments are therefore exceptionally qualified to provide restorative outcomes (e.g., Wang, Tsai, & Tang, 2019; Hartig, Mitchell, De Vries, & Frumkin, 2014; Hartig, Evans, Jamner, & Gärling, 2003; Kaplan, 2001; White, Pahl, Ashbullby, Herbert, & Depledge, 2013; Scopelliti & Giuliani, 2004). Nevertheless, natural environments should not be considered equivalent to restorative environments (Hartig & Staats, 2003). Instead, urban or built environments might also provide attributes that can lead to restorative experiences (Kaplan, Bardwell, & Slakter, 1993; von Lindern, Lymeus, & Hartig, 2017).

Green atmospherics were found to provide various benefits, including stress relief and improved mental and physical health outcomes, fostering positive responses and behaviours (see e.g., Vujcic et al., 2017; Lee, 2019; Kumar, Purani, & Viswanathan, 2020; Rosenbaum, Ramirez, & Camino, 2018). Gillis & Gatersleben (2015) state that biophilic design, incorporating natural elements into built environments, can enhance their restorative qualities. Purani & Kumar (2018) highlighted the benefits of biophilic service scapes, stressing their importance in recovering consumers' attention and mood, service scape preference, and effective service encounters.

Nevertheless, it has to be noted that contradictory research challenges the claimed outcomes of biophilic design, e.g., Song, Ali, Cobanoglu, Nanu, & Lee's (2022) results indicate insignificant differences in customer psychological reactions and subjective well-being between spaces with biophilic elements and those without when investigating hotel lobbies. Ha & Kim (2021) studied the restorative effects of campus landscape biodiversity and found that neither the level of biodiversity nor natural sound affected restoration and mood states.

Woods & Knuth (2023) refined Wilson's definition of biophilia, focusing on a person's attraction to biodiversity, offering a more straightforward way to validate the biophilia process. They (ibid.) suggest that biodiversity operates similarly to the principles outlined in the biophilia hypothesis, particularly by facilitating people's (re)connection with nature. In the tourism context, Siikamäki, Kangas, Paasivaara, & Schroderus (2015)

also found connections between biodiversity and the recreational use of Finnish national parks: they underlined the biophilia hypothesis by providing evidence that national parks with greater biodiversity attract more visitors compared to those with lower biodiversity. Kumar, Purani, & Viswanathan (2020) integrated the idea of biomorphism, which involves elements mimicking natural forms, into service scape design. Their research revealed that indirect experiences of nature in service scapes positively influenced consumers' attention restoration, perceived place, identity, and service scape preference. They concluded that biomorphic service scape designs could offer more practical alternatives to biophilic designs in specific contexts (see Kumar, Purani, & Viswanathan, 2020).

4 Empirical studies

This chapter discusses the approaches used during this research's exploratory and descriptive phases.

The various parts of the study build upon one another:

The exploratory phase aims to understand the nature of culinary tourism experiences and related environments, characterise restorative culinary experiences and environments, and get an overview of memorable culinary tourism experiences' outcomes. Furthermore, the approaches used during the descriptive phase of this research are discussed. This descriptive phase aims to test the conceptual models and research hypotheses developed based on the literature and the exploratory research phase.

4.1 Content analysis of tourism destination websites (study 1)

According to Woodside & Dubelaar's (2002) general theory of tourism consumption systems (TCS), destination marketing and related service marketing efforts, such as destination advertising websites, impact travellers' pre-trip behaviour, information search, and trip planning. Subsequently, these influences affect choices and behaviours during the trip, as well as post-trip evaluations like satisfaction and future behavioural intentions.

Nowadays, many nations and regions use tourism websites to promote potential holiday destinations, experiences, and settings. These websites usually advertise a destination's cuisine and food culture and consequently shape the destination's culinary image and create a virtual experience for culinary tourists. Government tourism websites run by official tourism organisations are a valuable research tool for (potential) travellers and offer information on culinary experiences at a destination to different types of (culinary) tourists (Horng & Tsai, 2010).

Similar to the approach of Horng & Tsai (2010), who analysed the presentation of food and food culture promoted on government tourism websites, the first stage of the intended study was to carry out a systematic, rule-guided analysis (Brunt, Horner, & Semley, 2017) to investigate culinary tourism experiences and environments promoted on official destination websites (study 1).

This content analysis aims to review online promotional culinary tourism material provided on destination websites. This results in a framework showing culinary tourism experience offers, their incidence, and related tourism environments and settings in leading culinary tourism destinations.

4.1.1 Methodological approach

4.1.1.1 Description and justification of the research approach

Content analysis research is a well-established methodology (Camprubí & Coromina, 2016; Stepchenkova, Kirilenko, & Morrison, 2009), widely used in tourism (e.g., Choi, Lehto, & Morrison, 2007; Hall & Valentin, 2005; Henderson, 2007; Kemp & Dwyer,

2003; Költringer & Dickinger, 2015) as well as in culinary tourism research (e.g., Boyne & Hall, 2004; Frochot, 2003; Horng & Tsai, 2010; Yousaf & Xiucheng, 2018). A common approach using content analysis research in tourism is utilising promotional material (Finn, Elliott-White, & Walton, 2000, p. 140), such as text on tourism websites (Stepchenkova, Kirilenko, & Morrison, 2009).

To obtain valid results, analytical categories for classifying (Malhotra, Birks, & Wills, 2012, p. 307) were developed to ensure an “objective, systematic and quantitative description” (Aaker, Kumar, Day, & Leone, 2011, p. 186) of the online promotional culinary tourism material. Units of analysis were predefined themes/codes based on the literature review on culinary tourism experiences. Besides describing culinary experiences, the tourism environment in which these experiences are offered was reviewed. Results were recorded according to prescribed rules (Aaker, Kumar, Day, & Leone, 2011). This follows the idea of a quantitative content analysis to explain comprehensive information in content categories to be able to analyse associations between categories using a frequency matrix (Stepchenkova, Kirilenko, & Morrison, 2009).

Following the procedure to carry out a content analysis, as suggested by Finn, Elliott-White, & Walton (2000) and Horng & Tsai (2010), a coding scheme needs to be identified based on the research aims. In the next step, the material has to be analysed following the coding scheme. Finally, initial results have to be compared and in case of disagreement re-analysed before results are finalised (Finn, Elliott-White, & Walton, 2000; Horng & Tsai, 2010).

Similarly, Stepchenkova, Kirilenko, & Morrison (2009, p. 454) suggest starting with data preparation, moving on with the identification of key variables, following with the creation of a word-frequency matrix, and finally terminating with a dimensional reduction of word-frequency data to investigate content “in a transparent, replicable, and effective way.”

4.1.1.2 Coding framework

Based on the suggested procedure, the categories mentioned by Horng & Tsai (2010), Björk, & Kauppinen-Räsänen (2016), Stone, Soulard, Migacz, & Wolf (2018), Bauer-Krösbacher, Stöckl, & Tischler (2015), Pasanen, Ojala, Tyrväinen, & Korpela (2018), Yun, Hennessey, & MacDonald (2011) as well as Roy, Gretzel, Waitt, & Yanamandram (2019) were used for developing this rule-guided framework for the analysis covering 61 items (see Table 3).

Category	Items	Relevant literature
Food culture	Introduction to food culture and local eating habits	Horng, & Tsai, 2010
	Introduction to local/traditional food	
	Introduction to local/traditional drinks	
	Guide to the cities/regions/destinations offering traditional food/drink	
	Introduction to culinary professionals	
Recipes	Recipes for local cuisine/links to recipes for local cuisine	
Table manners	Description/illustration of table arrangements	
	Introduction to table manners	
	Useful "restaurant" expressions in local language	
Information for culinary tourists	Description/illustration of representative cuisines	

Table 3 Continued		
Culinary tourism marketing strategies	Introduction to selected restaurants	
	Introduction to cuisines in major cities and tourist spots	
	Links to websites introducing local cuisines	
	Guide to vegetarian/vegan food	
	Guide to other special diets (e.g., detox, eco-friendly)	
	Introduction to gastronomy tours	
	Introduction to culinary festivals	
	Recommended food for souvenirs	
Restaurant guide	Restaurant guide	
	With search function	
Information on certifications	Restaurant certifications	
	Food/wine certifications	
Food information	Safety of local food	Björk, & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2017
	Price level of local food	
Types of food offered	Local food	Stone, Soulard, Migacz, & Wolf, 2018; Bauer-Krösbacher, Stöckl, & Tischler, 2015
	International food	
	Seasonal food	
	Wine	
	Beer	
	Spirits	
	Alternative diets (e.g., vegan, gluten-free)	
	Healthy nutrition (e.g., detox)	
	Fruits/vegetables	
	Cheese and dairy products	
	Spices/herbs	
	Sweets, confectionery, pastries	
	Oil/vinegar	
	Meat, ham, bacon, sausages	
	Fish, seafood	
	Others	
Types of activities offered	Growing, producing, manufacturing	Desmet & Schifferstein, 2008
	Preparing and cooking	
	Drinking, eating, tasting	
Overall environment	Indoors	Pasanen, Ojala, Tyrväinen, & Korpela, 2018
	Outdoors in natural settings	
	Outdoors in built settings	
Tourism settings	Rated restaurants (e.g., Michelin star)	Stone, Soulard, Migacz, & Wolf, 2018; Yun, Hennessey, & MacDonald, 2011; Roy, Gretzel, Waitt, & Yanamandram, 2019
	Local restaurants	
	Theme restaurants	
	Outdoor dining	
	Street food	
	Winery/brewery/distillery	
	Markets	
	Company visits/experience worlds	
	Wine store	
	Stores offering various regional and typical products under one roof	
	Festival/event (e.g., wine festival, country fair)	
	Cooking class	
	Food/wine/beer-route	
	Farm/orchard/u-pick location	
	Picknick	

Table 3: Criteria covered and coding framework

4.1.1.3 Selection of DMO websites

Tourists rely on various information sources to form an image of a destination; however, they tend to trust sources that are perceived as credible. Destination websites are often regarded as trustworthy and help expand a destination's marketing reach. At the same time, destinations play a crucial role in promoting both the region and local businesses, particularly small enterprises that may lack advertising or marketing expertise or budgets. DMOs therefore serve as key providers of information through their websites (Slocum & Curtis, 2018, p. 166).

Based on the coding framework presented in Table 3, official websites of destination marketing organisations (DMOs) in Italy, Spain, France, Austria, and Germany were analysed, as they are seen as culinary tourism destinations par excellence (Bauer-Krösbacher, Stöckl, & Tischler, 2015; Everett, 2016, p. 137; Karim & Chi, 2010; Ottenbacher & Harrington, 2013). The English versions of all destination websites were considered to allow comparisons.

To analyse the market in France, the offer of culinary tourism experiences in 20 tourism regions corresponding to the definition of L'Agence de développement touristique de la France (2020) was investigated. For Italy, 21 tourism destination websites, according to the structure of Agenzia Nazionale Turismo (2020), were investigated. For Spain, 19 tourism board websites, according to the Instituto de Turismo de España (2020), were reviewed. For Austria, the official tourism destination websites of the country's nine provinces listed by the Austrian National Tourist Office serve as a basis for investigation (see Austrian National Tourist Office, 2022). For Germany, the official tourism websites of the 16 states were investigated (see Deutsche Zentrale für Tourismus register, 2020). Destination websites not providing an English version have not been included in the analysis (see Table 4).

Code	Country	Destination	Website
1	France	Alsace	www.visit.alsace/en/
2	France	Lorraine	www.tourisme-lorraine.fr
3	France	Auvergne*	www.auvergne-destination-volcans.com/
4	France	Biarritz-Basque Country	www.biarritz-pays-basque.com
5	France	Bordeaux	www.bordeaux-tourisme.com/
6	France	Brittany	www.brittanytourism.com/
7	France	Burgundy	www.burgundy-tourism.com/
8	France	Champagne	www.tourisme-champagne-ardenne.com/
9	France	Corsica	www.visit-corsica.com
10	France	Cote d'Azur	https://cotedazurfrance.fr/en/
11	France	Dordogne Valley	www.visit-dordogne-valley.co.uk/
12	France	Jura Mountains	www.montagnes-du-jura.fr/en/
13	France	Loire Valley	www.loirevalley-france.co.uk/
14	France	Lyon	www.lyon-france.com/
15	France	Normandy	www.normandie-tourisme.fr/
16	France	Northern France*	www.hautsdefrance.fr/
17	France	Occitanie – Pyrenees	www.tourisme-occitanie.com
18	France	Paris	www.parisinfo.com/
19	France	Provence - Alps - Region Sud	https://provence-alpes-cotedazur.com/
20	France	Vosges Massif	www.massif-des-vosges.com
21	Germany	Baden-Wuerttemberg	www.tourismus-bw.de/
22	Germany	Bavaria	www.bayern.by/
23	Germany	Berlin	www.visitberlin.de/de
24	Germany	Brandenburg	www.reiseland-brandenburg.de/
25	Germany	Bremen	www.bremen-tourism.de/
26	Germany	Hamburg	www.hamburg-tourism.de/
27	Germany	Hesse	www.hessen-tourismus.de/
28	Germany	Mecklenburg - Western Pomerania	www.auf-nach-mv.de
29	Germany	Lower Saxony	www.reiseland-niedersachsen.de/
30	Germany	North Rhine-Westphalia	www.nrw-tourismus.de/
31	Germany	Rhineland Palatinate	www.gastlandschaften.de/
32	Germany	Saarland	www.urlaub.saarland/
33	Germany	Saxony	www.sachsen-tourismus.de/
34	Germany	Saxony-Anhalt	https://sachsen-anhalt-tourismus.de/
35	Germany	Schleswig-Holstein	www.sh-tourismus.de/

Table 4 Continued			
Code	Country	Destination	Website
36	Germany	Thuringia	www.thueringen-entdecken.de
37	Italy	Abruzzo	www.abruzzoturismo.it
38	Italy	Aosta Valley	www.lovevda.it/it
39	Italy	Puglia	www.viaggiareinpuglia.it
40	Italy	Basilicata	www.basilicataturistica.it
41	Italy	Emilia Romagna	www.emiliaromagnaturismo.com
42	Italy	Friuli Venezia Giulia	www.turismofvg.it/de
43	Italy	Calabria	www.turiscalabria.it
44	Italy	Campania*	www.incampania.com/en/
45	Italy	Lazio	www.visitlazio.com
46	Italy	Liguria	www.turismoinliguria.it
47	Italy	Lombardy	www.in-lombardia.it
48	Italy	Marche	www.turismo.marche.it
49	Italy	Molise*	www.moliseturismo.eu
50	Italy	Piedmont	www.visitpiemonte.com
51	Italy	Sardinia	www.sardegnaturismo.it
52	Italy	Sicily	www.visitsicily.info
53	Italy	Tuscany	www.visittuscany.com
54	Italy	Trentino	www.visittrentino.info
55	Italy	South Tyrol	www.suedtirol.info
56	Italy	Umbria	www.umbriatourism.it
57	Italy	Veneto	www.veneto.eu
58	Spain	Andalusia	www.andalucia.org
59	Spain	Aragón	www.turismodearagon.com/
60	Spain	Asturias	www.turismoasturias.es/
61	Spain	Balearic Islands	www.illesbalears.travel/es/baleares/
62	Spain	Basque Country	https://turismo.euskadi.eus/es/
63	Spain	Canary Islands	www.holaislascanarias.com
64	Spain	Cantabria*	www.turismodecantabria.com
65	Spain	Castile and León	www.turismocastillayleon.com/
66	Spain	Castile-La Mancha	www.turismocastillalamancha.es/
67	Spain	Catalonia	www.catalunya.com/
68	Spain	Ceuta*	www.ceuta.es
69	Spain	Extremadura	www.turismoextremadura.com/
70	Spain	Galicia	www.turismo.gal/inicio
71	Spain	La Rioja	https://lariojaturismo.com/
72	Spain	Madrid Region	https://turismomadrid.es/es/
73	Spain	Melilla*	https://melillaturismo.com/
74	Spain	Navarre	https://VisitNavarra.es
75	Spain	Region of Murcia	www.murciaturistica.es/
76	Spain	Valencia	https://comunitatvalenciana.com/es/inicio
77	Austria	Vienna	www.wien.info/de
78	Austria	Burgenland	www.burgenland.info/
79	Austria	Lower Austria	www.niederoesterreich.at/
80	Austria	Upper Austria	www.oberoesterreich.at/
81	Austria	Styria	www.steiermark.com
82	Austria	Carinthia	www.kaernten.at/
83	Austria	Salzburg	www.salzburg.info
84	Austria	Tyrol	www.tirol.at/
85	Austria	Vorarlberg	www.vorarlberg.travel/

Table 4: Overview of destination websites used for content analysis

Note: Destinations marked with * have been excluded from further analysis, as no English version of the website existed at the time when websites were analysed

4.1.1.4 Data collection and data analysis

To overcome subjectivity in the interpretation of the material and to ensure reliability, more than one trained judge should carry out the coding following explicit rules

(Camprubí & Coromina, 2016). Three coders did an initial review and a pre-test with selected websites in April 2020 to test the coding framework. The refinement of the coding framework and training of coders took place before actual fieldwork was started. Six trained coders then carried out fieldwork between 12 December 2020 and 6 December 2021. Two coders reviewed each destination website. Initial results were compared and, in case of disagreement, re-analysed and discussed before data analysis took place. After finalising assessments and the agreement of all coders, data analysis was done using SPSS version 26.0.

4.1.1.5 Reliability assessment

Besides the analysis of the results performing descriptive analysis procedures, a reliability analysis assessing inter-coder reliability, as suggested by Mayo (2014, p. 206), was done. Mayo (2014, p. 206) also recommends assessing intra-rater reliability, which requires a repeated assessment by each observer (Given, 2008, p. 445). However, an intra-coder analysis was not done in this case. Because two readings require more time and therefore produce higher costs and the second assessment performed by the same coder “cannot be considered as genuinely independently”, this procedure is seldom implemented in practice (Cohen, 2017, p. 1). Similarly, content reliability was not analysed separately, as the content analysis framework suggested by Horng and Tsai (2010) – which is the basis for this study – was already assessed by three culinary professionals in the mentioned study and attributed to having considerable content reliability (Horng & Tsai, 2010, pp. 77-78).

Cohen’s kappa values were calculated to assess inter-coder reliability. According to Salkind (2010), using Cohen’s kappa is appropriate when analysing the consistency of assessments among two independent raters categorising cases or items into two or more mutually exclusive groups. Table 5 summarises the inter-coder reliability assessments of initial results. According to Landis & Koch (1977, p. 165), the strength of agreement according to the indicated Kappa statistics can be classified as “moderate” (0.41 - 0.6) to “substantial” (0.61 - 0.8).

Country	Percentage of concordant assessments	Cohen’s kappa (k)	p-value
France	87.4%	.75	<.001
Germany	80.0%	.60	<.001
Italy	83.0%	.66	<.001
Spain	82.7%	.64	<.001
Austria	86.7%	.73	<.001

Table 5: Assessment of inter coder reliability

4.1.2 Findings

When analysing the culinary tourism marketing and promotion efforts on official destination websites, it becomes evident that most countries and destinations provide at least some general information for culinary tourists (see Figure 17). Specifically, they describe and illustrate representative cuisines and provide detailed descriptions, photos, illustrations, or videos of representative cuisines. Between 75.0% and 89.5% of all destinations in the assessed countries present this general information. Food culture is the second aspect, and it is explained and promoted on most of the

destinations' websites. A general introduction to food culture and local eating habits is presented on most destination websites. Similarly, most websites give an introduction to local/traditional food and drinks. In contrast, the amount of information related to cities, regions, and destinations offering traditional food/drink and culinary professionals varies highly between the countries. When investigating restaurant guides on official destination websites, it becomes evident that considerable differences exist among the analysed countries. While France and Austria provide extensive guides, including search functions, German, Italian, and Spanish destination websites provide significantly less information related to restaurants. Likewise, contents related to certifications vary among the reviewed countries. Information related to restaurant certifications is provided on most French and Austrian websites, while food certifications are mainly given on Italian and Spanish websites. In the same way, the dissemination of information related to traditional and local recipes varies significantly. Austrian, Italian, and French websites most commonly share such culinary insights.

Interestingly, culinary tourism marketing strategies are not frequently followed on the assessed destination websites. Within this category, the introduction to selected restaurants and gastronomy tours is the information that can be found most often. Other offers, however, are communicated relatively rarely. Information related to recommended food souvenirs and guides to vegetarian/vegan food and other special diets is presented scarcely. Similarly, links to websites introducing local cuisines can be found only on a few websites. Some basic information can be found, at least for cuisines in major cities, tourist spots, and culinary festivals. Table manners are a topic that is discussed very rarely. While descriptions/illustrations of table arrangements are presented on a few websites, introductions to table manners and useful "restaurant" expressions in local language are uncommon and can be found on only a handful of destination websites. Finally, giving information related to food safety and food certifications is not very common, except in France and Italy. While more than two-thirds of Italian destination websites provide information on food safety and more than

one-third of French destination websites provide information on food certifications, other destination websites barely state this information.

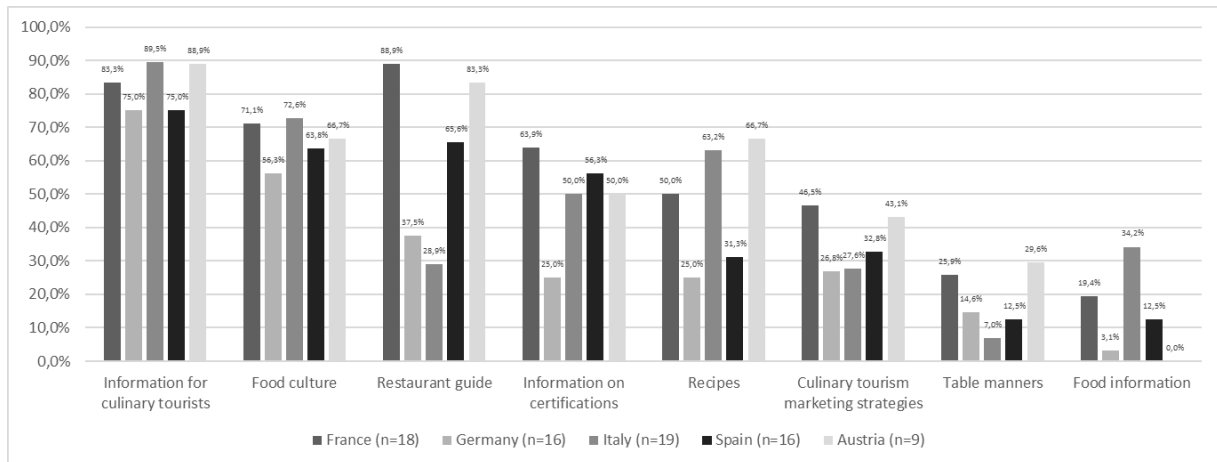


Figure 17: Culinary tourism marketing and promotional content on destination websites

The amount and types of foods offered and promoted vary considerably among the assessed countries again (see Figure 18). While almost all destination websites inform about local food, information related to international food offers can be found on only a few websites. Seasonal food is commonly offered on Austrian websites, while other countries do not set this specific focus to this extent. Alternative diets are mentioned on over half of the Austrian websites, while other destination websites promote this offer significantly less frequently. Information related to healthy nutrition is generally provided very rarely.

Related to specific products, wine is frequently promoted on Spanish, Italian and French websites. In contrast, only approximately half of the German and Austrian websites include wine-related information. German websites, however, most commonly present beer-related offers, while other countries do not market this offer that intensely. Spirits are highly marketed in France and Austria, while German and Italian destination websites advertise this offer less frequently. Similarly, Spanish websites promote the spirits offer relatively rarely. In general, fruits and vegetables are often marketed as culinary tourism products. Similarly, cheese and dairy products are promoted on many destination websites. In contrast, spices and herbs are a niche offer, except in Austria. Sweets, confectionery, and pastries are again a well-promoted offer, especially on French destination websites. The offer related to oil and vinegar varies significantly, with a clear predominance in Italy. Meat, ham, bacon, and sausages are highly marketed offers in France and Italy and, to a slightly lesser extent,

in Spain, Austria, and Germany. Finally, fish and seafood are advertised on approximately half of all destination websites.

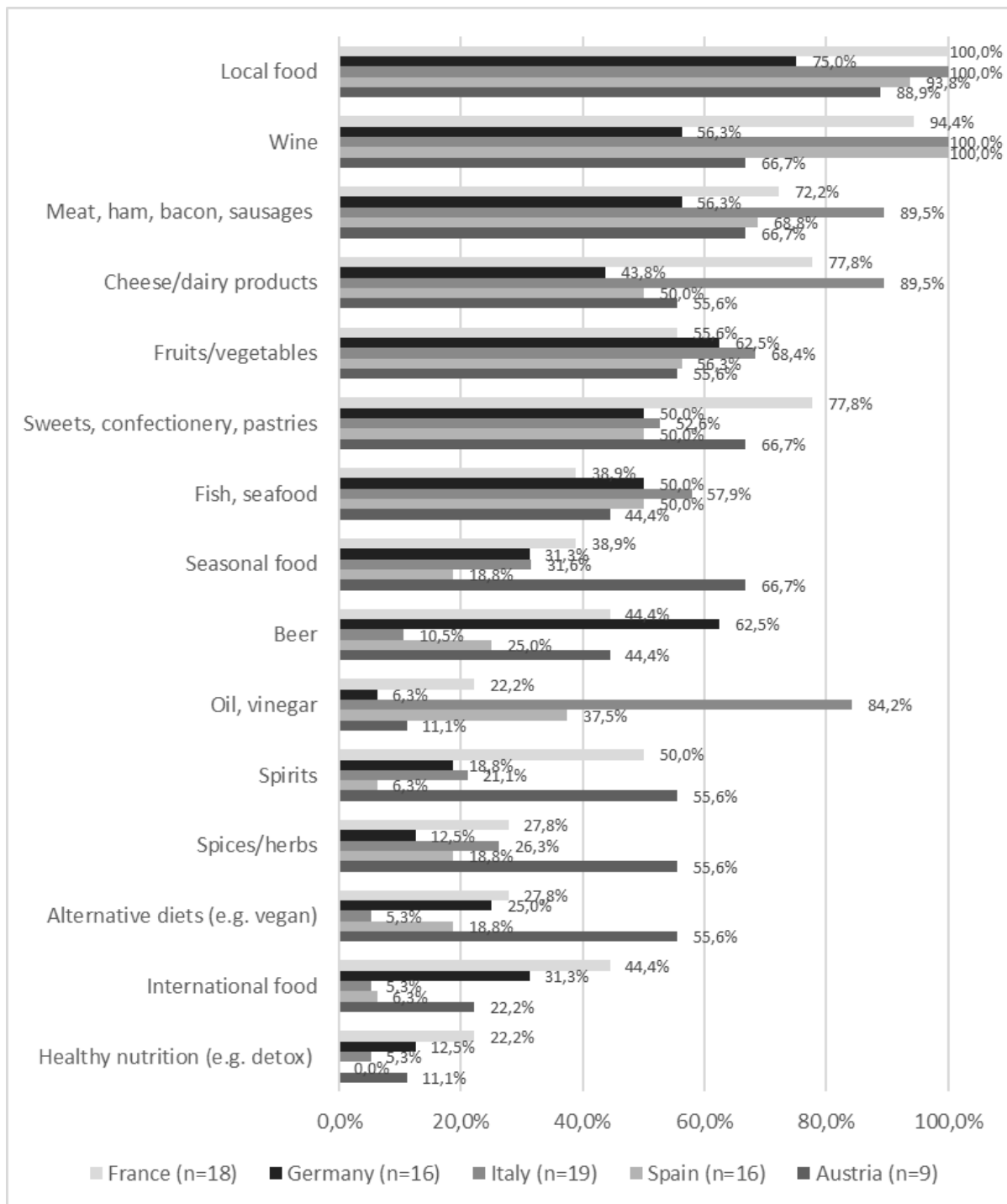


Figure 18: Types of food promoted on destination websites

When investigating the general environments, culinary activities, and their settings (see Figure 19), it can be seen that the overall environments of culinary activities are frequently marketed on French and Austrian websites. German and Spanish websites mainly provide this information as well. Italian websites, however, do not cover this topic broadly. Most destinations promote indoor settings. Likewise, most destinations

market outdoor settings in built environments. Natural outdoor settings, however, are not commonly marketed. Different activities are rather commonly presented, while specific culinary tourism settings are less promoted.

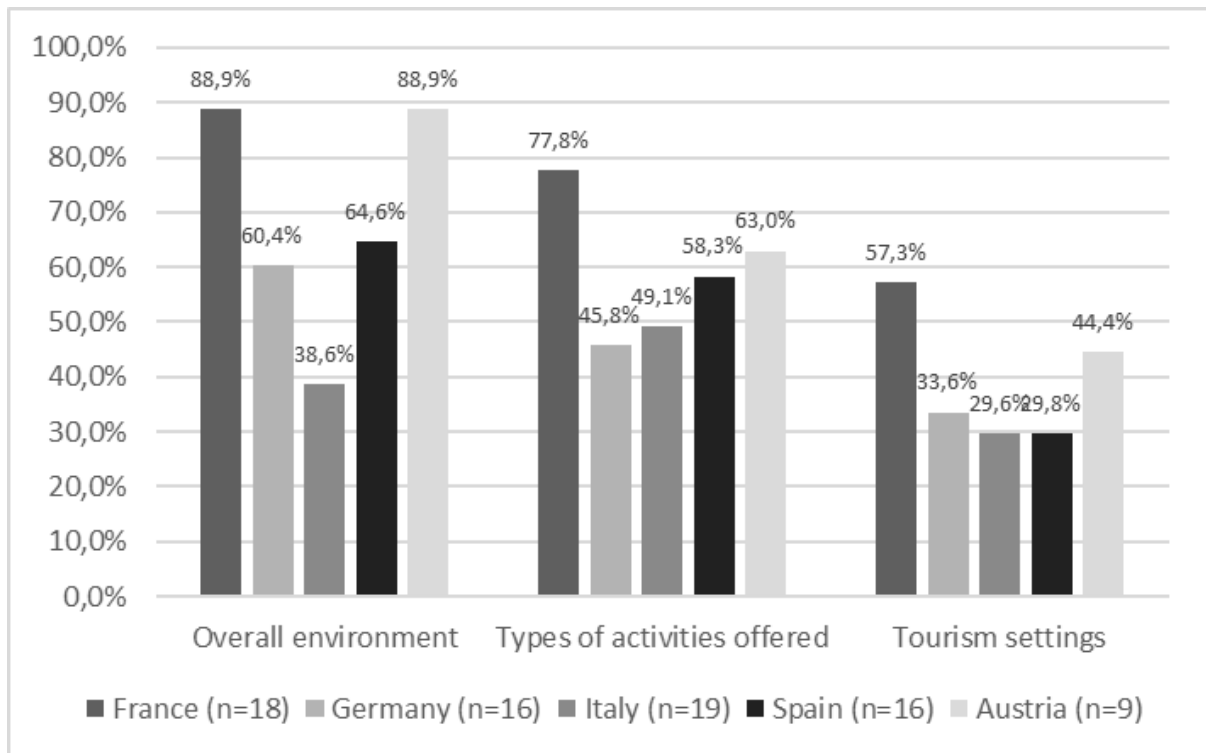


Figure 19: Types of food experiences, environments, and settings promoted on destination websites

Moving on to the specific types of culinary activities offered, it can be concluded that all analysed destination websites give information related to drinking, eating, and tasting activities. Nearly all websites provide this kind of information. Growing, producing, and manufacturing activities are also commonly advertised on Austrian websites, while German, Spanish, and Italian websites give this information less

frequently. Preparing and cooking activities are less marketed. Only a minority of websites promote these activities (see Figure 20).

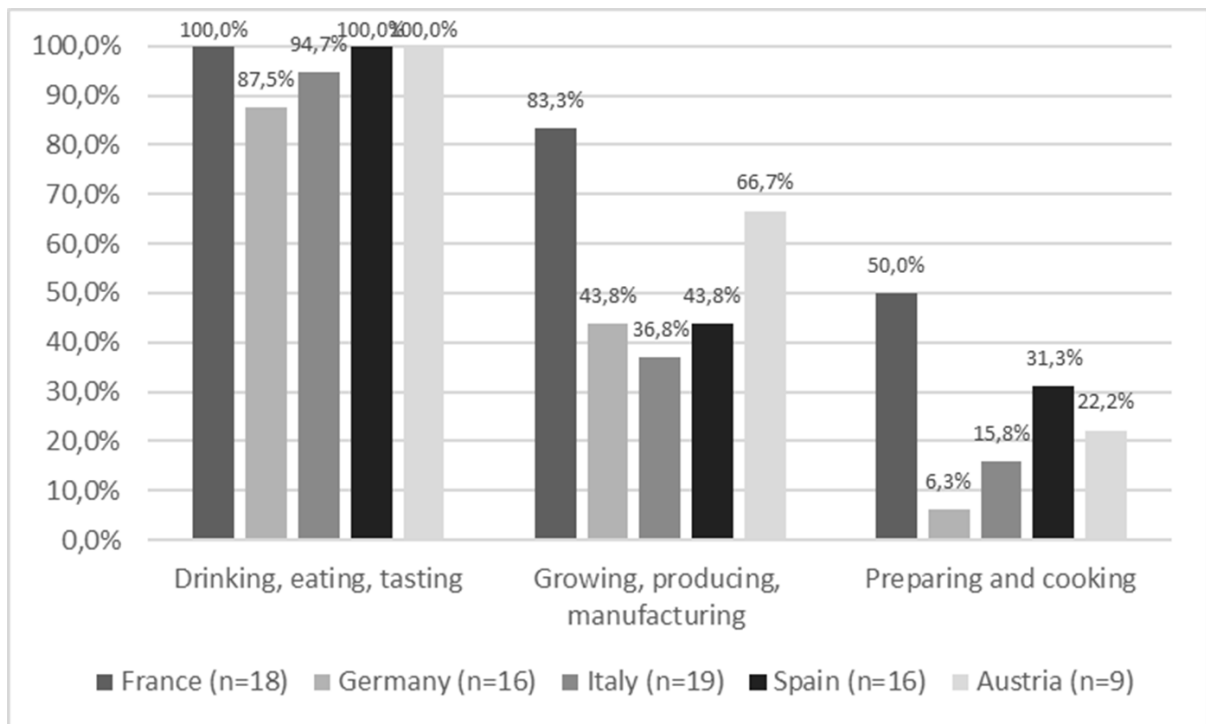


Figure 20: Culinary activities promoted on destination websites

Interestingly, culinary tourism settings are not exceedingly promoted. Among the frequently promoted settings are rated restaurants and local restaurants. Rated restaurants are mostly advertised on French destination websites, while local restaurants are generally marketed on most destination websites. However, theme restaurants and outdoor dining are not that commonly presented. Similarly, street food and dinner theatres can be regarded as niche offers.

Wineries, breweries, and distilleries are again widely advertised on destination websites. At the same time, markets are highly promoted offers on French websites, while other countries do not focus on this offer to this great extent. Company visits and experience worlds are commonly advertised offers in France and Austria. However, promoting wine stores can be seen relatively infrequently on all reviewed destination websites. Similarly, stores offering various regional and typical products under one roof are promoted relatively rarely. In contrast, festivals/events and food/wine/beer routes are commonly advertised. Cooking classes are well promoted in France, while other countries' destination websites do not market this offer to this extent. This result is quite similar to that for promoting farms/orchards/u-pick locations. Finally, picnic offers are again a niche (see Figure 21).

These settings are typically categorised into three areas and presented on related sub-sites: 1) staged settings offering direct on-site experiences, such as events, festivals, culinary routes, and experiential attractions (usually on an events/attraction/experiences page); 2) settings for purchasing local food and drinks, including markets and

regional food stores; and 3) traditional restaurant settings providing dining experiences (mostly summarised in restaurant guides).

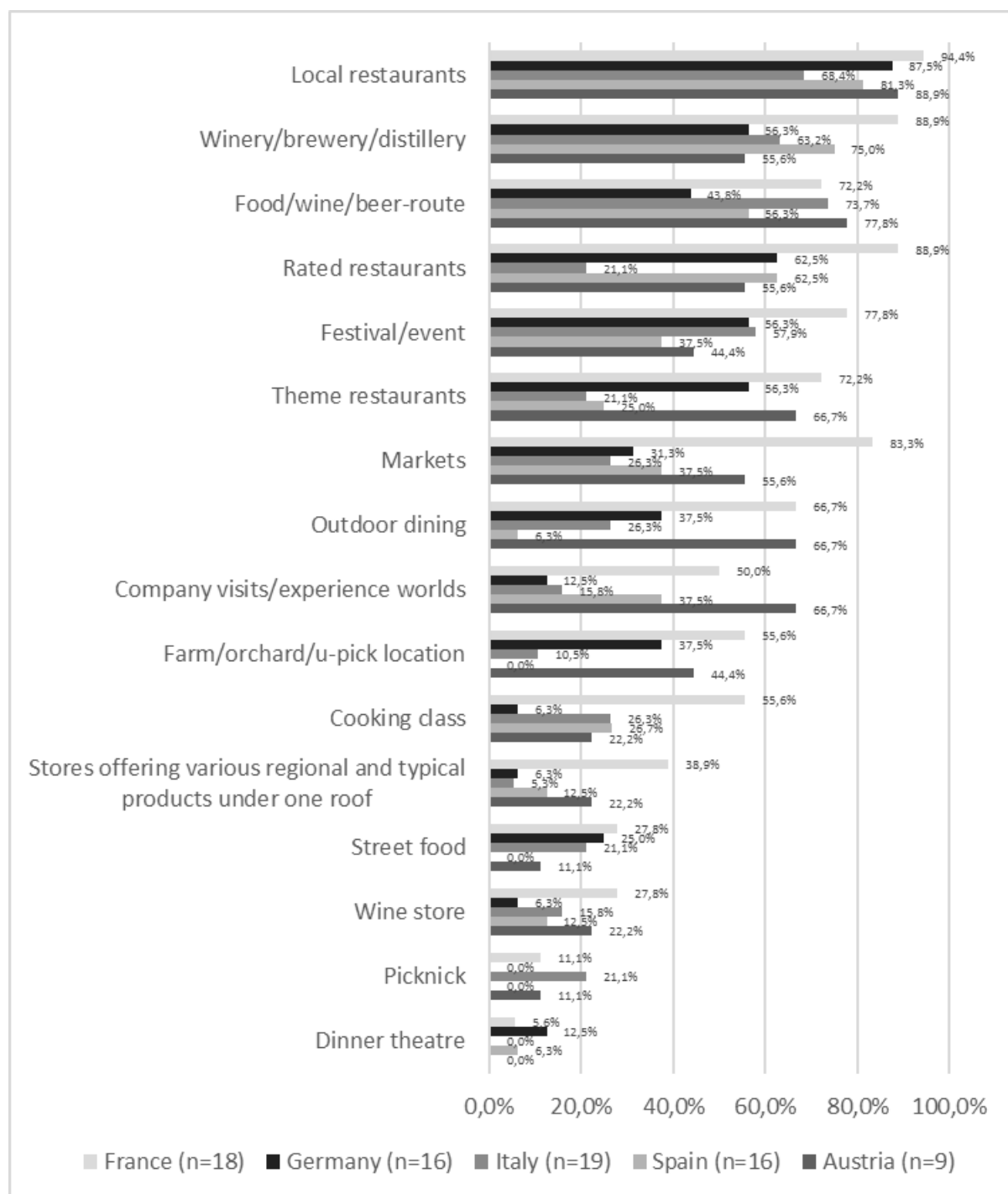


Figure 21: Culinary tourism settings promoted on destination websites

4.1.3 Discussion

In general, French and Austrian destination websites provide the most extensive information related to culinary tourism. French websites clearly focus on local food and

offers, providing much information on wine, cheese, and (starred) restaurants. The variety of promoted culinary tourism offers is usually vast and includes many different activities, themes and products. Local culinary specialities are well explained, and products are often easily found. Some destinations even allow buying local products online or provide related links. Additionally, experience centres, e.g., Calvados Experience Center and Mirabelle Plum Center, are described and promoted. While mountainous and coastal regions such as the Vosges Mountains or Brittany highlight their natural environment in tourism settings as well as region-specific flavours, wine-oriented destinations such as Champagne, as well as urban destinations such as Paris, focus more on wineries, high-end gastronomic restaurants and the variety of authentic bistros. Finally, it is noteworthy that French websites often provide information on gourmet visits and cooking workshops for children, which is uncommon in other countries. All in all, it can be concluded that the culinary offer presented on French destination websites highly corresponds to France's culinary image, which is highly associated with wine and fine cuisine (Cardoso, Vila, de Araujo, & Dias, 2020).

Karim & Chi (2010) proved that France and Italy are highly known for their food, cuisine, and quality. Furthermore, they pointed out that these countries provide travellers with unique food-related tourism activities, such as tours, cooking classes and street markets, which shape the destinations' food images and, consequently, travellers' intentions to visit these destinations. The authors specifically mentioned dining and restaurant offers and food-related tourism activities as determinant factors for travellers' intention to visit France. At the same time, food and cuisine significantly impact travellers' interest in visiting Italy. They concluded that a destination's specific culinary products help create a unique food image. Finally, travellers' image perceptions of a destination are the basis of creating marketing and promotion strategies for culinary destinations (Karim & Chi, 2010). The content analysis showed that French tourism destinations market their culinary offer very comprehensively compared to other countries. However, for Spain, Italy, Germany and Austria, a clear recommendation towards basing their food image on local culinary products of a destination and communicating them accordingly can be given.

Figuerola & Rotarou (2018) specifically highlighted the fact that countries lacking a strong image abroad (such as Chile for the wine tourism context) need strong marketing strategies. These strategies should focus on promoting the country as a culinary and wine tourism destination for both local and foreign tourists. Based on the Chilean wine tourism context, recommendations included leveraging official digital marketing channels, organising events, developing tourist apps and videos, providing up-to-date information, offering offline maps, maintaining a register of culinary and tourist attractions, and furnishing details about accommodations and restaurants were identified as crucial strategies for enhancing commercialisation and promotional efforts (Figuerola & Rotarou, 2018).

Another finding from the content analysis is that urban destinations typically offer less culinary tourism information. Here, culinary tourism information is mostly limited, except for restaurant guides, which mainly offer a simple search function. In most cases, it can be seen that culinary tourism is not the main offer of urban destinations. Nevertheless, it should be marketed by urban destinations as well, as Asian tourists

especially relate culinary experiences to urban destinations, according to the study conducted by Cardoso, Vila, de Araujo, & Dias (2020).

Food certifications are another aspect that is not communicated comprehensively, except in Italy. Sgroi & Modica (2022) highlighted the importance of excellent agri-food products for rural areas, as “[...] they allow the territory to be linked to the product and to fix it in the mind of the consumer.” The foundation for creating value is laid by promoting such products using certifications such as PDO, PGI, and TSG. In their case study on Pecorino Siciliano PDO, Sgroi & Modica (2022) specifically recommended that entrepreneurs of dairies better manage the Siciliano food and wine tourism offering and advance communication targeted at Italian and foreign tourists. Special attention should be paid to the quality of products and food safety Sgroi & Modica (2022). The lack of information related to food certifications and the safety of food detected in this content analysis clearly underlines Sgroi & Modica’s (2022) recommendations for promoting these issues, not only for rural areas.

Interestingly, not all tourism destinations provide comprehensive information on their culinary offer. While local food, wine, cheese/dairy products and meat/ham/bacon/sausages are promoted on most websites, information related to offers such as seasonal food, alternative diets, healthy nutrition and spices/herbs is provided less frequently. Folgado-Fernandez, Campon-Cerro, & Hernandez-Mogollon (2019) mentioned that quality food has to be seen as a crucial factor when designing unique tourism experiences as tourist experiences shape future intentions of travellers in terms of returning or recommending the experience lived in a territorial environment with an identity and quality food. Therefore, it is recommended that the full range of the gastronomic offer is presented, as this allows potential travellers to glimpse culinary experiences at the destination and form related expectations. Furthermore, it has to be considered that different visitor groups, such as international tourists and local residents, might have distinct expectations about food and food quality, as shown by Pezenka and Weismayer (2020) in their study on online restaurant reviews.

Surprisingly, tourism settings are not promoted extensively, except for restaurants. Settings offering attractive culinary tourism activities such as company visits and experience worlds are not marketed by all tourism destinations. This is especially striking, as all the countries under investigation have a highly developed foodscape and a long tradition in food museums, for example Italy, as Garibaldi & Pozzi (2021) mentioned. Additionally, such settings would allow practical and hands-on experiences to foster a deep engagement of the visitors with local food (Garibaldi & Pozzi, 2021).

According to the study of Batat (2021) investigating Michelin-starred restaurants in France, starred restaurants can significantly help rural tourism destinations promote their local and authentic culinary tourism products. She concluded that starred restaurants enhance the attractiveness of a destination by featuring the uniqueness of the food culture in which the cuisine of the chef is embedded. Potential tourists should be able to envision the culinary offerings of a destination by being informed about local and authentic culinary tourism products as well as the chefs’ creative cuisines and their

embeddedness in the region. Consequently, this helps create unique experiences that cannot be found elsewhere (Batat, 2021).

As tourism settings and environments contribute considerably to the memorability of a tourism experience, as pinpointed by Stone, Soulard, Migacz, & Wolf (2018), it is therefore highly recommended to inform the potential tourist about the locations where culinary tourism activities can be experienced. Specifically, designed and staged experiences such as festivals, cooking classes, and culinary tours are among the most memorable experiences besides restaurants and bars (Stone, Soulard, Migacz, & Wolf, 2018) and should therefore be marketed on destination websites. Additionally, Lai, Khoo-Lattimore, & Wang (2018) identified dining places and restaurants and their attractiveness and atmosphere as the main attributes shaping the food image of a destination, which emphasises the importance of effective communication here again. In the context of food tourism in Australia, they also discovered that farmers' markets and street markets play pivotal roles as significant attractions, effectively showcasing local produce and culture. However, promotional efforts frequently overlook these aspects. Likewise, food-related activities such as cooking classes and food tours are very attractive but absent in promotional videos (Lai, Khoo-Lattimore, & Wang, 2018). Especially outdoor and natural settings, which are often highly qualified to provide restorative outcomes (e.g., Wang, Tsai, & Tang, 2019; Hartig, Mitchell, De Vries, & Frumkin, 2014; Hartig, Evans, Jamner, & Gärling, 2003; Kaplan, 2001; White, Pahl, Ashbullby, Herbert, & Depledge, 2013; Scopelliti & Giuliani, 2004) and to induce memorable tourism experiences should be advertised in the culinary tourism context. As urban and built environments can also provide attributes leading to restorative experiences (Kaplan, Bardwell, & Slakter, 1993; von Lindern, Lymeus, & Hartig, 2017), they should furthermore be promoted.

A study by Lin (2014) shows that cuisine experiences affect psychological well-being, which in turn influences revisit intentions. However, DMOs do not mention the aspect of relaxation and restoration in the context of culinary tourism encounters that can be experienced at the destination.

Finally, it must be mentioned that the websites written in the local language provide significantly more information than the English versions of the respective sub-pages on culinary tourism. This is the case for all the investigated countries. Garibaldi & Pozzi (2021), for example, detected that Italian food museums are primarily appealing to domestic travellers while foreigners are the clear minority, which is mainly the result of a lack of visibility and language issues. This lack of visibility and the missing information in English is especially detrimental in times of increasing international tourism flows.

To conclude, the options for culinary tourism marketing are not fully exploited on official websites provided by culinary tourism destinations par excellence, although Slocum & Curtis (2018, p. 164) emphasise that showcasing local foods, their history, and the associated traditions in a cohesive manner on a destination's website enables tourists to envision the region's culinary culture, heritage, and experiences.

Therefore, based on the results of this content analysis, the recommendations provided by Cardoso, Vila, de Araujo, & Dias (2020) have to be reinforced at this point here: culinary tourism destinations should focus on presenting their regional offers, their gastronomic routes, pictures of tasty-looking, well-presented meals as well as the

variety of their food offered. In specific, marketing should focus more intensely on specific settings where offerings are presented. Three surroundings seem essential in this context: 1) staged settings with direct on-site experiences, such as events, festivals, culinary routes, experience worlds, etc., 2) settings providing opportunities to purchase local food and drinks, like markets and regional food stores, and 3) classical restaurant settings.

Communicating culinary offers and their settings helps create a unique culinary image that drives visiting intentions and eventually creates memorable culinary tourism experiences. Anton, Camarero, Laguna, & Buhalis (2019, p. 760) stress that “[...] the image of local food should be treated with the same relevance as other aspects in terms of marketing promotion and communication” as they concluded that culinary offers are pretty often not well promoted.

4.1.4 Contribution and evaluation of results

The tourism literature provides considerable evidence of the relationship between a destination’s culinary image based on its food offerings and attractions and the intention to visit the place. Besides, as highlighted in the literature review, culinary tourism environments and settings not only play an essential role in creating memorable experiences, but their promotion on destination websites clearly shapes travellers’ pre-travel expectations and on-site experiences.

Consequently, it is essential to comprehend the variety of food offerings, attractions and experience environments in renowned culinary tourism destinations. These aspects stimulate intentions to visit these places, forming the foundation for delivering on-site experiences that lead to further behavioural outcomes and trigger economic benefits for a destination. It is therefore crucial to know which and to what extent culinary tourism experiences and settings are promoted through official channels. Therefore, this first part of the research aimed to investigate the range of culinary tourism offers and settings promoted by well-known culinary tourism destinations.

Tourism destination websites are primary sources of information for potential visitors and provide information on attractions, accommodations, activities, amenities, and services available. Culinary offers are a significant aspect of travel for many people and should therefore be communicated on these websites. The information provided there clearly shapes visitors’ perceptions and expectations and influences tourists’ decision-making. Having easily accessible information helps travellers create personalised itineraries that align with their culinary interests and preferences and advance the overall (culinary) tourism experience as well as subsequent behavioural intentions.

Examining the offers presented on destination websites during this first stage generated insights about the range of current culinary tourism experiences and the settings in which they are offered. This approach helped to understand how destinations communicate these aspects to a (potential) traveller and their overall accessibility.

The results of this first stage were used as input for all further empirical research approaches, which are explained in the following chapters. Firstly, the results of this content analysis were used to develop the discussion guide for the focus group discussions and the interview guideline for the expert interviews with the intention to discuss

the obtained range of culinary tourism experiences and settings as well as their memorability. Furthermore, the characteristics of preferred settings were discussed. Finally, the findings from this content analysis were used to formulate research hypotheses and to design the research model. In specific, this study helped to determine segments of tourism settings, which were then used to analyse survey results across various contexts (see study 5).

4.2 Focus group discussions with travellers (study 2)

The content analysis described in the previous chapter provided an overview of culinary settings, offers, and activities promoted by destinations of well-known culinary tourism destinations. Based on these research results, existing culinary tourism activities and experiences were reviewed during four focus group discussions with different types of travellers (study 2). Furthermore, various culinary tourism environments detected in the content analysis were discussed with the participants to assess the characteristics of such environments in greater detail and to analyse preferences toward multiple settings as well as potential outcomes of related experiences.

Considering Woodside & Dubelaar's (2002) general theory of tourism consumption systems (TCS) again, performing focus group discussions at this point helps to better understand on-site culinary tourism experiences and related outcomes. This is based on investigating pre-travel information related to culinary tourism presented on official destination websites, addressing the interconnectedness of these different travel stages.

4.2.1 Methodological approach

4.2.1.1 Justification and description of the research approach

Focus group discussions are generally used to supplement other research approaches (Finn, Elliott-White, & Walton, 2000, p. 78) and help to design more systematic investigation methods, e.g., quantitative studies (Mayo, 2014, p. 200).

Similar to the approach of Wu, Cheng, & Ai (2018), who studied the dimensions of experiential quality perceived by cruise tourists and their effect on satisfaction and behavioural outcomes using a two-stage design, focus group discussions were the basis for the following quantitative study (study 5). Focus group discussions are often used in an empirical investigation's initial or explanatory phase (Frey & Fontana, 1993, p. 23; Hennink, 2014, p. 16). The underlying approach of this study also follows the recommendation of Horng & Tsai (2010), who suggested using focus group discussions to analyse the marketing capacities of culinary tourism offers after conducting a content analysis.

Therefore, culinary tourism offers and experiences discovered during the content analysis were discussed with travellers aged 18+ yrs. to understand the nature of memorable culinary tourism experiences and identify the attributes affecting them as well as related tourism settings and potential outcomes. The aim here was not to

generalise the findings but to create an initial understanding, which is usually the idea of qualitative research approaches (Malhotra, Birks, & Wills, 2012).

Focus groups are interviews used to investigate different viewpoints, opinions, and attitudes. This method is therefore appropriate when behaviour and motivations are to be investigated (Morgan & Krueger, 1993, p. 16; Krueger & Casey, 2015, p. 11; Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2011, p. 138) and when the interactions of participants are of interest (Jennings, 2010, p. 181). Both aspects are especially relevant to the study at hand and therefore lead to the conclusion that qualitative group discussions should be conducted. Focus group discussions were furthermore preferred over in-depth interviews as the mentioned interactive nature of group discussions usually allows to produce more insights compared to a series of in-depth interviews (Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2011, p. 136; Carson, Gilmore, Perry, & Gronhaug, 2001, p. 116).

4.2.1.2 Discussion guideline

A guideline listing the topics to stimulate the discussion (Finn, Elliott-White, & Walton, 2000, p. 78) was designed and used as the basis for moderating the discussions. The question format is usually open-ended but structured to allow the moderator to follow a directive approach during the discussion (Frey & Fontana, 1993, p. 33). Knodel (1993, p. 37) highlighted that it has to be considered how focus group data can be integrated into the overall research approach in those cases where such group discussions are part of a larger project combining various data collection methods. Consequently, the discussed topics were based on the literature review and the framework used for the content analysis to ensure this integration into the overall research project. Likewise, all upcoming research steps were based on the concepts discussed during this qualitative research phase to ensure this integrity.

Following the recommendations of Hennink (2014, p. 48ff), Krueger & Casey (2015, p. 41ff), and Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey (2011, p. 142ff), the interview guideline was used as a checklist for the moderator to cover all relevant aspects. Furthermore, the guideline was arranged according to the structure suggested by these authors (*ibid.*) (introductory questions, key topics, closing questions). To start the discussion, respondents were asked to introduce themselves and share a photo/anecdote they had been asked to bring to the debate to describe and share their most memorable culinary tourism experience. This projective technique using a pictorial and elicitation approach was employed to ensure a more engaging discussion, as suggested by Soley & Smith (2008), Rakic (2012) as well as Hennink (2014, p. 62) and to allow the participants to prepare for the group discussion (Krueger & Casey, 2015, p. 58). In the next part, participants were asked to talk about elements of memorable (culinary) tourism experiences. Furthermore, the outcomes of memorable (culinary) tourism experiences and the role of environments and experience scapes were discussed. Finally, the role of restoration and restorative environments was discussed. As Tung & Ritchie (2011) recommended, prior information regarding the questions to be addressed was given to the participants to ensure a higher-quality outcome.

The interview guideline used was provided in two versions (English and German) as it is recommended to translate the guideline into the language of discussion (Hennink, 2014, p. 67; Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2011, p. 148). The first focus group discussion was conducted in English – as international participants were recruited for this first

group –, the last three discussions were carried out in German, as this was the participants' mother tongue. The final interview guideline in the English and German versions can be found in Appendix 1.

4.2.1.3 Recruitment of study participants and data collection

Purposive sampling is typically used in qualitative approaches and can be described as a “[...] deliberate choice of a participant due to the qualities the participant possesses” (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016, p. 2). The aim is to find information-rich cases that can provide the information needed to fulfill the research aim (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). Therefore, organising a focus group discussion requires pre-screening of the potential participants (Jennings, 2010, p. 182), which means, in this case, that potential participants need to have earlier travel experiences in order to contribute to the discussion. This selection allowed the recruitment of participants who could provide relevant insights into the particular study topic specifically, as Carson, Gilmore, Perry, & Gronhaug (2001, p. 117) suggested. As random selection is neither needed nor appropriate for focus group research (Hennink, 2014, p. 41), participants were recruited using the personal networks of the researcher and those of students of the IMC University of Applied Sciences Krems. As mentioned, participants were selected on purpose as they had the specific sought-after characteristics and experiences and can therefore be classified as “information-rich” (Hennink, 2014, p. 41).

When selecting participants, a balance of different subgroups (age, gender,...) shall be aimed for (Finn, Elliott-White, & Walton, 2000, p. 78). Before recruiting participants for data collection, it is therefore essential to decide on the characteristics of potential interviewees (Knodel, 1993, p. 37). Knodel (1993, p. 39) stressed that discussions are usually held with separate groups when the idea is to analyse and compare people with various backgrounds and/or attitudes. To define the population, break characteristics (criteria that differentiate groups from each other) as well as control characteristics (criteria that are common for all groups) need to be specified (Knodel, 1993, p. 39). Consequently, the target group of the focus group discussions was defined as travellers aged 18+ yrs. Therefore, four discussions were carried out with people showing the mentioned characteristics (control characteristics) but having various backgrounds (break characteristics), which are discussed in subsequent parts. Following Knodel's (1993, p. 39) suggestions, the same topics were discussed in all four groups to allow comparisons.

Knodel (1993, p. 41) also discussed the number of sessions to be held. Following his recommendation, related considerations should be based on the number of break characteristics. Here, the most crucial break characteristics should be considered. The break characteristics mentioned below were identified as the most important ones for the study at hand, and therefore, four discussions were scheduled.

In May 2021, a first discussion was carried out, which also served as a test run to check the guideline, the wording of questions, the projective techniques to be included, and the length, and to familiarise the interviewer with the process. Pilot tests assessing the number of questions, their content, and structure, as well as their required length is seen as good practice; in specific, using the first group as a pilot is highly recommended (Hennink, 2014, p. 68; Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2011, p. 149). Six

participants with varying cultural backgrounds (four males and two females, ages 22-43 yrs., nationalities: Finland, Bulgaria, Austria, Mexico, and Slovakia) were recruited for this pre-test discussion. All participants were highly experienced and frequent travellers (break variable 1). This discussion – moderated by the researcher and an IMC University of Applied Sciences Krems student – was done in English and lasted 1:44 hours. After this discussion, the guideline was slightly adapted to ensure a better structure. However, special care was taken to keep the guidelines consistent to allow group comparisons (Krueger & Casey, 2015, p. 70).

In June 2021, a focus group discussion with young travellers was carried out (break variable 2). Six participants (two males and four females, ages 22-27 yrs., nationalities: Austria, Japan, Pakistan) took part in the meeting, which lasted 1:19 hours. In September 2022, another discussion with a special focus on families (break variable 3) was held (two males and four females, ages 37-45 yrs., nationality: Austria, children: between one and three underaged children). According to the literature, childbirth does not only influence daily mobility behaviour and leisure activities (Lanzendorf, 2010), but also travel behaviour. As families differ considerably from other tourists in their travel behaviour and usually have different motivations and needs (Schänzel, Yeoman, & Backer, 2012, p. 3), a specific focus was put on this group. Finally, a last discussion was performed with travellers aged 40+ (break variable 4) in October 2022 (ages 42-58 yrs., nationalities: Austria, USA). Travel behaviour of younger and older people is usually different (Boksberger, Sund, & Schuckert, 2009, p. 30), and travel behaviour typically remains relatively constant starting at the age of approx. 30 to 40 years. Therefore, this group of more mature travellers was formed as well. The last three discussions were moderated solely by the researcher. A detailed overview of these four groups, as well as the participants and their characteristics, can be found in Appendix 2.

In general, the literature suggests a range of five to twelve participants per focus group discussion (Mayo, 2014, p. 199; Jennings, 2010, p. 181; Finn, Elliott-White, & Walton, 2000, p. 78; Krueger & Casey, 2015, p. 2; Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2011, p. 136; Carson, Gilmore, Perry, & Gronhaug, 2001, p. 119). However, based on the recommendations of Hennink (2014, p. 38) as well as Krueger & Casey (2015, p. 82), smaller groups were created, as it was expected that each participant was likely to contribute a lot to the discussion based on their diverse and manifold (culinary) travel experiences. Given the relatively long duration of each discussion, despite interviewing a relatively small number of participants per session, this assumption proved to be correct.

Besides following the recommendation of Knodel (1993, p. 41) to define the number of sessions based on break and control variables (resulting in four groups), certain saturation was furthermore reached after four discussions, which has to be considered according to Hennink (2014, p. 43). Hennink (ibid.) specifies that the number of discussions to be held is determined “[...] through an iterative process until information saturation is reached”. Information related to the elements of memorable culinary tourism experiences, outcomes of memorable culinary tourism experiences, and aspects related to the role of relaxation started to repeat and did not lead to the generation of new codes, although significantly different target groups were interviewed. Following Hennink’s (2014, p. 43) definition, repetition clearly indicates saturation.

Although there is a discussion among scholars on how saturation should be conceptualised, the approach is widely accepted (Saunders et al., 2018). The saturation approach was therefore used for the study at hand following the recommendations of Saunders et al. (2018, p. 1897). Specifically, data saturation could be seen after collecting data during the four discussions as “[...] new data repeat what was expressed in previous data” (Saunders et al., 2018, p. 1897). Similarly, Krueger & Casey (2015, p. 23) and Carson, Gilmore, Perry, & Gronhaug (2001, p. 118) stated that three to four groups should usually be scheduled to allow data analysis across groups besides following the idea of saturation. Additionally, inductive thematic saturation was reached during the analysis, as no new codes or themes emerged (Saunders et al., 2018, p. 1897) (see the following subchapter for more details).

All discussions were held online using MS Teams. Krueger & Casey (2015, p. 211) mentioned that online focus groups are evolving as they are more flexible, and interviewees can participate anywhere. Following their recommendations for conducting online focus groups (Krueger & Casey, 2015, p. 214), a welcoming and friendly online environment was created, the layout and design were kept clean and simple, and the groups were kept relatively small. Furthermore, online discussions were preferred over personal meetings by the participants because direct encounters were not possible and/or favoured, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, which occurred during the first two discussions.

4.2.1.4 Data analysis procedure

All sessions were audio and video recorded to produce a transcript for data analysis as recommended by Veal (2006, p. 201) and Hennink (2014, p. 85). The transcripts served as a basis for subsequent qualitative thematic analysis, the most common approach to analysing focus group data (Hennink, 2014, p. 90).

Thematic analysis can be classified as an inductive approach (Hennink, 2014, p. 90), which is usually non-quantifying (Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013). Braun & Clarke (2006, p. 87) describe the 6-phase approach of thematic analysis as follows:

1. Familiarizing with the data
2. Generating initial codes
3. Searching for themes
4. Reviewing themes
5. Defining and naming themes
6. Producing the report

As mentioned, the process itself starts with creating verbatim transcripts to identify the discussions' main themes. Consequently, data are systematically coded to review all detailed comments on a specific topic. Topics are then contrasted across the data to find patterns, e.g., between distinct focus groups. This categorisation of themes and respective codes should allow for higher abstraction toward theory-building (Hennink, 2014, p. 90f).

In this context, the term code means “[...] an issue, topic, idea, opinion, etc., that is evident in the data” (Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2011, p. 216). Codes that emerge from

the empirical investigation are inductive, while those derived from the literature are called deductive codes (Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2011, p. 217). As recommended by Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey (2011, p. 218), both code types were introduced. While deductive codes are based on theoretical concepts in the literature review and the interview guideline, inductive codes were developed by reading and re-reading the transcripts for code development (Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2011, p. 220). Following the principle of saturation here again, codes were developed until no more new aspects could be categorised (Hennink, Hutter, & Bailey, 2011, p. 217). The resulting coding tree can be found in Appendix 3.

In this context, it has to be noted that while code saturation might be reached after a few cases, meaning saturation might need more interviews. This means that code saturation helps to identify all issues, resulting in a robust codebook, while more data might be required to understand those issues fully. High-prevalence codes are typically identified after a few interviews, while low-prevalence codes might require more interviews (Hennink, Kaiser, & Marconi, 2017, p. 604f). Furthermore, Hennink, Kaiser, & Marconi (2017, p. 605) assume that the sampling approach and the study population influence saturation issues. Achieving meaning saturation requires an iterative sampling process to monitor data's diversity, clarity, and depth. Additionally, a diverse study population might need a higher sample size to reach both code and meaning saturation (Hennink, Kaiser, & Marconi, 2017).

Data analysis and coding were done using MAXQDA 2022. Intergroup comparisons were performed based on the above-mentioned break characteristics, as described by Knodel (1993, p. 49).

Assessing reliability for focus group discussions usually requires a team approach (Knodel, 1993, p. 50). However, because of time and budget constraints, it was impossible to include several researchers in this data analysis procedure. Nevertheless, as several sessions were held, it is possible to assess the reliability of the data "[...] by comparing statements within and, more important, across sessions" (Knodel, 1993, p. 50). While some variation is expected between the groups, remarkable consensus was found within and between the four groups. Furthermore, the accuracy of the interpretative analysis is improved when the analyst is involved in the data collection process (Knodel, 1993, p. 50), which was the case as the researcher was present and moderated all four groups. Furthermore, validity in this context can be established by pilot-testing, clarification of interviewees' areas of ambiguity, and systematic analysis (Krueger & Casey, 2015, p. 242), which was forcefully followed for the study at hand.

Qualitative research approaches also require ethical considerations (Brunt, Horner, & Semley, 2017, p. 168). Focus group discussion participants were asked to provide an informed consent form and were told about all research project details. Specifically, they were informed that all data gathered would be treated entirely anonymously. Finally, during the focus group discussions, the moderator tried to reduce any potential risk, including physical, social, or psychological harm to the participants due to their involvement.

4.2.2 Findings

The analysis of the focus group discussions yielded several results across four main focal constructs:

- Determinants of memorable culinary tourism experiences
- The role of restoration and restoring environments
- Factors influencing tourists' expectations and satisfaction
- Outcomes of memorable (culinary) experiences and economic impacts

These are presented and discussed in the following subchapters. At the end of this discussion (see 4.2.3), Table 6 summarises all elements and implications related to the focal constructs identified during this phase of the study.

4.2.2.1 Determinants of memorable culinary tourism experiences

Local agricultural and food products

Among the most memorable elements of culinary tourism experiences is local, fresh, and high-quality food consumed in a fitting and unique tourism environment (e.g., fresh fish served at a beach restaurant located in coastal holiday destinations). One of the young travellers stated, *"[...] during our sailing trip, we made a stop in a small bay in Croatia. There, I was served with the best fish I've ever had."* (P8, Robin, 23 yrs.). Tasty, high-quality, fresh food and drinks and regional culinary products are well remembered and resulted in the codes assigned most frequently. Specifically, local products such as wine, cheese, fish, and desserts were often mentioned.

Furthermore, culinary experiences were classified as highly authentic and unique due to the regionality of the food/drink consumed: on the one hand, these culinary products are location-bound and cannot be easily bought or consumed at home, and on the other hand, they are served in an environment that is extraordinary and/or surprising but most importantly different from the usual environment at home. Most travellers also agreed that local food clearly represents a destination's culture and that therefore the local food offer fulfills their need to experience a new culture, which is most often a primary travel motive.

Storytelling about local and agricultural food products and their producers

The focus group discussions showed that learning about the culinary offerings at a destination is usually not a primary motive for most travellers and, in most cases, not intended. However, most of the respondents reported that stories they were told about local agricultural products and dishes led to a great personal learning experience. All participants agreed that they find it exciting when dishes or products from different regions of a country are presented alongside stories from their places of origin. Therefore, stories about the ingredients and production processes of dishes are highly valued and help people conveniently learn about local products and cuisine. In most cases, travellers were even more willing to try new and/or unfamiliar products and tastes when related stories accompanied these. For many travellers, this unintentional and incidental learning triggered by new food led to a greater general interest in the

regional culinary offer. Similarly, it was seen that participative culinary experiences can particularly stimulate personal learning and raise interest and awareness. The focus group results show that storytelling facilitates connecting with local products and cuisine. It lays the foundation for greater interest in the destination and subsequent activities during and after the holiday (e.g., buying food souvenirs, positive WOM).

Service quality

Service quality is also described as a highly memorable element of the tourism experience. Most participants remember episodes related to outstanding service quality provided by the staff. Specifically, families seem to value individual as well as family- and children-oriented services. They can also remember and report such experiences as they stay vividly in the minds of all family members. Experiences such as meeting the cook, offering highly individualised children's menus, or providing extra fast services are said to be well remembered by parents and children. Similarly, friendly and accommodating treatment of special needs and wishes (such as modified children's menus for picky eaters or fulfilling specific demands of travellers with intolerances and allergies) are well recalled and seem to lead to high guest satisfaction and memorability.

All respondents reported that they clearly expect individualised services, at least to a certain extent. One family traveller stated here, *"[...] I don't want to be treated like a number. I want to be seen as an individual"* (P24, Reinhard, 49 yrs.). Most participants seem to remember vividly how they were treated and how service staff encountered them. Here, both (highly) positive and (highly) negative experiences seem incredibly memorable, as several respondents were able to report many positive and negative examples of service quality-related experiences.

The culinary tourism setting

Physical and sensory environment

Tourism settings and their physical and sensory aspects contribute significantly to the memorability of (culinary) tourism experiences. Memories are very often linked to eating local dishes in extraordinary scenery. Even when simple, average, or low-quality food is served, a remarkable setting contributes significantly to the memorability of this culinary experience and outweighs non-superior quality. One participant mentioned,

"[...] and we ate this pizza in Cortina d'Ampezzo - rather average quality, a pizza which you can get basically everywhere, but the scenery was so amazing that I will always remember that. I think the scenery made the food even better." (P11, Martina, 22 yrs.)

Another middle-aged traveller commented on the physical and sensory elements of a dining experience by mentioning,

"[...] and once, we went to this traditional restaurant when we were in Japan. Everything was totally new for me. We had a traditional dinner, and we sat on the floor with these small pillows and tables, and in the middle of the table, there was a pot with soup. Everyone just threw everything into this soup, vegetables and

different types of fish, and seafood, and it was cooked and then taken out again. That was something completely new for me and so special, because I experienced it so closely, how it is done there.” (P23, Brigitte, 55 yrs.)

Environments and locations that are frequently remembered are located outdoors, such as stunning mountain sceneries, beaches, coastlines, or other green and blue spaces. Similarly, authentic indoor settings that fit the destination – such as hotels and restaurants corresponding to the local surroundings, e.g., through their decoration and furniture – are highly memorable. Furthermore, settings offering various culinary experiences, such as vibrant cities with numerous cafés, bistros, restaurants, markets, etc., or destinations providing a high density and broad range of sought-after experiences (e.g., regions with several highly rated restaurants or award-winning wineries), were considered unforgettable. The latter-mentioned settings appear to be especially attractive to young and international travellers. Sceneries completely different from the daily and usual environment are also highly memorable for most participants. This applies to outdoor environments (e.g., beautiful mountain scenery on winter sports holidays) as well as indoor environments (e.g., show kitchen in the middle of a restaurant).

The preferred physical setting – whether indoors or outdoors – is also expected to be clean and safe. Families and young travellers particularly appreciate an environment that is not dirty and where care is taken of environmental aspects and travellers’ safety (e.g., child safety). Polluted environments that fail to meet basic hygiene standards are associated with creating lasting but highly negative memories. Negative examples were mentioned here by several participants, e.g., Paris – which was described as a polluted destination.

Focus group participants often mentioned that the whole surrounding of an experience has to be coherent. The hotel, the hotel rooms, the atmosphere, and the food should harmoniously fit the holiday destination. One young traveller summarised,

“[...] it should be like a perfectly fitting package: the hotel, the room, the atmosphere, the service, and the activities I can perform there”. (P11, Martina, 22 yrs.)

Participants therefore do not only value accommodation with a consistent interior and exterior design (e.g., rooms, atmosphere, hotel amenities, etc.) but also a broader environment that fits the accommodation and offers spots for further activities within walking distance, like wineries, markets and taverns. This is particularly significant for parents, as most prefer not to walk long distances with their children. Activities that can be performed nearby are an essential criterion during the travel decision phase and are usually well-remembered.

Some participants also mentioned that several newly opened modern hotels and restaurants do not seem to have strong ties to the region in which they were built. As a result, they are seen as relatively interchangeable and do not contribute significantly to remembering a specific destination, as they could be located anywhere.

As a result, authenticity is another code that has emerged during data analysis. Environments that are described as being authentic contribute significantly to the formation of memorable holiday experiences. Several participants assessed traditional markets

and street food as highly authentic culinary settings. Some examples, like the traditional Viennese “Würstelstand” or food corners at Mediterranean food markets, were mentioned here. One middle-aged traveller summed up,

“[...] we enjoy visiting markets or market halls when on holiday. We found out that they tell everything about a destination’s culture because you get the raw ingredients and readily prepared food and everything can be tasted. That’s such a great experience: the atmosphere, the sound, the locals doing their daily shopping there, the wide variety of fruits and vegetables... I think that’s very authentic.” (P20, Josef, 58 yrs.)

Conversely, some participants argued that they dislike places that are too staged or modelled for specific experiences. They are seen sceptically, especially when they are designed and set up for tourism purposes only and do not consider locals’ needs. At the same time, most participants said they usually want to avoid crowded places or mass tourism spots and highly value smaller outlets such as local restaurants, little cafés, small-sized ski huts, etc., as they hope for more authentic cuisine, regional products, and closer contact with locals and hosts. For most participants, these culinary outlets are more memorable as they allow a deeper engagement with local culture, which might lead to a more significant learning experience. Such hidden or unknown places and small shops, where local products are offered, are especially interesting for those eager to try new things and learn more about a destination and its cuisine. However, a few participants mentioned that food safety and hygiene might remain blurred in such places, especially when buying at street food stands.

Related to the sensory environment, experiences appealing to all five senses were highly memorable and enjoyable. One frequent traveller mentioned that,

“[...] this was the most amazing culinary experience: a wine tasting, where all senses were attracted. By the special light, the sounds, the smell...” (P3, Peter, 43 yrs.).

All travellers agree that esthetically pleasing environments are highly memorable. The results of the focus group discussions suggest that different visual elements, such as the landscape of a destination, are incredibly memorable and attractive. Besides, experiences triggering further senses are also appealing and engaging. Related to sounds, it can be concluded that most participants want to avoid places that are too noisy and appreciate settings with decent background noise and no or gentle background music. Similarly, smells should not be too intrusive. However, adequate and fitting olfactory stimuli are considered to be memorable.

Finally, it can be concluded that an appealing sensory environment is not only memorable but also contributes to feeling comfortable and relaxed. One traveller stated in this context,

“...the sound of the beach and the sea brings me into holiday mood and brings all my senses together. When you just sit down, it’s starting to get comfortable and relaxing.” (P3, Peter, 43 yrs.)

Overall, participants stated they are more willing to accept and pay higher prices for culinary experiences when high-quality local products are served in a pleasant, nice, and relaxing environment.

Related to the cognitive environment, travellers want clear signage and information for their orientation. As holiday environments are, in most cases, unfamiliar spots, all travellers agreed that unambiguous signs (e.g., signs showing the way to restrooms and the spa, information describing unknown buffet food) help them feel confident, comfortable and relaxed in unknown environments.

Related to this matter, one middle-aged participant stated,

"[...] we once simply ordered a traditional soup in Thailand, as we weren't able to understand anything... nobody of us understood the menu or was able to read even parts of it... and we really didn't know what to do with this traditional soup that we ordered, all the ingredients were just put on the table, and it was terrible... we looked at the other guests, what they were doing, and we were trying to do the same thing. The others probably thought, 'How stupid are they? They are just throwing everything into the soup!'. And it didn't taste good either. But we just didn't know what to do with it." (P21, Oskar, 47 yrs.)

Social environment (travel companions – locals – hosts)

Personal networks and (potential) travel companions are not only important sources of information during the planning phase and before a trip, but they also possess a great potential to significantly enhance the memorability of a culinary tourism experience. Moreover, locals are also seen as an essential source of information while on holiday, and their recommendations are highly valued. Asking locals helps find restaurants serving authentic, local, and, in most cases, reasonably priced dishes. However, they are not only a source of information. Again, they might also contribute substantially to the memorability of an experience. Besides these short-term personal contacts with locals, more extensive personal relations with hosts are highly estimated and perceived as memorable. Additionally, several travellers stated that they would not have been able to find extraordinary places such as highly authentic, small restaurants without the advice of locals and/or hosts. Furthermore, the participants agreed that insider tips given by locals and hosts are usually not found in traditional sources such as travel guides, restaurant platforms, search engines, etc. Most travellers therefore value being in direct contact with their hosts, and this also provides an excellent opportunity to learn about the region they live in and the local culture and traditions there. One young traveller even called it *"the magic of food and beverages"*. After some drinks and sharing beautiful meals, tourists, locals and hosts can become great friends and find common ground even when they do not speak the same language. Furthermore, culinary experiences are perceived as authentic and memorable when locals are involved, and travellers usually feel welcomed in this setting (e.g., when the local host/local provider moderates the experience, such as in cooking classes). Several participants underlined this aspect by mentioning that they specifically visited local markets to contact locals and local producers, buying regional products and tasting/preparing them afterwards (e.g., barbecuing the freshly bought fish on the terrace of their holiday apartment).

Nevertheless, it seems to depend on the type of holiday, the traveller's background, the occasion, whether this personal contact with locals and other guests is desired, and to what extent this contact is seen positively. Some participants mentioned that getting in touch with other guests and locals might be interesting when they have something in common (e.g., coming from the same country and working in the same industry). In contrast, getting in touch with others is not preferred for certain types of holidays (e.g., romantic holidays) or on specific occasions (e.g., weddings).

Travel companions are therefore a central aspect determining the social holiday environment of a culinary experience. All participants agree that the (culinary) holiday experience is more enjoyable when they share the same motivations or prefer the same activities as those accompanying them. One experienced traveller who considers herself a foodie and prefers travelling with peers even argued that,

"I'm the only one in my family who is interested in culinary things. Therefore, I prefer not to travel with my family. I want to learn about the culture and the food. The experience is much better when you do it together with people who like the same stuff." (P1, Anna, 30 yrs.)

The group of family travellers especially valued the quality time they could spend together on holiday. Related to the culinary context, it can be seen that they specifically appreciate having time to prepare and enjoy their meals together as a family. Additionally, family travellers – and self-catering travellers in particular – highly esteem doing all processes related to eating together as a group, such as trying and buying local products at a market and preparing dishes afterwards. The aspect of togetherness was declared as being highly appreciated. One traveller described that his best holiday experience,

"... was a family holiday in Ireland. We rented a flat together, we hunted mushrooms, we prepared and cooked meals together and ate together, that was the perfect holiday for me. The human component is very important; you must find perfect companions." (P3, Peter, 43 yrs.)

Family travellers furthermore emphasised, "[...] when the kids are happy, the whole travel group will be happy and satisfied" (P18, Michaela, 40 yrs.), which clearly underlines the importance of a pleasant social environment in creating satisfying culinary experiences.

Temporal environment

All participants agree that engaging with a destination and immersing themselves in the activities offered there without any timelines and schedules allows them to experience a true sense of holiday and relaxation. Time constraints such as sharply defined breakfast times are often perceived as a potential stress factor. Most participants prefer not having tight holiday schedules to allow relaxation and mental recovery to occur.

Culinary experiences are usually seen as being a highly flexible holiday activity. Even when other activities are not possible (e.g., outdoor activities due to bad weather) or venues are closed (e.g., limited opening hours of cultural sites), culinary activities can be performed almost anytime (e.g., visiting a café) and are highly appreciated as a

valuable holiday activity. Culinary activities are often not perfectly planned and organised in advance. Some participants stated that while usually only one or two holiday activities, such as visiting a museum, are pre-planned, culinary activities are very often likely to happen by chance (e.g., visiting a market while strolling around a city). However, most participants agree that meal times generally structure a day while on vacation and other activities are planned around them, e.g., breakfast and dinner are scheduled, and the rest of the day and other holiday activities are planned around that. One frequent traveller stated, *“It’s not a relaxing holiday when you have tight schedules. On holidays, your belly and palate will guide the whole day”* (P4, Markus, 22 yrs.). Similarly, one parent explained,

“...the entire daily routine on holidays is guided by our children’s eating habits and meal times. Everything else is planned around that. They just want to know: When, where and what do we eat today?” (P16, Claudia, 44 yrs.)

Another interesting aspect is that daily obligations such as buying food and cooking are seen in another light, and the temporal environment is perceived differently when on holiday: such daily obligations are then seen as joyful and offer the opportunity to experience relaxation. One young traveller stated,

“[...] when I was in Lisbon, I did this cooking class, where I was able to relax quite well... you are cutting the ingredients side by side with other participants, and you cook this meal together... and simultaneously you learn something new, and you get to know new people. During this activity, relaxation came incidentally. And in contrast, cooking at home is a total stress factor for me in my everyday life.” (P10, Henna, 25 yrs.)

Flexibility and duration of culinary activities were also significant issues covered in the discussions: Participants preferred shorter activities and were less interested in overly long activities (e.g., participating in a 4-hour cooking class, eating a 10-course menu). Similarly, all participants prefer flexible starting and end dates and individualised offers (e.g., spontaneous and informal liquor tasting when visiting a distillery). Both aspects seem essential to consider when designing culinary activities.

Parents especially highlighted the importance of quick services as most children cannot accept long waiting times for their food. Furthermore, several parents preferred self-catering apartments to allow greater temporal flexibility (e.g., using amenities such as a kitchenette to prepare children’s meals flexibly).

Finally, it must be noted that getting together for specific occasions and related culinary activities seems especially memorable (e.g., a dinner during a birthday celebration with family members while on vacation, experiencing the gastronomic offer of festivals and events at a destination with travel companions). Such events and occasions are usually well remembered. Especially in cases where an extraordinary atmosphere is provided on such occasions (e.g., special tabletop décor for a birthday dinner) or specific services are offered (e.g., presenting a birthday cake with spray candles, offering special birthday menus), these highly individualised treatments are well-memorised. Similarly, specific events, including extraordinary culinary offers on special occasions, are highly memorable (e.g., evening events and gourmet festivals).

4.2.2.2 The role of restoration and restoring environments

In general, culinary experiences are perceived as being highly relaxing and restorative. Eating and drinking are seen as greatly relaxing activities during holidays. Culinary experiences can even help overcome unpleasant vacation situations, such as long waiting times. One frequent traveller described a problem at an airport: his flight was re-scheduled several times, which led to a total waiting time of nine hours. However, the broad culinary offers provided at the airport and by the airline put him in a holiday mood as he was able to enjoy different culinary experiences just at the beginning of his vacation, and he felt highly compensated for the inconveniences caused by this delay.

One frequent traveller even stated, “[...] *great wine and amazing food create a good holiday experience so that I can start to relax*” (P5, Luis, 28 yrs.). Or, as another frequent traveller noted, “[...] *food experiences help to get away from stress and worries, and you do not think about the bills you have to pay at home*” (P3, Peter, 43 yrs.). Several participants mentioned the potential of culinary tourism to offer such a sense of disconnection.

In general, a relaxing and comfortable atmosphere is considered to significantly facilitate restorative effects. Besides commonly known restorative amenities such as a pool, a gym or a spa, relaxing environments can be created relatively easy by a pleasant overall ambience and comfortable seating facilities. Therefore, sophisticated and cost-intensive amenities are not always needed to allow restoration in the culinary tourism context; as one frequent traveller stated, “[...] *a relaxing atmosphere is important... the environment should allow to relax, this can also be very simple without much equipment.*” (P6, Veronika, 25 yrs.). However, the environment should not be too sterile as this might create an uncomfortable atmosphere. One young traveller stated in this context, “[...] *if it is too clean, it would be like in a hospital.*” (P1, Anna, 30 yrs.).

All participants prefer outdoor and natural environments because of a more enjoyable and relaxing overall atmosphere. Furthermore, natural environments such as outdoor dining areas are perceived as more authentic and memorable. One experienced traveller stated in this context,

“The area and the setting are important to me; a beautiful view, a mountain, for example... It doesn't need any music or a special design. But the more impressive the surroundings, the better the culinary experience. And outdoors is usually more interesting because I prefer to eat outside rather than indoors.” (P6, Veronika, 25 yrs.)

In the same vein, a family traveller stated that the family's culinary experience was especially memorable and restorative because,

“The hosts cooked for us outdoors, including some Zillertal specialities and schnapps, and we enjoyed that in the open nature, with a beautiful view of the mountains. This was very relaxing.” (P16, Claudia, 44 yrs.)

And one young traveller noted,

“Honestly, for me, it's more about the outdoors and green surroundings. So when I go out to eat, for example, especially in the summer, I prefer outdoor dining. So I don't like it when there's nowhere to sit outside, for example.” (P8, Robin, 23 yrs.)

Biophilic elements that allow a direct experience of nature, such as daylight, fresh air, plants, and water, were also highly appreciated. Furthermore, elements allowing an indirect experience of nature and a preference for natural materials, colours, and smells were mentioned here.

Furthermore, the importance of a clean, safe, and hygienic environment was highlighted, as non-polluted and safe settings allow for greater restoration effects. Additionally, food safety and hygiene issues were also mentioned by some participants, who addressed aspects such as avoiding unhygienic street food, crowded areas, and self-service buffets to ensure a relaxing overall holiday experience. One middle-aged traveller claimed,

“[...] it is totally horrible for me when there is a tightly packed self-service buffet... where everyone touches everything, and people are literally already grabbing each other's plates – too narrow and totally unhygienic.” (P19, Michaela, 52 yrs.)

Finally, it appears that preferences for specific aspects of restorative culinary environments vary between target groups and based on travellers' motivations. While family travellers appreciate amenities such as a kitchenette to prepare simple snacks for children flexibly, other travellers perceive it relaxing when they do not have to worry about preparing meals and washing dirty dishes.

To conclude, food experiences allow participants to escape the usual environment and daily stress at home. Relaxation effects can then be reached relatively easily during on-site culinary experiences: just sitting down comfortably and enjoying food and drinks in a pleasant setting is already considered very relaxing. One participant even stated, *“Relaxation for me is simply good food and a perfect wine; that's all I need.” (P3, Peter, 43 yrs.)*. The temporal aspect is important here again: the fact of simply having time to sit down unhurriedly and indulge in a tasty meal was mentioned by several participants as this contributes substantially to travellers' relaxation and restoration. One middle-aged traveller declared, *“Stress doesn't go well with food at all; I want to enjoy my food calmly, especially on vacation.” (P22, Andreas, 43 yrs.)*

Interestingly, storytelling might also enhance restoration effects: Many participants expect to hear the stories behind the food and drink served, as well as their origins, as this allows them to disconnect more deeply from their daily lives and permits a greater immersion into the overall holiday experience, which ultimately leads to restoration effects.

4.2.2.3 Factors influencing tourists' expectations and satisfaction

Culinary offers that do not meet the travellers' expectations and/or are of low quality (e.g., low-quality buffet-style food) can negatively affect the travel experience and satisfaction and restoration. One experienced traveller reported here,

“We went to a hotel in the Czech Republic. We had half board there. Initially, we did not want to book half board, but we had a voucher for this package, including half board, and we could not book without half board. Then we said, OK, let’s take it; at least we do not have to bother getting food in the evening. But the food there was awful. On the second day, we decided not to eat at the hotel restaurant; the quality was just too bad. You could not eat that. This definitely dampened our holiday mood. I want sun, good accommodation and good food when on holiday.”
(P25, Constanze, 42 yrs.)

Type of vacation and culinary expectations

The type of vacation and activities planned seem to play an important role when defining expectations related to culinary experiences. When on round trips, sport/active holidays, self-catering trips such as camping, city trips, and family vacations, expectations related to culinary experiences appear to be lower. The same seems to apply to travellers choosing “All Inclusive” offers. In all these cases, eating can be considered a basic need that must be fulfilled quickly and conveniently. Similarly, it seems that the length of the stay affects the interest in culinary activities: On short trips, travellers might *“[...] neglect the food and culinary part because you want to see all the places and the culinary part is not so important. Some simple or fast food is fine in that case”* (P12, Veronika, 22 yrs.) as stated by one participant. But again, a beautiful surrounding seems to enhance the quality of the culinary experience, as one young traveller claimed,

“[...] we were on a trip along America’s West Coast, and the scenery was amazing. Very often, we simply opted for some ‘Grab & Go’ offers, just to get something to eat, the quality was not amazing. However, it is suited to the type of holiday we have chosen – to be on the road and to experience this outstanding landscape.”
(P11, Martina, 22 yrs.)

In contrast, when visiting countries well known for their cuisine and culinary offers, expectations are usually higher and should be met to avoid dissatisfaction. One participant stated,

“[...] we were on a road trip to Bordeaux, and I had high expectations. We always dreamt about French cuisine and expected some nice grocery stores and small shops offering local, high-quality products. It was a great disappointment to see how poor the quality of the products was, especially in the supermarkets.” (P9, Alexander, 27 yrs.)

Therefore, communication and storytelling seem to be important in this context as well: Culinary images of countries/regions shape travellers’ expectations. Thus, promotional claims and stories told in advance must be experienceable at the destination to avoid dissatisfaction.

Types of culinary activities and experience realms

Related to culinary activities while on vacation, it can be said that experiences to taste, indulge, and participate in seem more attractive and memorable than culinary experiences to see and observe. However, experiences to taste, indulge and participate

in might have lower levels of participation, as they are less known and are more challenging to research in advance since detailed information is not always available. While foodies and travellers, who are primarily motivated by the culinary offer, and children, seem to prefer experiences to participate in, travellers seeking relaxation seem to favour activities to see and observe and to taste and indulge. The latter ones enjoy not having to worry about anything or actively participate, which contributes to their personal relaxation. Nevertheless, all participants appreciate having the option to engage in culinary activities either passively or actively.

Participants also mentioned that while actively participating in culinary activities, other aspects can be easily included (e.g., providing information on the region and the products leads to personal learning experiences). One traveller stated in this context,

"It is always interesting when you can do something on your own, for example, when helping with the vineyard work: you go there, you can see it, you can touch it... you put your emotions into it and can follow the whole production process much better." (P12, Viktoria, 22 yrs.)

The role of emotions

The focus group discussions further revealed that culinary experiences can trigger many positive emotions that ultimately enhance overall tourist satisfaction. The most frequently mentioned emotional categories that culinary experiences might trigger are surprise, joy, relaxation, happiness, and anxiety or affinity toward local food.

Positively surprising moments such as unexpected services, unprompted gifts or spontaneous personal encounters with locals were among the most memorable experiences reported by participants. The group of young travellers especially wanted to be surprised during their holidays and highly valued spontaneous and unexpected events and activities. Furthermore, most participants stated that consuming local food in a pleasant environment usually results in joy and happiness and helps create a holiday atmosphere. One middle-aged traveller talked about his holidays in Greece,

"[...] and right after the check-in, the receptionist invited us to go directly to the pool bar. We were served a welcome drink and a snack there. It was just a glass of local wine and some tzatziki, relatively simple... but we enjoyed this so much right at the beginning of our holidays, and it immediately made us get into holiday mood." (P22, Andreas, 43 yrs.)

During the discussions with family travellers as well as travellers aged 40+ yrs., anxiety towards unknown (exotic) food was reported by some participants. Parents stated that they are sometimes concerned about the quality of food served and whether their children are willing to try and eat what is offered. While young travellers and experienced travellers were (in most cases) excited about trying new and exotic local dishes, families and less experienced travellers preferred buffet-style food to venture to new tastes. They perceived buffet-style food as less risky since other dishes could always be taken if they disliked particular tastes. Furthermore, family travellers reported that buffet-style food allows children to get into new tastes, such as clams, prawns, exotic spices, and herbs.

In several cases, participants stated that they developed sympathy towards local specialities and cooking styles after trying them during their holidays, even in cases where they initially disliked specific food; e.g., one middle-aged traveller reported that she disliked raw fish before trying sushi in Japan and after her holidays she became a true fan of Japanese food and sushi and even started to cook it herself. Another participant explained that he did not like Paella until he tried authentic Paella in Mallorca together with his friends and travel companions. Back home, he began hosting dinner events with his travel companions to recreate and enjoy the authentic taste. Several participants shared similar experiences and emphasised that they became more open to trying specific food categories back home, actively seeking them out in local shops and supermarkets; e.g., one family traveller stated that she started looking out for cheese coming from the holiday destination she visited and whenever such cheese is available at her local supermarket, she buys it there.

4.2.2.4 Outcomes of memorable (culinary) experiences and economic impacts

Food souvenirs

Most respondents want to bring back some products and, especially, food souvenirs they tasted during their holidays as these allow them to extend the holiday experience at home. Wine and cheese were the most popular food souvenirs mentioned in the discussions. Several participants stated that they specifically buy food souvenirs to allow the culinary experience to last longer as these souvenirs remind them of their holidays and the visited destination, and they also trigger positive emotions.

However, a few participants stated that they would not want to buy culinary souvenirs as it would be impossible to recreate the experience at home. Doing this will most likely lead to disappointment. Recreating a food experience at home without the specific location and the ambience they had at that very moment during their holidays is perceived as unrealistic. One respondent reported that he bought wine after a wine tasting on holidays and did not enjoy the same wine back home. He stated,

“I think I was so hyped at that moment on holiday when I tasted this wine, but I could not recreate this experience at home when I opened this bottle of wine I bought. It was a big disappointment.” (P2, Stefan, 22 yrs.)

Another issue raised during the discussions was the location and environment where food souvenirs can be bought: Participants stated that they are usually not willing to buy food souvenirs at unknown places (e.g., sidewalk sales) and prefer well-known and authentic outlets such as delis, local wine shops, or food markets.

Among the interviewees, experienced travellers and travellers showing a high culinary motivation seemed to be more willing to buy unfamiliar food souvenirs besides their willingness to try more new and exotic dishes while on holiday. Finally, these travellers were also more prepared to bring back home food souvenirs safely and hygienically (e.g., bringing cold boxes on holidays), they were more aware of potential import regulations (e.g., limited amounts of alcoholic beverages) and more interested in ordering food online when back home to avoid problems with logistics and portability (e.g., glass bottles).

After their holiday, most of the participants were, in general, more aware of specific food categories they had become acquainted with during their stay and stated that they specifically looked out for them during their daily shopping at local stores. Besides buying food souvenirs, several participants mentioned that they enjoy cooking new dishes that they got to know during their holidays back home. The interest in local food, therefore, seems to continue for at least some time after returning home from holidays. However, it has to be mentioned that interest in specific local food seems to decrease over time. In most cases, as soon as food souvenirs are used up. What usually remains longer is the general interest in the specific product category (e.g., wines coming from the holiday destination). Only a few tried to order specific local food online directly from the producer or ask friends, relatives and colleagues to bring specific food and/or drinks when they visit the same destination. For these highly interested consumers, it is very important to get information about potential sales channels during their stay directly when being in contact with the producer/seller in order to be able to purchase exactly these products back home.

Satisfaction, positive WOM and loyalty

All of the participants agree that they would definitely recommend a positive (culinary) holiday experience and share them (e.g., personal word-of-mouth, personal online networks). Interestingly, when asked about online reviewing behaviour on social networks and platforms, it became clear that participants are only willing to post reviews about culinary experiences when they have had either very positive or very negative experiences. Posting average culinary experiences on review platforms is seen as a waste of time.

Approximately half of the participants stated that they would be willing to revisit the destination. However, during the discussions, it was also found that visiting the same destination again is rather unappealing for travellers who are especially keen on experiencing new things during their holidays (especially young travellers). All participants furthermore agreed that culinary experiences are an important variable when it comes to determining overall holiday satisfaction. One experienced, middle-aged, family traveller summarised, “[...] *if the food is not good, I’m an extremely dissatisfied guest.*” (P13, Sonja, 41 yrs.)

Finally, a rather unexpected result was that new personal relationships with other travellers, locals or hosts are a further possible (long) lasting outcome of the holiday experience. Young travellers, in particular, want to stay in touch with new friends they made and continue their relationships with the people they met during their holidays.

4.2.3 Discussion

Determinants of memorable culinary tourism experiences

The core offer (local agricultural and food products and related experiences)

Based on the results presented above, high-quality local food can be characterised as a key element of any memorable culinary experience, bearing great potential in contributing to high overall tourism satisfaction. Likewise, Timothy & Ron (2013, p. 99) stated that food and food quality are central aspects of the overall tourist experience

and “[...] few things can bring about more negative encounters in the destination and stir up more unpleasant memories after a journey than bad-quality or unhygienic food.”. Akhoondnejad (2024) also found that the core product of food is the main determinant of both positive and negative memorable food tourism experiences. At the same time, culinary experiences are classified as being highly memorable due to their authenticity and uniqueness based on the aspect of regional anchoring. Similarly, Park & Widyanta (2022, p. 10) claim that tourists specifically “[...] look for local ingredients, local dishes, and local food spaces (and their stories) [...]” because of the evident tourists’ authenticity-seeking behaviour. Equally, Chang, Kivela, & Mak (2010, p. 1000) discovered the “authentic travel experience” aspect in their focus group discussions: participants in their study stated that they consumed local food because of their desire for a highly authentic experience. Additionally, their participants mentioned that consuming local ingredients usually means that these products are freshly prepared and served (e.g., fresh fish), which contributes to the overall quality of local cuisine. Similar results can be seen based on the focus group discussions done for the study at hand. The participants highly valued the aspect of freshness, which eventually led to the overall tastiness and quality perception of local food. Exactly the same findings were detected based on the focus group discussions with travellers to a food museum and its associated restaurant conducted by Kim, Park, & Xu (2020).

The focus group discussion results also indicate that personal and direct communication, as well as stories that are told about the food products, provide a great chance to trigger personal learning experiences and stimulate and satisfy novelty-seeking behaviour, resulting in more satisfying culinary tourism experiences. Chang, Kivela, & Mak (2010, p. 1001) also highlighted the learning aspect as a result of culinary tourism experiences: based on their focus group discussions, they concluded that local food provides a great learning/education opportunity. Their participants stated that eating local food enables them to gain knowledge about food, which helps to develop their skills in discussing and evaluating local food (see Chang, Kivela, & Mak, 2010). Furthermore, highly individualised services seem to be well and positively remembered for a long time after the holiday. This perfectly underlines the considerations of Cohen & Avieli (2004, p. 772), who stated that “culinary brokers” such as waiters and locals can mediate between the tourist and the local food in order to encourage the tourist to try local and/or unknown dishes and to be more adventurous. Similarly, Tung, Chen, & Schuckert (2017) verified that employee responsiveness influences guest satisfaction, loyalty and perceived value. Rachao, Breda, Fernandes, & Joukes (2021b) also discussed the importance of direct staff contact related to a traveller’s co-creation experience. They found that personal encounters with frontline staff affect culinary experiences and showed that more staff support is required in physically active experiences. Hence, they also concluded that tourism staff can be regarded as facilitators of tourism experiences.

In general, service quality and pleasant interactions with service staff seem to be important drivers of satisfaction. Statements such as *“I’m more annoyed, and I’m more likely to leave a restaurant when the staff is unfriendly. I could rather accept that the food is not quite optimal, or if the ambience and atmosphere is not quite perfect”* (P20, Josef, 58 yrs.), as expressed by one middle-aged traveller, underline this result.

The findings also underline that the culinary offer at a destination is typically not the primary motivation considered in tourists’ decision-making processes and destination

choices. While eating and drinking during a holiday might be a necessity for some travellers, only a few might be classified as “foodies”. In any case, the actual on-site experience and resulting outcomes seem to be heavily influenced by the quality of culinary tourism encounters. Quan & Wang (2004, p. 302) mentioned that in most cases, “[...] food consumption in tourism is an extension of the daily experience and can thus be regarded as a supporting consumer experience [...]”. However, in certain situations and under specific circumstances, food consumption can become a peak touristic experience as tourists are specifically looking for novelty and change during their holidays. In the same vein, Chang, Kivela, & Mak (2010, p. 998) conclude that travellers perceive the consumption of local food as a “peak touristic experience”, and they are usually eager to try local food. However, travellers usually maintain their daily eating habits and preferences to a certain extent, and it is therefore hardly possible for them to consume local food at every meal (Chang, Kivela, & Mak, 2010, p. 998). Nevertheless, enriching the “pure” consumption of food by e.g., telling stories about local products and production processes helps to turn an eating experience into a peak tourism experience for various traveller types.

Related to activities performed during specific culinary experiences, it seems that experiences centred around tasting, indulging, and active participation are more attractive and memorable than those focusing on pure observation. Nevertheless, all participants highly value the flexibility to choose between passive or active engagement. In the same vein, Sthapit, Coudounaris, & Björk (2019, p. 348) highlight that not all travellers are interested in active interactions during their food experiences and that memorability might be dependent on each tourist’s preferences related to the individual level of engagement. In this context, Rachao, Breda, Fernandes, & Joukes (2021b) have already shown that wine tourists are more interested in wine activities, requiring less physically active participation and calling for less technical skills. Additionally, these authors have proven that tourists’ interest levels in active involvement in culinary experiences are related to their interaction with residents (Rachao, Breda, Fernandes, & Joukes, 2021b). Rachao, Breda, Fernandes, & Joukes (2021a, p. 1060) also highlighted the importance of non-wine-related activities during a winery visit as ancillary experiences, such as enjoying the scenery and atmosphere as well as socialising and learning, as this combination leads to more positive perceptions of the experience. Both aspects were also detected based on the focus group discussions.

Chang, Kivela, & Mak (2010, p. 1001) emphasised that travellers are usually highly interested in visiting local restaurants and trying local food when receiving related (online and offline) recommendations from their reference groups. These information channels should therefore not be underestimated in the culinary tourism context. Interestingly, the participants did not mention the aspect of prestige and status within a reference group, as found by Chang, Kivela, & Mak (2010, p. 1001). In contrast to the focus group partakers of Chang, Kivela, & Mak’s (2010) study, participants in the study at hand did not mention that they were explicitly motivated to try local food because of their wish to assert their social status or to share such experiences when back home. Interestingly, the participants did not address changing eating behaviours or new food trends, although phenomena such as healthy eating, vegetarianism, veganism, and intolerances are increasingly discussed in culinary tourism literature, and they are often recommended as key considerations when designing culinary tourism experiences (see e.g., Rachao, Breda, Fernandes, & Joukes, 2021a; Dilek & Fennell, 2018).

The role of the culinary tourism setting

Besides local food and related activities, the settings where they are consumed seem to bear great potential to make an experience highly memorable. Memories are very often linked to eating local dishes in extraordinary environments. Exceptional settings can even outweigh non-superior food offers and quality. Similarly, Akhoondnejad (2024) also found that the environmental factors surrounding a food experience are some of the key influences on culinary tourism experiences. Rachao, Breda, Fernandes, & Joukes' (2020, p. 921) also highlighted the importance of the physical setting of culinary experiences. They recommended combining elements such as the interior architecture, layout, employees, and atmosphere to allow "[...] an immersion in local culinary resources and provide a meaningful, creative and 'eatertainment' experience." (Rachao, Breda, Fernandes, & Joukes, 2020, p. 921).

In specific, a pleasant environment that appeals to all five senses was characterised as highly memorable by the focus group participants. This outcome also underlines the findings of Buzova, Sanz-Blas, & Cervera-Taulet (2021), who conceptualised a destination's sense scape based on five dimensions (visual scape, smell scape, taste scape, sound scape, and haptic scape). They concluded that all five senses contribute significantly to a destination's overall sense scape and identified the visual scape, covering all visual impressions, as the most important one, followed by the haptic scape and the taste scape. Furthermore, the esthetic dimension of an environment and sensory stimuli are the most relevant in modelling the overall experience, as suggested by Loureiro (2014). For the rural tourism context, she (ibid, p. 7) especially highlighted the importance of "[...] atmospheric cues inside the rural lodging and also contemplation of the landscape, using the five senses". Nevertheless, Muskat et al. (2024) specifically suggest moving beyond focusing solely on the effects of visual stimuli (e.g., lighting and colour), as their findings demonstrate that auditory and tactile senses are just as significant as visual cues in shaping culinary experiences.

Additionally, Pikkemaat, Peters, Boksberger, & Secco (2009) highlighted that theming and providing consistent cues are essential strategies for coherence in the overall environment. They recommend that different products and services offered at a destination should be authentically linked and arranged around a core theme to ensure coherent offers. Similarly, Chen, Suntikul, & King (2020, p. 1410) concluded that successful experience scapes are characterised by a harmonious fit between their physical elements and a specific theme to allow tourists to create memorable experiences. These aspects were also brought up during the focus group discussions. Findings suggest that a destination's overall theme and the culinary tourism environment should fit together harmoniously to trigger positive memories. Specifically, the aspect of regionality and the possibility to experience this regionality was highlighted in this context. Park & Widyanta (2022, p. 10) also recommended that culinary tourism environments should be designed in such a way that they provide solid connections and bonds with a region's features and offer meaningful experiential settings and multi-sensorial elements. The focus group participants also agreed that the environment should not be too staged, modelled or artificial. Likewise, this issue of experiences that are perceived as too staged, leading to post-purchase dissonance and unfulfilled expectations, has already been highlighted in other studies (e.g., Curtin & Wilkes, 2007).

As mentioned previously, experiences centred around local cuisine are considered highly memorable due to their authenticity and unique regional characteristics, which contribute to creating a distinct and unique selling proposition (USP). Beyond the culinary offerings themselves, the ambience in which they can be experienced also plays a crucial role in setting them apart from competitors and enhancing their memorability. Similarly, Anton, Camarero, Laguna, & Buhalis (2019, p. 760) recommended developing iconic and authentic food offers that provide a sharp contrast for visitors to clearly distinguish a destination's offer from competitors. They furthermore suggest that authentic and unique environments, in combination with local food and other tangible and intangible elements of the destination, such as landscape and lifestyle, can help to enhance a destination's competitiveness (see Anton, Camarero, Laguna, & Buhalis, 2019). The results of the focus group discussions can fully validate their recommendations.

When summarising the focus group results related to social aspects of an environment and local/host interactions in specific, several earlier studies underline the outcomes of the focus group discussions: Rachao, Breda, Fernandes, & Joukes (2021b, p. 6, 12) highlight that travellers usually wish to get involved in the real-life of the destination and the local community which can be achieved by experiencing the everyday life of residents. This was clearly seen in various examples provided by the focus group participants (e.g., by emphasising their desire to visit local food markets to experience the local culture and the residents' way of living). The authors (*ibid.*) consequently recommend including local businesses and residents in marketing strategies showing a destination's food and wine heritage and traditions. Paulauskaite, Powell, Coca-Stefaniak, & Morrison (2017) claim that travellers are explicitly looking for authentic and experience-oriented activities, e.g. social interactions with locals. Consequently, greater feelings of immersion into the experience might arise. Additionally, Park & Widyanta (2022) mentioned that food experiences are typically co-created with local people such as sellers or tour guides, who can therefore be classified as interactive agents of a destination's foodscape.

Related to travel companions and resulting social interactions, Chang, Kivela, & Mak (2010, p. 1002) found out that group harmony is an important aspect when choosing culinary activities or restaurants during a holiday: travellers are usually willing to accommodate their family and friends' food preferences and consequently, to assure everyone's satisfaction. Likewise, Quan & Wang (2004, p. 303) highlighted that food consumption experiences are especially memorable when they are experienced together with family and friends, as they can then be classified as peak tourist experiences. Both aspects were verified during the focus group discussions.

Based on their study's findings related to social interactivity during wine tourism experiences, Rachao, Breda, Fernandes, & Joukes (2021b, p. 12) suggest that large-scale tasting rooms should be downsized and more restricted and exclusive. Evidence was also found for this in this part of the study, as participants clearly stated their wish to avoid too crowded places.

Nevertheless, the type of holiday, the traveller's background, and the occasion might determine how social environments are perceived and if travellers want to engage in social interactions within this setting. Several examples based on the focus group dis-

cussions were presented earlier. Related findings were also discussed in earlier studies: Rachao, Breda, Fernandes, & Joukes (2021b, p. 11f) have shown that younger culinary travellers prefer to get involved and immersed during wine tastings. For them, interacting with other tourists is not a primary motivation for participating in such culinary experiences (see Rachao, Breda, Fernandes, & Joukes, 2021b).

Related to the specific settings in which culinary experiences take place, it can be concluded that the preferred environments, which are at the same time perceived as restorative, are characterised by:

- green and blue spaces, nature-oriented and biophilic designs, and outdoor and open spaces
- cleanliness and hygiene
- personal and children's safety
- traditional, authentic, local/regional design (e.g., local architecture)
- having enough space, not feeling squeezed (also in pre and post-COVID times)
- enough and understandable information (e.g., clearly readable signs, providing information in an understandable language, e.g., English in international tourism)
- pleasant sensory stimuli (e.g., no or moderate background noise, good lighting, comfortable seating facilities)
- no or very limited time constraints and overall flexibility (e.g., extended opening hours, no pressure to finish a meal quickly, broad range of activities to engage in with the freedom to choose)
- environments that allow non-culinary related experiences such as enjoying the landscape and atmosphere as well as relaxing and socialising

Many of the above-mentioned characteristics underline Packer's (2014) findings, who emphasise the need for a harmonious interplay of physical, sensory, social, cognitive, and temporal elements when creating tourism environments to meet visitors' needs for restoration. Additionally, Muskat et al. (2024) identified that a mix of sensory and non-sensory determinants of an environment (as also covered above) will eventually also drive satisfaction and WOM in food tourism experiences.

The role of restoration and restorative environments

A main outcome of the focus group discussions is that culinary endeavors are seen as highly relaxing holiday activities. Culinary tourism experiences can contribute significantly to relaxation and restoration on vacation, as they address the motives of enjoying, indulging, resting, calming down, having a nice time, and getting away from the daily routine, which usually coincides with travellers' general holiday motives. Similarly, Lin & Mao (2015, p. 27) argue that a unique culinary experience allows travellers to escape from their daily routines and environments. Loureiro's (2014) study shows that escapism is the second most important driver of the overall tourism experience. She specifically emphasised that the escapism dimension in the rural tourist context allows travellers to embrace the rural place's lifestyle and to forget everyday life (see Loureiro, 2014).

At the same time, it was shown that the physical, temporal, social and cognitive aspects of an environment can greatly enhance the traveller's overall ability to restore and relax. It is therefore not only the aspect of enjoying food and drinks that generates a feeling of relaxation. Instead, it is the combination of the environment in which the culinary experience takes place and the food offered that leads to relaxation and restoration effects, e.g., a gastronomic experience at a ski hut offering local dishes. In general, restorative effects can be quickly achieved by providing a comfortable and calm environment for the culinary experience. Subiza-Pérez et al. (2021) also underscored this and found that the quietness and calmness of a place are significant predictors of restoration. As highlighted by the participants, restorative effects can appear rather quickly and efficiently when an environment is perceived as restorative, which was also highlighted by Collado, Staats, Corraliza, & Hartig (2016). Additionally, it was found that a setting appealing to all five senses seems to allow restoration effects. This corroborates the findings of Qiu, Jin, & Scott (2021), who claim that the sense scape influences visitors' perceived restoration and that multisensory components characterise a restorative environment.

Another intriguing aspect is the fact that daily tasks like grocery shopping and cooking take on a different perspective while on vacation as they take place in different environments. These routine obligations might then be viewed as joyful opportunities that provide a chance to experience relaxation. This stresses the conclusions of Quan & Wang (2004, p. 302), who stated that many food consumption experiences in tourism can be classified as routine food experiences within the range of daily or weekly customs. However, in certain situations, tourists are specifically looking for food experiences beyond these boundaries since novelty and change-seeking are further important travel motives. Food consumption can then turn into peak tourist experiences, especially when combining it with (gastronomic) events (e.g., food festivals) (Quan & Wang, 2004).

Related to the physical environment of a culinary tourism experience, it can be seen that cleanliness and safety are basic prerequisites for achieving restoration effects. While the literature provides considerable evidence that hygiene and cleanness are among the most essential criteria in the decision-making and destination-choice process of travellers (see e.g., Ozturk & Qu, 2008; Chen & Bau, 2016; Ambler, 2015), Cohen (2004, p. 761) explicitly emphasises the importance of hygienic food and food safety issues while on holiday. As discovered during the focus groups, tourists generally want to avoid illnesses caused by unknown local foods to enjoy the holiday experience and perceive a sense of well-being. Similarly, Pham, Eves, & Wang (2023) provided evidence that safety and hygiene concerns play a key role in determining street food experiences and tentative behaviours. Significant concerns that were found in their study are related to unknown food types, food sources and preparation processes and perceived risks towards personal well-being and unhygienic/unsafe practices (ibid.). Furthermore, physical environments following natural and biophilic design principles seem to be perceived as more restorative based on their ability to allow direct and indirect experiences of nature, especially in outdoor settings. This supports the findings of earlier works using ART and biophilia theory in the tourism field, such as Packer (2014). It also aligns with the findings of Subiza-Pérez et al. (2021), who demonstrated that favourite outdoor spaces are typically characterised by a higher presence of green and natural elements, which are significantly correlated with restorative effects. The elements and attributes that define these preferred yet restorative

culinary tourism environments, as identified in this study during the focus group discussions, were addressed in the previous section.

Tourism activities lead to unfamiliar and unknown situations, which can cause stress and discomfort. Related to the cognitive environment, the conclusions of Pikkemaat, Peters, Boksberger, & Secco (2009, p. 242f) are therefore to be reinforced here: a positively perceived setting is strongly connected to good visitor guidance and can consequently contribute to tourists' well-being as it allows them to feel comfortable. In this context, Cohen & Avieli (2004, p. 761) also emphasised that tourists usually face unfamiliar food and culinary situations while on holiday. Therefore, these authors (*ibid.*) underlined that communication difficulties could quickly occur in the culinary tourism context (e.g., due to language barriers, unknown ingredients, and hardly understandable menus). This might lead to tourists feeling intimidated because of their unfamiliarity with local table manners and eating habits, which can eventually result in anxiety, frustration and insecurity. Consequently, the recommendations of Pikkemaat, Peters, Boksberger, & Secco (2009, p. 242), who specifically highlighted the importance of thought-out visitor guidance and communication concepts, including clear signage, when designing culinary experiences, can be supported here. The importance of designing stress-free environments to overcome anxiety towards unfamiliar food and unknown situations was also addressed by Anton, Camarero, Laguna, & Buhalis (2019, p. 749). They discussed the visitors' tradeoff between their desire for novelty and trying new things on the one hand and their need to remain in lower-risk environments due to their aversion to unfamiliar foods on the other hand. Cohen & Avieli (2004, p. 769) emphasised exactly this fact when stating that buffet-style food in (hotel) restaurants helps to acquaint travellers with foreign cuisines, which can also be regarded as an outcome of the focus group discussions.

Similarly, the temporal and social aspects of the environment seem to greatly influence a traveller's ability to restore and relax. All participants value the fact of having time and not being bound to any schedules or tight opening hours. Friendly service personnel who are able to professionally, attentively, and quickly fulfill the needs of all members of the travel group (e.g., children and parents) are also considered an essential driver of relaxation and contribute significantly to guest satisfaction.

Nevertheless, it has to be assumed that what people consider as restorative changes during the lifecycle of travellers because of changing needs (Scopelliti & Giuliani, 2004, p. 425). This assumption can be reinforced by slightly differing outcomes of the four group discussions with different target audiences, e.g., family travellers and young travellers expressed varying attributes of restorative environments. This was also highlighted by Zhou, Zhou, & Li (2024), who emphasised the importance of addressing tourists' varied sensory needs for effective market segmentation. Tourism providers should develop their products based on diverse experiential demands to enhance individual tourists' mental restoration (see Zhou, Zhou, & Li, 2024).

At the same time, a few participants raised issues of environmental awareness as well as a preference towards environmentally friendly and sustainable culinary experiences, similar to the study of Rachao, Breda, Fernandes, & Joukes (2021a), who identified these as central themes based on their focus group discussions on food and wine tourism experiences. Environmental concerns were emphasised, for example, by addressing the excessive use of plastic for packaging food and food souvenirs or using

plastic cutlery to consume local products during culinary events. One participant highlighted the waste aspect related to buffet food, stating, *“better less quantity and good quality than much food of mediocre quality.”* (P19, Michaela, 52 yrs.). At the same time, unspoiled, clean and natural environments were assessed as particularly restorative, as highlighted by one young traveller,

“I found Croatia particularly restorative because the Croatians take much more care and pay attention to cleanliness, ensuring that nothing is left behind, and they have a good waste disposal service. Also, for example, in sailing yachts, they have well-maintained marinas... This beautiful naturalness, which people are consciously taking care of. This might also be a reason why I probably won't consider the Maldives, because while I imagine it to be incredibly beautiful and stunning, everyone says that the Maldives are completely polluted, that simply reduces the whole vacation atmosphere for me...” (P7, Mio, 22 yrs.)

This suggests that pro-environmental attitudes and environmentally friendly offers might also influence the assessment of culinary tourism experiences and their outcomes. Nevertheless, as only a few participants raised this issue, it might be necessary to consider a potentially broad range of specific beliefs and thoughts of travellers related to this topic that could influence their assessments here.

Factors influencing customers' expectations and tourist satisfaction

Based on the focus group results, it becomes evident that pre-vacation expectations and the degree to which they are met during the holiday significantly impact the level of satisfaction during the holiday and subsequent outcomes. In the same vein, Mehmetoglu and Engen (2011, p. 252) argue that experiential dimensions and elements are closely linked to visitors' motives and reasons for visiting a destination or attraction.

Most participants stated that the culinary offer is one aspect that is considered in their destination choice. However, it is usually not the most important one. Nevertheless, Rahman, Zaman, Hassan, & Wei (2018, p. 125) already showed that a positive perception of local food influences the purchasing behaviour of food and, consequently, stressed the importance of clear communication using different promotional tools to drive these positive perceptions, e.g., by providing information about local restaurants in social media etc. Their recommendation can therefore be reinforced at this point, especially as these authors mentioned that all marketing efforts should focus on enhancing tourists' perceptions of local food by optimising culinary tourism environments and their sensory properties (Rahman, Zaman, Hassan, & Wei, 2018, p. 126). To conclude, as travellers' expectations seem to shape the culinary tourism experience considerably as well as resulting satisfaction and other succeeding variables (e.g., loyalty), all marketing communication activities need to incorporate exactly those expectations.

Exceeding expectations, especially with positive surprises, leads to satisfaction and memorability. Expectations are mainly shaped by information that is available online (e.g., destination websites, social networks, online travel guides) and culinary images. All participants stated that they extensively use online sources when deciding on a holiday destination. At the same time, many travellers also research the internet before

their trip to get a feeling of the culinary offer. This not only influences the booking decision but also shapes culinary expectations. It can be assumed that expectations are greatly driven by these pre-trip behaviours (e.g., saving search results in personal Google Maps to avoid missing important spots during the trip), especially for travellers with a higher culinary interest (e.g., foodies). To sum up, expectations are, in any case, an essential driver of the overall culinary tourism experience and resulting outcomes. If the realised holiday type is centred around culinary motives, expectations are higher and must be sufficiently fulfilled to create satisfaction and positive and memorable experiences.

Furthermore, it can be concluded that the level of satisfaction and memorability depends not only on expectations but also on the traveller's characteristics, such as the traveller type (e.g., family travellers) and the chosen vacation type. The focus group discussions led to the assumption that preferred culinary activities and settings differ significantly among different target groups. Subsequently, culinary tourism expectations might vary again.

Outcomes of culinary experiences and economic impacts

The results show that culinary experiences are a primary driver of tourism satisfaction, even for travellers who do not travel primarily for culinary reasons or motivations. Nevertheless, their pre-travel expectations have to be met (or exceeded).

The outcomes of culinary experiences identified in the focus group discussion align perfectly with Godovykh & Tasci's (2020) framework on outcomes of tourism experiences. They suggest a sequential nature of pre-visit, on-site and post-visit experiences with product/brand-related outcomes such as satisfaction, enhanced perceptions, loyalty, word-of-mouth, increased consumption, lower price sensitivity, brand trust, brand commitment, brand involvement, brand advocacy, satisfaction with brand, and purchase decision emerging after the trip (Godovykh & Tasci, 2020, p. 5).

Satisfying culinary experiences can therefore lead to loyalty, advocacy, and positive word-of-mouth, often well after travellers have returned home. This outcome supports the findings of Loureiro (2014), who provided evidence that memory and positive emotions mediate tourism experiences and following behavioural intentions. Similarly, Anton, Camarero, Laguna, & Buhalis (2019, p. 746) stated that a memorable food experience is the primary driver of the desire to repeat an experience, try the same food again, and share food experiences with others. However, the economic impact beyond the journey is shorter-lived: While most travellers buy food souvenirs on-site and retain a general interest in the destination and its local culinary products after their holiday, at least for a specific time, re-purchasing food products at home (e.g., via online shops) is a clear niche.

Based on the focus group discussions, it can be seen that travellers enjoy buying and bringing back culinary food souvenirs that they tasted during their holidays as they allow them to extend the holiday experience at home and are a tangible reminder of this culinary experience. This is in line with the definition of Swanson & Timothy (2012, p. 490), who stated that souvenirs are "[...] objects that are symbolic reminders of an event or experience [...] which can trigger an imaginary return to memorable times and places." Similarly, Ho, Liu, Yuan, & Liao (2021) emphasised that food souvenirs are

tangible representations of a destination's local culture. All in all, buying food souvenirs for personal use and as gifts seems prevalent among travellers, which has already been highlighted by Altintzoglou, Heide, & Borch (2016). These authors also proved that tourists showing higher levels of innovativeness are more willing to buy unfamiliar food souvenirs, and the general willingness to purchase food souvenirs is driven by familiarity with the food souvenirs (see Altintzoglou, Heide, & Borch, 2016).

Nevertheless, the interviewees did not only raise the issue of souvenirs as such but also emphasised the environment in which they can be bought. They mentioned the cleanliness and authenticity of such settings. In this context, Swanson (2004) also highlighted the importance of the food souvenir shopping environment, which should be inviting, clean, and encouraging and make the tourist feel welcome.

Furthermore, issues related to transportability and logistics of local agricultural and food products/souvenirs were addressed as these might be potential causes of tourist worries. Lin & Mao (2015, p. 27) also highlighted that producers must consider convenience aspects of food products and souvenirs, such as portability and packaging, as tourists might not be willing to buy items that are difficult or inconvenient to handle.

To conclude, food purchasing and souvenir buying seem very common among travellers. However, it varies depending on the buyer's and trip characteristics. Swanson & Horridge (2006) also highlighted that travel motivations can influence souvenir-buying behaviour and recommended offering an appealing souvenir mix in an attractive store environment based on different travellers' motivations.

Finally, the findings suggest that local food clearly represents a destination's culture and shapes culinary expectations. This underlines the findings of Everett & Aitchison (2008), who have shown that food is a key driver of forming regional identities. By the same token, Swanson and Timothy (2012, p. 492) also highlighted that food items and souvenirs bought serve to represent the specific place visited, capture its unique qualities, and reflect local tradition and culture.

Table 6 summarises all elements and implications related to the focal constructs identified in this part of the study.

Focal construct	Found elements	Implications
<i>Determinants of memorable culinary tourism experiences</i>	• Agricultural and local food/drink offer (quality, freshness, localness/regionality, seasonality, authenticity) and related experiences • Food communication/presentation and storytelling • Service quality	• Both culinary and average/non-culinary travellers typically seek local, fresh, and high-quality food. Culinary experiences based on such products are perceived as highly authentic, unique and memorable. This type of food is seen as location-bound and therefore interchangeable, and it shapes the destination's image and culture. • Stories told about local food are perceived as highly interesting. They can provide an excellent learning opportunity, which leads to greater interest in the regional culinary offerings and, eventually, buying those products. Based on such stories, travellers might also be more willing to try new and/or unfamiliar tastes. • Excellent service is a main factor in determining memorability. Highly individualised service encounters are usually well-remembered and contribute to guest satisfaction.

Table 6 Continued

	• Culinary tourism setting (physical/sensory, social and temporal aspects)	• Memories are often linked to eating local dishes in extraordinary environments. An exceptional setting can even outweigh non-superior food offers and quality. Outdoor environments are usually preferred and also well-remembered. Indoor settings should fit the overall environment of the destination (e.g., common theme, traditional style, etc.), which also contributes to perceived uniqueness and authenticity. Cleanliness and safety in culinary settings are of great importance. The spatial design is essential (having enough space, not feeling squeezed). Information should be provided clearly and understandably (e.g., signage). • Experiences that attract all five senses are highly memorable and enjoyable. Different sensory cues and stimuli can be easily included in culinary tourism experiences. • Interactions with travel companions, other guests, locals, and hosts have the potential to trigger memorability. However, the extent to which these interactions are sought after depends on the type of vacation. A pleasant social environment will most likely result in higher overall satisfaction. • Culinary experiences that are experienceable at the traveller's own pace and autonomously are usually preferred. Culinary activities are generally not pre-planned or organised. Nevertheless, mealtimes structure the day while on vacation. Several daily obligations related to food consumption (e.g., buying food and preparing food) are seen in a different light when on vacation and are usually seen as joyful. Temporal gatherings for specific occasions and engaging in related culinary activities can also create lasting memories (e.g., birthday dinners).
<i>The roles of relaxation and restoring environments</i>	• Aspects related to the temporal, physical and social environment • Attributes of restorative environments	• Eating and drinking are seen as highly relaxing holiday activities. Culinary activities can even help to overcome unpleasant situations (e.g., long waiting times). Culinary tourism experiences can contribute significantly to relaxation and restoration, as they address the motives of enjoying, indulging, resting, calming down, getting away from the daily routine, etc. • Relaxing culinary environments can be created rather easily (e.g., by providing comfortable seating facilities in non-crowded environments). Cleanliness, safety, and hygiene contribute substantially to a relaxing atmosphere. Providing enough flexibility and time to enjoy a culinary experience at one's own pace helps to achieve restoration and relaxation effects. • Outdoor, natural and biophilic designs are preferred. Different elements allowing the direct and indirect experience of nature support memorability and restoration (e.g., plants, water, daylight, natural materials, and well-integrated individual components).
<i>Factors influencing tourists' expectations, satisfaction and memorability</i>	• Meeting customers' expectations to achieve satisfaction and designing the experiences according to customers' motivations and preferences • Clear communication of experiences to be expected • Types of culinary activities and experience realms • The role of emotions	• Culinary offers that do not meet the travellers' expectations and/or quality standards will likely result in low satisfaction, and travellers might feel stressed. • The type of vacation and activities planned play an important role when defining expectations related to culinary experiences. • Clear communication of what to expect is essential to allow travellers to form expectations that can be met or exceeded, as they are the basis of subsequent behavioural intentions. • Experiences to indulge and to participate are more attractive and memorable compared to culinary experiences to see and observe. Nevertheless, the traveller's personality and the vacation type must be considered when designing culinary experiences. • Culinary experiences can trigger many positive emotions that ultimately enhance overall tourist satisfaction. Surprise, joy, happiness, relaxation, and anxiety or sympathy towards local food are among the most prominent emotional categories triggered by culinary tourism experiences.

Table 6 Continued

Outcomes of memorable culinary experiences and economic impacts	• Immediate spending/food purchases and souvenirs • Loyalty/advocacy • General interest in specific product categories • Destination image	• Travellers usually want to buy food items and souvenirs to extend their holiday experience at home. Nevertheless, enjoying food souvenirs at home is generally quite different from on-site experiences, as the experiential context is missing or entirely different. • Travellers are usually willing to recommend positive culinary experiences. Nevertheless, online reviews are generally written only for very positive or very negative culinary experiences. • Positive experiences can lead to loyalty. Nevertheless, the interest in repeating a culinary experience is affected by the traveller's personality. • After a vacation, travellers are, in general, more aware of specific food categories and agricultural products they became acquainted with during their stay. Back home, they usually look out for those food categories, and their interest in local food products continues for at least some time after returning home. • Food is a key driver of regional identities and clearly shapes and represents a destination's culture and image.

Table 6: Focal constructs and focus group discussion findings

4.2.4 Contribution and evaluation of results

This part of the research aimed to identify and understand the determinants of memorable culinary tourism experiences as perceived by travellers and to classify the outcomes of such experiences. Furthermore, this research approach tried to evaluate the role of culinary tourism settings and their perceived restorativeness in this context.

The focus group discussion approach allowed the researcher to delve deeply into travellers' culinary tourism experiences, their determinants, and their perceptions and preferences related to the settings where such experiences are offered. Evidence was found that travellers' culinary experiences are greatly shaped by factors such as the local agricultural and food offer, its quality and related experiences, food presentation and communication, and service quality. At the same time, culinary tourism encounters are influenced by the experience setting. The focus group discussions also helped to gain an understanding of what makes culinary tourism experiences memorable. Participants described the nature of memorable culinary tourism experiences and articulated the factors that enhanced their overall results, particularly emphasising that exceptional settings are well-remembered. Additionally, resulting product/brand-related outcomes (e.g., satisfaction, loyalty, WOM) and consumer-related outcomes (e.g., emotions) were identified.

Besides, the focus group discussions provided an opportunity to explore various settings and contexts in which culinary tourism experiences occur. Participants discussed previous culinary experiences in different settings and evaluated the role of restoration and perceived restorativeness of various culinary tourism environments. Findings suggest that culinary tourism experiences have great potential in promoting relaxation, rejuvenation, and well-being as an immediate effect, and several aspects related to the temporal, physical, and social environment can even enhance the perceived restorativeness of a setting and drive further outcomes.

The practical relevance of this part lies in a deeper understanding of culinary tourism experience determinants, as they are essential for designing tailored culinary tourism

encounters that meet travellers' expectations. This information is invaluable for destination managers, restaurateurs, and tourism operators seeking to create memorable and restorative visitor experiences. The findings also support the need for clear communication, which was already highlighted after the content analysis. Travellers need to know what to expect to allow travellers to form expectations that can be met or exceeded in order to allow restorative outcomes.

The results of the focus group discussions were used as input for developing the experiment, the survey instrument, the research hypotheses, and the research model, as shown in subsequent phases of this research (see studies 4 and 5). Specifically, this study helped identify the determinants of culinary tourism experiences and their immediate and indirect outcomes. This was necessary to operationalise related concepts and develop the data collection instrument for study 5.

Furthermore, the travellers' opinions were compared to the expert interview results (see study 3), as both perspectives are relevant for destination planning and development. Practical recommendations based on the findings of both studies are discussed in chapter 5.2.

4.3 Expert interviews with culinary tourism professionals and tourism researchers (study 3)

The Theory of Tourism Consumption Systems (TCS) developed by Woodside and Dubelaar (2002) aims to help tourism marketers understand how different elements of a travel experience are interconnected. This understanding enables them to develop more effective marketing strategies and improve the overall travel experience (Woodside & Dubelaar, 2002). Therefore, investigating the perspectives of practitioners and experts in the field is important in providing these practical recommendations.

Therefore, industry experts were interviewed to discuss and evaluate the focus group results and prepare data collection instruments for upcoming study parts (studies 4 and 5). Additionally, several outcomes of the focus group discussions were elaborated on and contrasted with the experts to gain a broader view of the culinary tourism consumption system.

4.3.1 Methodological approach

4.3.1.1 Justification and description of the research approach

Expert interviews are usually conducted in the exploratory phase of a project and can be seen as a "crystallisation point" for obtaining practical insider knowledge (Bogner, Littig, & Menz, 2009, p. 2).

Culinary tourism practitioners and scholars were identified as the primary target group for this part of the research: Tourism and marketing planners can foster the creation of a tourism environment which can positively contribute to creating memorable tourism experiences (Agapito, Valle, & Mendes, 2014, p. 225). Furthermore, destination managers are responsible for facilitating the development of a destination, which can create memorable tourism experiences that enhance revisiting tourists' intentions (Tung &

Ritchie, 2011). Therefore, expert interviews with destination managers, culinary tourism planners and experts representing culinary tourism associations and initiatives were carried out to understand the importance of creating memorable and restorative culinary tourism experiences and designing related environments. Additionally, practitioners in the field of culinary tourism (cooks and hotel managers) were recruited. Besides these tourism managers and practitioners, tourism researchers, scholars, and consultants were interviewed for this study, as they advise managers and planners by providing practical recommendations based on their research and knowledge. This follows the recommendation of von Soest (2023), who recommends the inclusion of “inside” as well as “outside” experts.

4.3.1.2 Interview guideline

For the study, semi-structured expert interviews were conducted to generate knowledge on how to design culinary tourism experiences and environments that can drive customer value. As expert interviews are more information-based compared to other types of qualitative interviews (Kruse, 2015, p. 53f), an interview guideline was used. As the guideline should translate the information needed to answer the research questions into interview questions, specific contents must be based on the key concepts mentioned in the literature (Gläser & Laudel, 2010, p. 142). The results of the literature review presented in earlier chapters are therefore the basis of the interview guideline. This topic-related guide does not only cover the creation and design of culinary tourism experiences and their settings but also the role of memorability and relaxation as well as resulting outcomes. The final guideline can be found in Appendix 4.

Using such a guideline allows for the structured acquisition of relevant information, eventually permitting comparisons and ensuring integrity. Nevertheless, Gläser & Laudel (2010, p. 151) recommend adapting the guideline in each interview to allow a natural flow and, secondly, adapting the guideline according to each interviewee's specific background and knowledge. Both recommendations were followed during the data collection process. Besides the English version, a German translation was provided as German is the mother tongue of most of the interviewees. Therefore, they preferred to do the interview in German.

4.3.1.3 Recruitment of experts and data collection

Depending on the existing research interest, a definition can be given related to who can be called an expert (Meuser & Nagel, 2005, p. 443). Gläser & Laudel (2010, p. 117) highlight that it is essential to assess potential interviewees based on whether they possess the information required for the study, their accessibility and their willingness to share the information sought. For the purpose of this research, destination managers, marketing managers, culinary tourism planners, representatives of culinary tourism associations, and (culinary) tourism consultants/researchers can be defined as the relevant target group, as they have privileged access to required information (ibid.). Following the idea of Crouch (2011) to recruit managers as well as researchers to determine attributes that define a destination's competitiveness, these two target groups also seem important for the study at hand: Firstly, individual tourism practitioners who have experience or knowledge related to culinary tourism design and management are interviewed. Secondly, researchers and consultants with expertise in

culinary tourism, experience design and destination management were recruited. Experts belonging to one of those target groups were recruited nationally and internationally as they have information on the complex issue of designing and managing culinary tourism experiences.

Here, it must be acknowledged that the identification of an expert is ultimately subject to the researcher's judgment. However, reviewing the characteristics distinguishing expert knowledge from ordinary people's knowledge helps to define an expert (Meuser & Nagel, 2009, p. 18).

Therefore, different criteria were developed and applied when defining and recruiting experts. Here, the considerations of Sotiriadis (2015, p. 1223), who recruited culinary and food tourism experts to create a framework to be used as a strategic planning tool for culinary tourism projects at the destination level, were taken into account. Subsequently, the following criteria that have to be met by the experts were developed:

- A comprehensive perception and opinion about culinary tourism
- Experience and expertise in the relevant field
- Activity in tourism destination/marketing management and/or culinary tourism, either academically or professionally

Following these criteria, 14 experts were recruited and interviewed for the study (see Table 7 as well as Appendix 5 for full details). All interviews were conducted online (using MS Teams and Zoom) between March and July 2023. After the interviewees' permission, audio and video recordings were made, which served as a basis for producing transcripts. Following Gläser & Laudel (2010, p. 194), interviews were rendered anonymous after the transcription. Following the idea of data and code saturation in qualitative research (see Saunders et al., 2018), as discussed in previous chapters, interviews were carried out until new data repeated what was expressed in earlier interviews and until no new codes were generated.

Expert no.	Position	Organisation	Location
E1	Executive Director	World Food Travel Association	USA
E2	Manager and hotel development expert	Niu Hotels	Europe
E3	Marketing manager and coordinator of wine & culinary tourism products	Salzburger Land Tourismus (DMO)	Austria
E4	Agricultural marketing expert	Austrian Chamber of Agriculture	Austria
E5	Project manager for wine & culinary tourism initiatives	Weinviertel Tourismus (DMO)	Austria
E6	Head of Product	IDM Südtirol - Alto Adige	Italy
E7	Coordinator culinary and regional affairs	Energy and Environment Agency of Lower Austria	Austria
E8	Chef/cook to rent	Traditional Austrian restaurant/self-employed (rent-a-chef company)	Austria
E9	Consultant	Tourism consulting agency focusing on destination management and culinary tourism experience design	Austria

Table 7 Continued			
Expert no.	Position	Organisation	Location
E10	Manager of the initiative "Netzwerk Kulinarik"	Agrarmarketing Austria (AMA)	Austria
E11	Professor (expertise: economy in tourism management, product development, service design)	TH Deggendorf	Germany
E12	Manager "Genussland Oberösterreich"	Amt der Oberösterreichischen Landesregierung	Austria
E13	Managing director	Weintourismus Burgenland	Austria
E14	Culinary tourism product developer and manager of the "Slow Food" initiative	Kärnten Werbung (DMO)	Austria

Table 7: List of interviewed experts

4.3.1.4 Data analysis procedure

Data analysis was conducted analogously to the focus group study. Again, the process of thematic analysis, as recommended by Hennink (2014, p. 90) and presented in earlier chapters, was followed. As developing relevant themes is the ultimate analytic purpose of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022, p. 4) and the main goal of the expert interviews at hand was to discover topic-related themes, this procedure was followed here again to develop, analyse and interpret patterns across a dataset based on codes. MAXQDA 2022 was used for this procedure. The resulting coding tree can be found in Appendix 6. Again, it has to be emphasised here that all issues related to coding and considerations related to saturation were handled similarly to the approach followed for the focus group discussions, as described in the previous chapter. Additionally, the ethical considerations applied in the focus group discussion approach were also taken into account here.

4.3.2 Findings

Similar to the focus group discussions, four main focal constructs were identified when analysing the expert interviews:

- Determinants of memorable culinary tourism experiences
- The role of restoration and restorative environments
- Ensuring tourist satisfaction
- Customer value and economic impacts of memorable culinary tourism experiences

The following subchapters present and discuss these findings. Table 8, at the end of the discussion (see 4.3.3), provides a summary of all elements and implications related to the focal constructs identified in this phase of the study.

4.3.2.1 Determinants of memorable culinary tourism experiences

Based on the expert interviews, several key aspects of culinary tourism experiences were identified:

High-quality local agricultural and food products

All experts agree that dedicated culinary tourists are usually highly interested in local food and drinks. These travellers do not consider eating to be a simple and basic need and would therefore not want to simply satisfy their hunger while on holiday. Nevertheless, according to the experts' opinion, this also applies to most of the "average" travellers as getting to know local food and drinks is – in general – an important travel motive. A hotel development expert and hotel manager (E2) mentioned that even those people who do not travel for culinary reasons enjoy combining a nice vacation (e.g., a city trip) or a business trip with appealing food and drink experiences. This implies a great starting point for introducing all travellers to local food and drinks.

From the experts' point of view, the paramount consideration is that the food and beverages offered must meet specific quality standards and that the ingredients used should have a connection to the region. In the best case, the dishes served are made of high-quality regional products and based on recipes with a certain local tradition. But this also implies that the chefs of local restaurants are able to prepare such meals that might be non-standard. However, these skills do not always exist, as mentioned by a representative of the *Austrian Chamber of Agriculture* (E4). Another challenge mentioned in this context was the issue of the availability of local products (quantity- and quality-wise, and also depending on seasons) as addressed by the Head of Product at *IDM Südtirol* (E6).

Based on his 17 years of experience as a cook, E8 furthermore emphasised that the significance of using local ingredients has grown tremendously over the last few years. The issue of seasonality and regionality gained significant appreciation from both customers and caterers due to the growing interest in sustainability. According to his evaluation, this trend got a further boost during the COVID-19 pandemic. While it was important to offer exotic and international dishes and a broad menu in previous years, customers' attitudes and preferences have changed, and guests are now specifically looking for regional, seasonal, and sustainable food. Similarly, customers became more educated but also more critical of food quality, in his opinion. Several customers are now in the position to distinguish high-quality from low-quality products, e.g., they are able to recognise mass-produced products that look like handmade products, and they are now able to judge and therefore value the quality of hand-crafted products.

Correspondingly, the Head of Product at *IDM Südtirol* (E6) mentioned that in recent years, chefs/gastronomes, as well as state tourism organisations and destination marketing organisations, have realised that international cuisine has matured. To stay competitive, a new offering had to be developed to stand out from the competition. The offer has therefore increasingly focused on local, authentic and traditional food products. The Head of Product at *IDM Südtirol* (E6) furthermore pointed out how the South Tyrolean culinary offer was adapted in previous years to meet the current need for local, unique and authentic food and drink experiences,

"We realised that we couldn't keep up with it [international cuisine], and then we wanted to go our own way. Being identified with two cultures and cuisines was recognised as our main strength, and we then took the chance to advance by basing our offer on Mediterranean Alpine cuisine. And this pervaded all South

Tyrolean offers in recent years, and it has been lived everywhere and, yes, at some point, even excessively. The symbiosis of these two cuisines is definitely something that makes us unique now.” (Head of Product at IDM Südtirol, E6)

In the same vein, the aspect of the authenticity of local food/drink products was stressed by several experts: Local products are considered to be highly authentic in the experts' view and, at the same time, authentic experiences are typically sought by culinary and average/non-culinary travellers. A tourism consultant and experience design expert (E9) mentioned the importance of culinary heritage as a source of authenticity in this context,

“Staging a culinary experience needs to consider the cultural heritage or – more specifically – the culinary heritage of a region and the place, the spirit of the place, or as we could call it, the ‘genius loci’.” (Tourism consultant and experience design expert, E9)

Similarly, the culinary tourism product developer and manager of the “Slow Food” initiative at *Kärnten Werbung* (E14) stated,

“Our offer is based on sustainable food, which is anchored in the region. And this is, of course, an important factor for many guests, as they want to experience the region authentically. And according to our guest surveys, we know that the most important aspect when selecting a specific gastronomic offer is the regionality of the food offered.” (Product developer and manager of the “Slow Food” initiative at Kärnten Werbung, E14)

Besides the prerequisites of authenticity and high quality of ingredients/products, the Executive Director of the *World Food Travel Association* (E1) emphasised the uniqueness that can be achieved with such an offering,

“It is this special and authentic product that you cannot get anywhere else that makes the unique and memorable culinary experience.” (Executive Director of the World Food Travel Association, E1)

A tourism management and experience design professor (E11) highlighted in this context that in most cases, tourism experiences are replaceable to a certain extent and could be offered in many destinations, e.g., outdoor activities, hiking or biking trails, accommodation, ski resorts, etc. However, a culinary experience, which is based on local and agricultural food products is something truly unique and allows to clearly distinguish from other destinations. Therefore, these products can be seen as the starting point when creating culinary experiences and might eventually become a decisive factor in the customers' decision-making process and destination choice. Here, he gave the example of Italy as a (culinary) tourism destination,

“When asking people why they went to Italy and you ask them when returning home from Lignano or Bibione, they all will tell you, ‘The food was just amazing there’, so I think the culinary offer is a key factor in decision making and also a driver for advocacy and loyalty because they all want to come back.” (Tourism management and experience design professor, E11)

Culinary tourism experience types and experience realms

The managing director of *Weintourismus Burgenland* (E13) emphasised that creating an experience around the core offer (food/drinks) is essential as many customers are specifically seeking experiences nowadays,

“I believe that many people are nowadays also looking for a special experience, so I see a trend here... There is a need for something that goes beyond a simple wine tasting; people expect something more than that, and I think businesses are well advised to provide such additional experiential offers for them.” (Managing director of Weintourismus Burgenland, E13)

The culinary tourism product developer and manager of the “Slow Food” initiative at *Kärnten Werbung* (E14) emphasised that many culinary tourism encounters can be easily embedded into other types of experiences, e.g., cycling, hiking, etc. She believes that this combination of culinary and other tourism experiences makes them especially memorable.

E13 furthermore highlights that an experiential aspect can usually be integrated quite simply (e.g., by offering a short hike through nearby vineyards before a wine tasting). However, experiences that allow “hands-on” involvement are probably the most attractive ones, according to E13. Most experts agree that such activities to participate in and to take part in can enhance memorability and they are able to trigger many emotional reactions. A tourism consultant and experience design expert (E9) attributes tasting experiences a high potential of evoking subsequent purchases, e.g., tasting food at a market stand will most probably end in the purchase of one or the other product.

However, the main problem mentioned in this context is the current labour shortage. Engaging culinary tourism experiences need to be designed in such a way that existing labour and staff are not restricted in following their production processes. A representative of the *Austrian Chamber of Agriculture* (E4) gave the example of a local cheese producer who needed to limit the number of visitors to their premises as well as opening hours and activities as he did not have the time to produce his cheeses any more, although his main aim was to inform and involve visitors.

Experiences to see and observe are seen as a good starting point for conveying basic information related to local products. Videos on websites, audio guides provided by culinary attractions, pictures/signs, and labels were mentioned as examples here. However, when compared to experiences to participate in or to take part in, they are not perceived as effective since the emotional/human components are usually missing here.

Attracting the five senses and evoking positive emotions

According to the experts, culinary tourism experiences are particularly effective at engaging the five senses due to their inherent sensory nature. This sensory appeal can therefore be a special delighter of any culinary tourism experience and a significant contributor to the overall experience.

A tourism management and experience design professor (E11) specifically underlined that culinary tourism experiences possess a high potential to attract all five senses unobtrusively, which can finally result in highly joyful and intense flow experiences that eventually contribute to overall enhanced tourism experiences and satisfaction.

The culinary marketing manager of *Salzburger Land Tourismus* (E3) claimed that – regardless of the actual design and type of the culinary experience – positive emotions need to be evoked in order to enhance memorability. In her view, food and drinks possess a high potential to emotionalise tourism experiences based on different sensory cues and, consequently, to trigger memories (e.g., because something tastes similar to a dish served by one's grandmother).

Novel experiences and positive surprises

All experts agree that extraordinary, positively surprising and novel experiences can foster customer satisfaction as well as long-lasting impressions. In contrast, standardised and uniform products are not seen as being especially memorable. The experts mentioned examples such as standard breakfast offers at a hotel and fast food restaurant visits: in their view, such culinary experiences are usually not capable of creating long-lasting memories. All experts furthermore agree that only those services and experiences that exceed customers' expectations have the potential to create long-lasting memories and, consequently, drive loyalty and advocacy. In this regard, it was stressed that culinary tourism settings have the potential to create exactly those novelty and surprising aspects, even in such cases where the food and drinks served are neither novel nor extraordinary per se. Here, several experts mentioned the example of average food consumed in extraordinary settings. Such combinations have the potential to create long-lasting memories.

Similarly, well-known products (e.g., traditional dishes prepared according to an old recipe of the chef's grandmother) that are re-interpreted in a modern way and incorporate local ingredients can lead to positive surprises and therefore trigger the creation of long-lasting memories. International travellers in particular might be positively surprised by new tastes and new table and plate arrangements. Such novel aspects and positive surprises are characterised by their great potential to create memorable experiences. In this context, the Head of Product at *IDM Südtirol* (E6) mentioned the example of a luxury hotel in South Tyrol, where the chef tries to follow the idea of the Mediterranean Alpine cuisine in combination with a new and international touch to create surprising moments, e.g., sushi stuffed with local samlet ("Matscher Saibling") is served there.

The Executive Director of the *World Food Travel Association* (E1) specifically stressed this novelty aspect in combination with the uniqueness of culinary experiences: He claims that a culinary experience has to be unique to a person in order to be memorable. Here, he specifies that "[...] for someone who has never had this dish that is automatically going to be memorable." (E1).

The manager of "Netzwerk Kulinarik" of *Agrarmarketing Austria* (AMA) (E10) underlined that culinary tourism experiences have great potential for learning something new, which can then be integrated into the daily lives of the travellers as soon as they

return home. She mentioned the example of an oil tasting while on vacation, where recommendations and tips are given in order to find perfect combinations of specific oils and dishes/salads. Typically, such recommendations stay in the travellers' minds rather long as they might be followed at home. Consequently, this learning experience has the potential to evoke further economic effects (e.g., re-purchasing this specific oil in local stores back home). Similarly, the managing director of *Weintourismus Burgenland* (E13) emphasised that culinary tourism experiences allow travellers to get detailed information and gain expertise which might not be found anywhere else (e.g., through travel guides, the Internet or wine bottle labels).

In the same vein, the culinary tourism product developer and manager of the "Slow Food" initiative at *Kärnten Werbung* (E14) highlighted,

"We want to offer our guests an experience that has a lasting impression on them. And our offers are designed in such a way that they develop a deeper understanding of food, and our guests can only experience that when they really see how food is produced, e.g., directly at the farm. I think it's very important that people can take new knowledge with them and that they gain knowledge that they didn't have until that moment, so it's very important for us that they learn something new during their holidays." (Product developer and manager of the "Slow Food" initiative at Kärnten Werbung, E14)

A tourism consultant and experience design expert (E9) highlighted that culinary tourism experiences might also be a perfect starting point to reconsider one's attitudes towards food/drink-related aspects, e.g., sustainable/organic production and decision criteria of day-to-day food shopping behaviour. A tourism management and experience design professor (E11) stressed that by absorbing environmental impressions and capturing the emotions evoked by a (culinary) tourism experience, learning experiences and, finally, even transformative experiences might occur.

The culinary tourism setting

All experts highlighted the importance of the culinary tourism setting, which, in their opinion, is a key element of the overall experience. To underline this, many experts gave the example of food souvenirs that travellers consume back home: Travellers might finally realise that these products do not taste as good as they did during their holidays. This is simply because the setting/ambience is different back home.

The managing director of *Weintourismus Burgenland* (E13) emphasised that the setting allows the creation of additional value: The core product (food and drink of a certain quality) is usually something the guest clearly expects, but the setting allows the creation of additional value and experiences travellers are usually seeking.

Similarly, the Head of Product at *IDM Südtirol* (E6) mentioned that creating memorable experiences requires more than just the dish on the plate. He particularly underlined the importance of the whole setting and ambience and service-related aspects when designing culinary experiences. In the same vein, a tourism management and experience design professor (E11) highlighted that the perception of the environment has great potential to create a truly unique experience and trigger emotions.

The Executive Director of the *World Food Travel Association* (E1) underlined that attention needs to be paid to all details of a setting, e.g., soundscape, temperature, visual cues, etc., to create a harmoniously fitting and memorable environment. He furthermore perceives that many bars, cafés, restaurants, etc., look the same around the world; he called it “*Brooklyn, New York trendy esthetic with chalkboard writings and stuff like old incandescent lamps that look like from the Thomas Edison era*”. These places might look familiar and cosy. However, they are interchangeable, not authentic and might, therefore, not be able to meet travellers’ expectations of authentic, unique and memorable experiences.

Environmental aspects should therefore be seen as important sources of competitive advantage as suggested by *Agrarmarketing Austria (AMA)*: The manager of “Netzwerk Kulinarik” of *Agrarmarketing Austria (AMA)* (E10) highlighted that besides high-quality products, Austria has a lot to offer to create pleasant and memorable culinary tourism settings (e.g., landscape, nature, hospitable family-run businesses). This is therefore considered a main benefit and USP when creating culinary tourism offers and an important matter when marketing Austrian culinary offers.

Remarkably – and similar to the results of the focus group discussions – outdoor environments seem to have great potential in driving memorability, as assessed by several experts. Interestingly, some experts also reported that their guests evaluate outdoor culinary experiences better than indoor experiences. The project manager for wine & culinary tourism initiatives of *Weinviertel Tourismus* (DMO) (E5) also highlighted that their guests are less critical, and the organisation sees fewer complaints when their culinary experiences are provided in outdoor environments.

Physical and sensory environment

All experts recognise exceptional physical and sensory environments as pivotal factors contributing significantly to the formation of memorable culinary tourism experiences. To underline this, the project manager for wine & culinary tourism initiatives of *Weinviertel Tourismus* (DMO) (E5) presented internal figures based on their guest surveys proving that a large majority of their clients to specific culinary events decided to attend them merely because of their extraordinary settings with specific physical aspects such as a stunning outdoor location.

All experts furthermore agree that the physical and sensory environment should be carefully planned and can usually be fully steered and controlled by the experience planner/designer. Therefore, all related aspects should be considered carefully when designing and delivering the experience. Furthermore, several details related to the design of the physical environment were addressed by the experts: Providing enough space and seating facilities is seen as essential, similar to the demands raised during the focus group discussions. Furthermore, moderate background noise is seen as acceptable, while noisiness should be avoided in order to allow undisturbed conversations. A further simple but important aspect related to the physical setting is seen in the cleanliness of the whole environment (e.g., production facilities, restaurants).

A tourism management and experience design professor (E11) recommended that the interior design should be kept simple. He specifically emphasised that most often,

“staging simply means leaving out”, and here, he particularly means leaving out excessive reminiscence, decoration and other extras that distract the guests’ attention from the essential aspects (e.g., the dish served). To underline this, he gave the following example,

“We all know an example of a very good Italian restaurant where the food quality is nice. However, when it comes to interior design, you feel like you’re kind of transported back to the 90s. The fishing nets hanging through the rooms, the Venetian gondola... and 60% of the stuff that is standing around is simply bulky waste. And also the dishes and how they are presented on the plate: I think the days are definitely over where you overloaded the plates, put some decorative garnish on the dish and then added a physalis on top.” (Tourism management and experience design professor, E11)

Therefore, the main recommendations for designing both the core food/drink offer and the physical environment where the culinary tourism experience takes place are to reduce and focus on key essentials using unobtrusive cues.

A further key recommendation related to the design of the environment given by the experts was that the physical setting of a culinary experience should fit the food offered and the overall theme of a destination. The culinary marketing manager of *Salzburger Land Tourismus* (E3) mentioned an example of a Salzburg-based restaurant owner and cook: his restaurant is located in a 100-year-old building inherited from his grandparents, and his culinary concept is also based on traditional family recipes. However, the building, as well as the culinary offer, is supplemented with modern aspects such as contemporary architecture and cutting-edge food arrangements. Such combinations can be characterised as being highly memorable and authentic, according to the culinary marketing manager of *Salzburger Land Tourismus* (E3). Similarly, a tourism consultant and experience design expert (E9) summarised that a location needs to fit the whole surroundings, the region and the overall topic. Consequently, certain aesthetics and visual cues must demonstrate this congruency.

However, culinary experiences are not only seen as the main contributor to memorability due to the physical setting they are consumed in, but they are also classified as being highly memorable due to their potential to attract all five senses. While tasting and smelling are predominantly addressed by the core culinary offer (food and drinks served), experts also attribute seeing, hearing, and feeling to being easily influenced by the physical setting. And here, it is seen as important to design coherent stimuli in order to create memorable tourism experiences as well as to foster sales. In this context, a tourism consultant and experience design expert (E9) mentioned the example of a wine shop where all sensory stimuli were integrated consistently,

“The experience here is simply the result of a summary of several aspects such as the visual impression of the tasting room, the colours there, the environment, the furnishings, their style, also architectural elements, but also the taste of the food or the wine served there ... All the sensory aspects contribute very, very strongly to how experience is perceived, i.e. how good or how intense it is; and ultimately it does not only influence the customer’s perception of this experience but also sales, because if everything is coherent, the ambience etc., then you are

also willing to spend some money there or you spend even more than planned.”
(Tourism consultant and experience design expert, E9)

Social environments

Equivalently to the assessments of focus group participants, experts consider pleasant social environments as a main contributor to a successful and memorable culinary experience. However, the experts also highlighted the fact that the social environment cannot be fully controlled or designed by the providers, as they cannot influence the structure of guests they have on a particular day, as well as specific inter- and intra-group relationships happening among their guests. Therefore, the social environment is seen as a potential risk factor when creating and delivering culinary tourism experiences due to its limited controllability.

Nonetheless, the social environment is specifically attributed to being highly memorable, and in most cases, it is perceived positively during a culinary experience. The experts agree that this is due to the fact that culinary experiences are perceived as being pleasant and relaxing per se and especially joyful when having them together with other fellow travel companions. A tourism consultant and experience design expert (E9) specifically stressed that a pleasant social environment will most often lead to relaxation. He mentioned the example of wine tastings, where exactly this getting together of different people (known and unknown ones) combined with enjoying different wines contributes a lot to a pleasant experience and resulting memorability and relaxation.

The project manager for wine & culinary tourism initiatives of *Weinviertel Tourismus* (DMO) (E5) mentioned in this context:

“As the idea of this specific culinary experience [Tafeln im Weingarten] is to place all 100 guests at one very long dinner table, you will definitely sit next to a stranger. And our guests are often quite shy and a bit reserved at the beginning. However, after the second or, at the latest, with the third course, you would think that they have known each other for years, and they start chatting about God and the world. And really nice social interactions come automatically after some time, I've seen it happen quite often. So this social experience is also a success factor here and which makes it so memorable.” (Project manager for wine & culinary tourism initiatives of *Weinviertel Tourismus*, E5)

Service-related aspects

All experts assessed that providing excellent service quality is crucial. The managing director of *Weintourismus Burgenland* (E13) drew attention to the additional value that can be generated by providing excellent service. A customer could simply drink a glass of wine in an anonymous hotel lobby or a wine bar, but exactly the service-related aspects make the difference here and allow the creation of memorable culinary experiences. The culinary marketing manager of *Salzburger Land Tourismus* (E3) specifically pointed out that those people who deliver a culinary experience, e.g., service staff and cooks, should be passionate about local, high-quality products. In her opinion, they should not only be able to provide information about the quality of local products, their

producers, processing processes, etc., but they should also be able to express their passion for them. In specific, she mentioned,

“These people who are in direct contact with the customer have ‘to live it’, and if they don’t, then a guest won’t be able to receive our message, and then it’s not a valuable experience for them.” (Culinary marketing manager of Salzburger Land Tourismus, E3)

Service quality is often closely linked to meeting individual expectations and providing personalised offers and services based on guests’ needs. Several experts mentioned that reacting adequately to individual guests’ needs and wishes is – in the guests’ view – perceived as “high service quality” and an indicator of professionalism. The coordinator of culinary and regional affairs at the *Energy and Environment Agency of Lower Austria* (E7) recommended asking for specific guests’ preferences and needs already when booking a culinary experience. During their online reservations and bookings, guests could be asked to state specific needs at the end of the reservation process, e.g., vegan or a specific menu due to allergies and intolerances, accessibility for people with disabilities or amenities for children (e.g., highchair), etc. In her view, knowing such issues in advance helps avoid potentially negative encounters and act adequately and professionally. In the end, guests will perceive this as a high service quality level, which is usually well remembered.

Personal encounters and direct communication

Experts perceive personal encounters as the most powerful tool in driving memorability. All experts agree that culinary experiences should include the direct involvement of those who are the creators and deliverers of such experiences, e.g., those who produce regional products, such as winegrowers, farmers, chefs, etc. In the best case, this involvement includes a direct and personal encounter with those people. The manager of the “Netzwerk Kulinarik” of *Agrarmarketing Austria (AMA)* (E10) summarised,

“So the success [of a culinary experience] is definitely based on having a vis-à-vis who is there for me as a customer, with all my individual needs..., who is there to answer my questions, who explains something to me...” (Manager of “Netzwerk Kulinarik” of Agrarmarketing Austria, E10)

Similarly, the Head of Product at *IDM Südtirol* (E6) mentioned that “*being an authentic host*” is something aimed for and celebrated in South Tyrolean hospitality and gastronomy. According to their customer research studies, this aspect is actively sought for and appreciated by guests.

Some experts view these service-related and human components of the culinary experience as being more important than non-human aspects. The Head of Product at *IDM Südtirol* (E6) underlined this by stating that – in most cases – a guest would be able to “*find a way around consuming local products*”, and sometimes it is even not possible to create dishes with local ingredients only, just because of their limited availability (quality/quantity-wise and season-wise). The uniqueness of a culinary experience is – in the experts’ eyes – therefore often based on the human components and social interactions, especially in such cases where it is not possible to base it (solely) on the local food products because of the mentioned constraints. Nevertheless, most

experts clearly highlighted that it needs both (human and non-human components) to create a memorable culinary tourism experience.

The chef of a traditional Austrian restaurant based in Lower Austria (E8) emphasised,

“Eating out is actually much more than just satisfying hunger. It's actually more or less an experience. And the human relationships that you experience might be worth much more than the actual food served. Such personal contacts will always be remembered, and the drink or food served may even slip a bit into the background.” (Chef of a traditional Austrian restaurant, E8)

In the same vein, the project manager of wine & culinary tourism initiatives of *Weinviertel Tourismus* (DMO) (E5) explained the success of their best-selling culinary tourism offer:

“Our flagship project is “Tafeln im Weingarten”. Here, a chef from the Weinviertel region prepares a five-course menu that is served in different and extraordinary environments such as vineyards. And what is particularly important to me is the fact that the chef takes the microphone between all courses and talks about his philosophy, he tells us what we eat, why he chose this dish, and the story behind the dishes; for example, his grandma already cooked this dish and now he reinterpreted it... This also includes the chef telling us where he got the products from, about his local and regional suppliers, etc. This even goes so far that the chef greets each of the 100 guests per dinner personally, with a handshake... And for each course, one or two glasses of local wine are served. Here, the vintners also talk about their wines; they present them personally, and of course, guests have the chance to order these wines after dinner or to visit the wineries the next day. Of course, the vintners use this as an advertising platform to present their wineries and to invite guests to visit them and sell their wines. And this is indeed our most successful product that we offer here in the Weinviertel. We are usually fully booked half a year in advance. So experiencing these personalities behind such culinary experiences is clearly a key element for us.” (Project manager of wine & culinary tourism initiatives of Weinviertel Tourismus, E5)

Furthermore, a tourism consultant and experience design expert (E9), as well as the manager of culinary tourism initiatives at the federal state level (E12), highlighted that a glimpse of behind-the-scenes activities such as meeting the chef or assisting the winemaker in their wine cellar might be a key moment of a culinary experience, which is perceived as a powerful tool to evoke positive emotions and to create memorability. Such personal encounters are perceived as a valuable tool to permit “personal” selling even after the initial contact and to create customer value after the visit: Products are then recognised, e.g., on a supermarket shelf or at a farm shop, and according to the experts, it will be more likely that guests who visited this particular producer earlier, buy this product again, as they know the producer personally and had this direct interaction.

In cases where such personal contact is not possible, the main actors (farmers, producers, vintners, etc.) should at least be communicated and made visible by various means (e.g., presenting the local producers on the menu). Some experts reported that

many successful businesses (e.g., long-established family-run restaurants) are already doing a lot to provide a local/seasonal offer by involving local players (e.g., ultra-local sourcing). However, most of them did not and do not communicate this aspect, and only a few businesses stage this and use it in their experience design efforts. In the same vein, the manager of "Netzwerk Kulinarik" of *Agrarmarketing Austria (AMA)* (E10) perceives a lack of pride – predominantly seen among SMEs – when using and marketing local and agricultural food products, although most of them have an outstandingly high product quality. However, it can be seen that the personalities of key players are very often neither communicated nor promoted.

Personal conversations are seen as highly important where potentially surprising and/or negative aspects need to be communicated: The experts recommend addressing any potentially surprising aspects proactively, especially where offers and experiences might look different than what was expected by guests. The coordinator of culinary and regional affairs at the *Energy and Environment Agency of Lower Austria* (E7) gave the example of tasting plates, which are typically offered by wineries together with their wines: most guests would expect different cheeses, nuts and grapes on such a plate. However, these products cannot be sourced locally throughout the year in specific regions. Therefore, they decided that – to be able to use local products only – their tasting plates are altered in different seasons, resulting in a different look compared to what customers are usually acquainted with, e.g., different dried fruits and pickled specialities are offered instead of the conventional products mentioned earlier. Consequently, E7 mentioned that it was decided to inform and educate guests on the aspect of seasonality whenever such tasting plates are served to avoid negative surprises and complaints. Similarly, several experts highlighted the aspect of sustainability, which can be addressed in the same way.

Likewise, potentially negative aspects should always be communicated personally and approached proactively (e.g., noise caused by a nearby airport or construction work taking place in the immediate surroundings). The aspect of avoiding negative disturbances and/or informing about potentially worrying cues or events was also mentioned by a tourism management and experience design professor (E11): He highlighted that it is important to not disturb the overall experience and to avoid any negative cues (e.g., long waiting time until dishes are served without giving related information why this occurs). How such potentially negative cues are dealt with is an important determinant of the overall service quality and experience and, eventually, restoration outcomes. E11 gave another example: dishes that are presented on the menu and ordered by a guest but are not available anymore. In such cases, this could even be turned into a positive cue using direct, personal communication by simply stating that this is an indicator of the exceptional freshness of the ingredients and that the chef would not want to serve a product of lower quality (e.g., by using frozen products). In most cases, providing information on such issues will be seen as an indicator of service quality and helps to easily avoid potentially negative cues. At the same time, such personal communication efforts will be well remembered.

Storytelling and themes

According to the interviewed experts, in addition to these direct personal encounters, the stories told about the main actors (producers, chefs, farmers, etc.) and about the

main products (local ingredients, food/drinks served, etc.) are another important driver of memorability.

The culinary marketing manager of *Salzburger Land Tourismus* (E3) emphasised that their storytelling approach is based on the partners involved:

“What we really attach great importance to is not only promoting restaurants but always trying to bring together producers and restaurateurs. We have many stories to tell here because of our strong players. We want to tell guests where the product comes from, how it is processed in Salzburger Land, and how it ultimately reaches the plate of the guest. All our protagonists really live that, and guests need to be able to feel this and their passion for them, and they should know about the story of the products which are on their plates. And a guest should be able to feel that in the atmosphere, the whole structure of the culinary offer and, above all, in the people. So here in the Salzburger Land region, the success is made of the products and their stories.” (Culinary marketing manager of Salzburger Land Tourismus, E3)

A tourism management and experience design professor (E11) summarised,

“Many culinary offers are more or less based on the same ingredients, but some providers simply manage to focus on the local offer; they create and present the food in a contemporary form and are able to tell interesting stories about the products and the people. And I think, even nowadays, this message is not understood in many regions... They could create so much more and exploit this so much more by clearly focusing on their stories.” (Tourism management and experience design professor, E11)

Several experts mentioned that successful storytelling is very often based on contents related to local traditions. This information is easily understandable and perceived as authentic. In this context, the experts mentioned that most often, stories are built on specific heritage and traditional aspects, such as *“We are preparing this special meal exactly as our grandmother/grandfather did.”* A tourism consultant and experience design expert (E9) points out that successful stories should furthermore include aspects such as the actual location/destination, its history, culture and traditions, the food/drinks and the origin of the ingredients as well as the background and history of the people who have grown or prepared the product. Ultimately, he suggests covering all elements a guest encounters during his/her trip. He specifically emphasises that the stories should not be too comprehensive. However, they should be well-integrated and honest/authentic.

In this context, the Head of Product at *IDM Südtirol* (E6) gave the example of a casual fine dining restaurant in South Tyrol where – on one day of the week – only products that come from their direct circumference (30 km) are served. On these special days, the guests have the chance to meet some of the local producers at the buffet, and, in advance, the whole kitchen and service staff visit these producers in order to be able to tell their stories to their guests and to evoke positive emotions.

An agricultural marketing expert of the *Austrian Chamber of Agriculture* (E4) also highlighted that personal communication efforts and stories told during personal encounters will always outperform any other communication tools, such as pictures, audio guides, brochures with QR codes linking to videos etc., as the latter clearly lack the emotional component. Additionally, the manager of "Netzwerk Kulinarik" of *Agrarmarketing Austria (AMA)* (E10) emphasised that the storytelling approach is also very helpful when creating content for various marketing and communication campaigns. Typically, there are many stories to tell about local products (e.g., where the products come from, how they were produced, etc.), and such stories are needed to create emotional and appealing content.

Similarly, restaurant menus are seen as an important communication tool that should be used for storytelling approaches, as mentioned by the experts. Providing information on the products used, the producers and local players directly on the menu is seen as the perfect place to share such stories unobtrusively. In this context, several experts addressed the issue of multilingual versions of the menu: As it happens quite often that international guests do not understand the translated versions of the menu, some experts reported that several restaurants stopped providing them. Instead, these restaurants trained their service staff to explain the dishes, tell stories about them and give recommendations to their guests, as negative surprises could happen easily based on improper translations and without appropriate explanations of the dishes offered.

Finally, it has to be noted that the extent to which communication efforts and storytelling approaches should be integrated into the whole culinary experience and to which extent they are perceived as being adequate is highly dependent on the customers' expectations. Less involved travellers who just want to satisfy their hunger are not seen as the main target group here and might be annoyed by such communicative efforts. In contrast, more involved customers and specific consumption occasions (e.g., gala dinners, festivals) can provide a perfect starting point for such approaches. The experts mentioned that dedicated customers might also be more interested in learning something new about the products, the producers and the destination.

Besides storytelling, several experts recommended following a common topic throughout the customer journey. A tourism management and experience design professor (E11) specifically emphasised the need for a well-integrated thematic design along the customer journey besides caring about the other elements of experience design based on Pine & Gilmore: 1) thematic design, 2) design of positive cues, 3) avoidance of negative cues, 4) involving the five senses and 5) memorabilia.

Several experts underlined the importance of focusing on a clear topic that is visible throughout the customer journey and at all touchpoints (e.g., dishes presented on the menu and the overall appearance of the location).

The chef of a traditional Austrian restaurant based in Lower Austria (E8) highlighted here,

"It is, of course, important that your customers know what you are offering, not only based on the dishes on the menu but also based on the overall appearance

and design of your restaurant and your location.” (Chef of a traditional Austrian restaurant, E8)

Furthermore, a clear reference point to the offer/main theme of the entire tourism destination should be established in order to create authentic and memorable experiences. The experts highlighted that such a common theme, which is followed throughout the whole customer journey, guarantees a coherent experience. Consequently, the results based on the focus group discussions were reinforced by the experts and are therefore to be underlined here again: the whole culinary tourism environment should be harmoniously fitting to the entire holiday destination and its main theme(s). To underline this, E11 gave a negative example of a rural restaurant in Lower Austria offering down-home cooking but also having scallops on the menu, which is completely displaced in his view. In the same vein, some experts also mentioned the importance of a strategic fit between a culinary experience and the brand (e.g., destination/company brand), which should be experienceable throughout the whole customer journey. The manager of "Netzwerk Kulinarik" of *Agrarmarketing Austria (AMA)* (E10) mentioned examples where excellent products of outstanding quality are produced (e.g., fruit juices). Still, then marketing and communication efforts and/or experience-related aspects are not thought out properly (e.g., poorly designed labels, dirty bottles, improperly designed farmer's shops or missing purchasing options).

4.3.2.2 The role of restoration and restorative environments

All experts agree that eating and drinking are highly relaxing holiday activities. A tourism consultant and experience design expert (E9) even stated that,

“It’s the culinary delights that actually make it a relaxing holiday. Allowing guests to simply enjoy a culinary experience in peace and without time pressure will automatically result in a relaxing experience.” (Tourism consultant and experience design expert, E9)

Furthermore, the experts highlighted that restorative environments have great potential to trigger behavioural intentions, such as loyalty and advocacy. Designing the environment of a culinary experience in such a way that discovering and enjoying it at one's own pace while providing freedom to decide on what activities to engage in is the main recommendation of the experts to foster restoration and relaxation effects and tourists' satisfaction. Typically, restoration and relaxation seem to evolve based on providing autonomous explorations related to four dimensions of the experience setting: 1) Aspects related to the temporal environment, 2) aspects related to the physical setting, 3) aspects related to the social environment, and 4) aspects related to the offer and service.

Aspects related to the temporal environment

Analogous to the statements of the focus group participants, the experts mentioned that having enough time for a culinary experience is important. Having no fixed schedules or rigorous timeframes helps create a pleasant and relaxing environment.

The project manager for wine & culinary tourism initiatives of *Weinviertel Tourismus* (DMO) (E5) reported in this context,

“You sit there all evening long. You could probably have eaten the whole thing in an hour and a half, but still, it takes 5 hours... And this is actually the relaxation part of the whole culinary experience...”. (Project manager for wine & culinary tourism initiatives of Weinviertel Tourismus, E5)

In the same vein, the culinary marketing manager of *Salzburger Land Tourismus* (E3) argued that customers should give culinary experiences the same value as attributed to any other experiences sought on vacation, such as sightseeing. By taking time for eating and drinking, relaxation will follow automatically, according to her assessment. Likewise, the culinary tourism product developer and manager of the “Slow Food” initiative at *Kärnten Werbung* (E14) emphasised that they learned that there should not be too many experiences and too many offers in one specific culinary tourism package. According to her assessment, reducing and focusing on a few aspects only, as well as giving enough time and providing the appropriate setting to enjoy a culinary experience, are the main drivers of relaxation.

The managing director of *Weintourismus Burgenland* (E13) especially highlighted the importance of providing great flexibility. In his eyes, even small cues can help reduce stress and allow restoration (e.g., offering options for alternative activities or drinks when long waiting times occur).

Aspects related to the physical setting

According to the experts, aspects related to the physical setting are important influencers on how a setting is experienced and whether it is perceived as relaxing. Several aspects of the physical environment presented above are therefore to be characterised as having great potential to allow relaxation and restoration effects if designed adequately.

Most importantly, the cleanliness of a setting is seen as essential here. Furthermore, noisiness should be avoided to allow undisturbed conversations with other people and to allow relaxation. Room design aspects such as providing enough space, seating facilities, and good lighting are seen as further important contributors to relaxation. Providing clear signage and easily understandable information on the main aspects of the setting, such as how to access the restrooms, is furthermore perceived as essential to avoid guests' discomfort and allow relaxation.

Again, allowing free choices and autonomous discoveries in a physical setting (e.g., where to sit) drives feelings of relaxation. Additionally, natural and outdoor environments are attributed to being more restorative. The managing director of *Weintourismus Burgenland* (E13) even highlighted that culinary experiences should include at least one element which is related to experiencing and exploring nature (e.g., offering a picnic in the vineyards, asking the guests to explore the immediate surroundings of the premise, etc.). The experts also addressed various elements of a biophilic design. Specifically, the importance of attributes allowing an indirect experience of nature (e.g., natural materials and colours, daylight and fresh air) as well as experiences related to space and place (e.g., organised complexity, well-integrated individual elements and mobility and wayfinding issues) were emphasised.

Aspects related to the social environment

An agricultural marketing expert of the *Austrian Chamber of Agriculture* (E4) highlighted that relaxation frequently arises because of a pleasant social environment. Sitting down and enjoying a culinary experience together with travel companions (e.g., family members, friends) most often means that the stress level finally decreases, and relaxation and restoration effects occur.

How other guests behave is also a main aspect that should be considered here. Nevertheless, the experts acknowledge that this issue is difficult to manipulate. However, as the culinary marketing manager of *Salzburger Land Tourismus* (E3) points out, *“when entering certain locations, guests usually know what they can expect based on the exterior and interior design as well as the atmosphere there.”*

Aspects related to the offer and service

Providing an adequate offer that meets the expectations of the traveller and ensuring a satisfying service are further seen as the main drivers of relaxation and restoration effects. A tourism consultant and experience design expert (E9) highlighted that offering different types of experiences (e.g., experiences where a product can be tasted or where the production process can be observed vs. experiences where hands-on activities can be performed) is important to meet travellers' varying preferences and expectations. Some might perceive being actively involved as relaxing, while others might not want to do so and perceive this as stressful.

A high level of service quality and well-trained service staff are furthermore perceived as important contributors to the perceived restorativeness. The chef of a traditional Austrian restaurant based in Lower Austria (E8) gave an example in this context,

“Well, if the waiter does a great job, there can be as much stress in the restaurant as possible if s/he's good and knows how to slow down and calm down the situation, maybe with a good sense of humour and a nice joke, then everyone will be fine and will feel more comfortable, even in the most stressful situations.” (Chef of a traditional Austrian restaurant, E8)

4.3.2.3 Meeting customers' expectations and achieving tourist satisfaction

A strategic management approach, including a careful design of culinary experiences, is seen as essential by most experts in order to meet customers' expectations and to achieve tourist satisfaction. According to the experts, several crucial aspects must be taken into account when planning the experiences along the customer journey: arousing potential guests' interest, allowing them to dream about a culinary experience and setting expectations as well as providing relevant information based on their individual needs are seen as key aspects here.

The managing director of *Weintourismus Burgenland* (E13) highlighted that a customer's experience begins before booking. Providing clear and easily accessible information to elicit bookings is important to guarantee a successful start to the customer journey.

Providing all relevant information related to a culinary experience is highly recommended in order to properly manage the expectations of (potential) guests. This should be done in such a way that those who are highly interested can find more detailed information, while those who could be categorised as “incidental” culinary tourists should be provided with a general overview giving basic, simple and easily accessible information. Promoting a culinary experience with appropriate photos, videos, texts, etc., is seen as crucial to getting a clearer picture of what to expect at a destination. Providing this information and communicating all details adequately during the pre-travel phase is seen as important. Experts also feel that the post-travel phase is similarly important but frequently underestimated. In their view, many culinary experiences would provide an excellent basis for prolonging the customer journey and creating related customer value. However, quite often, the possibility of purchasing local products easily and conveniently is neither thought out nor provided. Similarly, measures related to customer relationship management (e.g., simply offering a box or a list where guests can leave their contact details to allow follow-up measures such as guest feedback, newsletters, promotional codes for further purchases, etc.) are often not planned. Therefore, many economic effects potentially occurring after the initial experience cannot be triggered. The managing director of *Weintourismus Burgenland* (E13) claims that this is a clearly missed opportunity for many providers and producers, as welcoming guests on-site and offering a satisfying experience usually leads to the fact that visitors are convinced of the products’ high quality and they are therefore interested in subsequent (re-)purchases. In his view, occasional reminders (e.g., newsletters with promotion codes) could be easily distributed. They would not only stimulate further purchases but could also lead to loyalty (e.g., revisiting a destination) and advocacy behaviour (e.g., WOM). Consequently, this would be the basis for substantial middle- and long-term economic effects. Furthermore, providers seem to miss the chance to monitor the experiences delivered (e.g., by conducting guest satisfaction surveys after the visit). But, according to the experts, it would also be important to monitor delivered culinary experiences and adapt them from time to time or whenever needed based on the customers’ feedback. Having the guests’ contact details would easily allow this.

In the same vein, a tourism consultant and experience design expert (E9) underlined the importance of all the different phases of an experience along the whole customer journey: 1) a positive first impression (cleanliness, esthetics, a friendly and warm welcome, etc.) is important during the *arriving* phase; 2) during the *sensing* phase, enough information (signage etc.) should be provided, and positive emotions should be fostered to allow a relaxing start of the culinary experience; 3) during the *experience* phase, guests should be immersed by the activities and be able to steadily experience a feeling of relaxation and restoration; 4) then personal *encounters* (with other guests, the host, the producer etc.) take place; and 5) finally, guests should have the chance to *take away* tangible material (e.g., food souvenirs, shopping facilities) as well as non-material (e.g., a personal relationship with the producer) remembrance. Based on this 5-step-model, he recommends thinking of all potential touchpoints and how the core topic and the brand can be communicated and reinforced throughout the whole customer journey to meet the customer’s needs and expectations as well as to increase competitiveness.

This includes, on the one hand, the technical design, which includes all aspects that are not directly perceived by a customer (e.g., Where can the deliverer of the experience find a connection for power supply for the kitchen when planning outdoor cooking

and dining?) and on the other hand all issues related to the immediate and direct customer experience and related communication (e.g., How can customers find their way from the parking lot to the entrance?).

The issue of dealing with potentially negative cues and their effect on guest satisfaction was highlighted by several experts: Potential constraints faced by a producer/deliverer of a culinary tourism experience (such as limited time resources and personnel) need to be considered, e.g., small-scaled producers might not be in the position to welcome visitors on a daily basis as they need to take care of the production and daily business. Experiences that can be offered might therefore be different compared to those of larger businesses. The experts suggest that – especially when specific constraints need to be taken into account – all elements of a culinary experience should be assessed according to their potential to contribute to the overall experience and satisfaction to allow focusing on the most important ones.

In this context, a tourism management and experience design professor (E11) suggested using the Kano model to determine “must have” factors and “delighters” of a culinary experience. He identified aspects such as cleanliness, friendliness of the staff and an acceptable price/performance ratio as “must have” factors. These aspects cannot significantly drive the overall satisfaction but might easily lead to dissatisfaction if not provided adequately. Creating satisfaction based on the culinary offer itself and providing “delighters” in culinary tourism was assessed as being more challenging. Outstanding settings as well as personal encounters might act as delighters in this context according to his evaluation.

The Executive Director of the *World Food Travel Association* (E1) specifically highlighted the importance of analysing the guests’ expectations and motivations in order to know what kind of experiences need to be delivered. The managing director of *Weintourismus Burgenland* (E13) claimed that the ultimate goal should be to exceed customers’ expectations – at least marginally, and this could be achieved by rather simple cues (e.g., such as serving a nice welcome drink like a local verjuice or the provision of insider tips given by the host).

Several experts not only raised the issue of knowing the varying interests and expectations of different tourist groups, but they also highlighted current developments such as ageing populations, migration, inflation, new lifestyles, values and attitudes of younger age groups (e.g., related to sustainability) which need to be considered when designing individualised offers.

To conclude, the specific expectations and preferences need to be studied according to all experts as they appear to influence the assessment of a culinary tourism experience.

4.3.2.4 Economic impacts of culinary tourism experiences and related customer value

All experts agree that culinary experiences have a strong impact on the overall vacation experience. Some even stated that they are the most important component in driving the overall tourism experience and resulting satisfaction. As every guest gets in touch with culinary experiences at their chosen destination, these experiences have

high potential to drive economic value both during a vacation and beyond. Consequently, multiple immediate and downstream effects were identified by the experts:

Immediate effects

The most important economic outcome was seen in direct, on-site spending for culinary experiences. These direct expenses on culinary experiences, including local food and drinks, and money spent on food souvenirs are seen as an important source of revenue – especially for farmers and direct sellers – as underlined by the manager of “Netzwerk Kulinarik” of *Agrarmarketing Austria (AMA)* (E10). Likewise, a tourism management and experience design professor (E11) claimed that a pleasant culinary experience at the destination would most likely increase direct spending while on vacation.

The project manager for wine & culinary tourism initiatives of a DMO (E5) explained:

“We organise all these culinary events because we want to generate immediate value for the region. The money that is spent here right during the event... This means that the businesses here have the chance to create value. Of course, our aim is not only to enable these companies to create value on that particular event day but also to create new contacts and gain new customers through this event, i.e. to establish new supplier-customer relationships.” (Project manager for wine & culinary tourism initiatives of Weinviertel Tourismus, E5)

Food souvenirs

Offering an easy and convenient opportunity to buy experienced local products immediately after their consumption is furthermore seen as a key to maximising the economic outcome, especially in order to drive food product and souvenir sales. Easily accessible and convenient buying opportunities, such as shelves stocked with local products (e.g., chutneys, juices) that are placed directly in the experience setting, e.g., in the entrance area of a local restaurant, are seen as best practice examples here.

The culinary tourism product developer and manager of the “Slow Food” initiative at *Kärnten Werbung* (E14) reported that they developed a special Slow Food guide which not only informs about the products and culinary experiences but also shopping facilities (e.g., farm shops, markets, local grocery stores etc.). The Head of Product at *IDM Südtirol* (E6) mentioned that, in earlier days, generating economic effects during and after the journey has not always been an aim which was actively tried to target; quite often, it just happened incidentally,

“Earlier, it was always the best case when South Tyrolean guests simply filled the little space they had left in the trunk with apples and wine and maybe some bacon and Schüttelbrot when returning home. Today, the product variety is much wider and finished to a high quality, e.g., honey, marmalade, juices... Nowadays, we have farm holidays with farmer’s shops, farmers markets, several culinary initiatives and supporting associations such as ‘Roter Hahn’, stores promoting and selling high-quality South Tyrolean products such as ‘Pur Südtirol’ to achieve these economic effects.” (Head of Product at IDM Südtirol, E6)

In the same way, the culinary marketing manager of *Salzburger Land Tourismus* (E3) underlined what role food souvenirs can play in the creation of economic value today. For them, it is highly important to involve local producers and farmers/direct sellers in the whole process of delivering the culinary experience to foster immediate direct sales, buying food souvenirs as well as to promote various buying channels already during the consumption process (e.g., informing about farm shops, farmer's markets, online shops etc.). Furthermore, the experts agree that food souvenirs allow the "extension" of a guest's holiday experience, which is seen as an important marketing benefit. The Head of Product at *IDM Südtirol* (E6) stated here,

"When the people are back home and enjoy the products they brought with them, then this is again a linkage to the holiday experience they had and the destination they visited." (Head of Product at *IDM Südtirol*, E6)

Similar to the statements of the focus group participants, the experts addressed the issue of the transportability of food souvenirs. However, some experts mentioned that exactly this challenge could be turned into a main benefit of culinary tourism experiences: An agricultural marketing expert of the *Austrian Chamber of Agriculture* (E4) mentioned that food products which are shipped to the customer after their journey are a perfect link to reinforcing positive memories and fostering destination loyalty and advocacy. He stated,

"Letting people actively do something, e.g., blending their own spirit, producing a cheese... and then asking them to leave the product at the producer for professional ripening and ageing... And then the tourist returns home and - let's say after 3 months -, s/he gets a delivery: his/her product in a matured form, professionally matured of course. And this is the perfect extension of the customer journey and the culinary travel experience." (Agricultural marketing expert of the *Austrian Chamber of Agriculture*, E4)

Loyalty and advocacy

The experts assessed that culinary experiences have high potential to enhance customer loyalty and advocacy. The culinary tourism product developer and manager of the "Slow Food" initiative at *Kärnten Werbung* (E14) stated in this context,

"The first thing everyone talks about related to their holiday is food and cuisine, and what I think we should not underestimate is – when we look at different social media platforms, we see that posting food pictures and talking about culinary experiences is really a big topic. And this, of course, also holds great opportunities for tourism destinations." (Culinary tourism product developer and manager of the "Slow Food" initiative at *Kärnten Werbung*, E14)

But not only the actual culinary experiences while on vacation seem to possess a high potential of triggering these outcomes: The manager of "Netzwerk Kulinarik" of *Agrarmarketing Austria* (AMA) (E10) also sees food souvenirs as a perfect starting point for stories related to culinary experiences that are then told back home. Consequently, positive WOM and advocacy will follow quite naturally based on the travellers' stories they tell others back home, either based on their actual experience or the food souvenirs they brought with them. The chef of a traditional Austrian restaurant based

in Lower Austria (E8) mentioned that in most cases, it is not the restaurant and/or its name which is reported or recommended directly to others, but rather stories that are told about good food and drinks which were consumed there. Similarly, the managing director of *Weintourismus Burgenland* (E13) gave the example of a cheese or wine which was bought as a food souvenir and which is then consumed back home together with family/friends/neighbours:

“Then, it makes you want to talk about this souvenir that you brought with you, and this might even trigger the [neighbours’] desire to go there for the next vacation. And I think this a very important aspect that we have to consider in culinary tourism, as this works so well for the area of wine and culinary delights.” (Managing director of Weintourismus Burgenland, E13)

The culinary marketing manager of *Salzburger Land Tourismus* (E3) specifically stressed that culinary experiences possess a high potential to trigger loyalty and foster revisits by saying,

“It is very important to us that guests say in the end: I want to go there again because I want to taste that again, and I won’t be able to get exactly this on my plate anywhere else.” (Culinary marketing manager of Salzburger Land Tourismus, E3)

The Executive Director of the *World Food Travel Association* (E1) formulated it similarly by stating that a product which cannot be bought or consumed at home drives the intention to re-visit a tourism destination and to look for similar culinary tourism experiences.

Local network approach to further support economic effects

Many experts highlighted the importance of building local culinary tourism networks and integrating all partners into the design and delivery of culinary experiences. Specifically, DMOs are seen as important and helpful facilitators when developing culinary tourism destinations and related experiences. They can greatly assist in building bridges between producers of local food, tourism providers and gastronomy. Especially in destinations where many small-scale businesses exist and that might not be able to produce a critical mass of food and drink products, the support of DMOs is seen as highly valuable to connect different enterprises and to develop joint food marketing strategies and related experiences. Local culinary tourism initiatives that foster the education of local producers – especially SMEs – their product quality and joint marketing efforts are seen as equally important here. Such initiatives seem to have considerable reach when governed by DMOs. The project manager for wine & culinary tourism initiatives of a DMO (E5) stated in this context:

“There are, of course, various offers of individual businesses such as themed brunches of local restaurants, and we do advertise and communicate them. In addition, we always try to develop tourism products together, and ideally, businesses from different sectors, such as gastronomy, agriculture and the wine industry, are involved here. In the best case, these products are bookable and generate overnight stays.” (Project manager for wine & culinary tourism initiatives of Weinviertel Tourismus, E5)

Additionally, this expert reported that initiatives such as their “Marchfelder Genusstour” allow local farmers of the Weinviertel region to showcase their products during culinary festivities. As predominantly small-scale businesses exist in their region, one producer would neither be able to organise such an event nor to establish a critical mass of products. Most of them can neither welcome guests nor intend to open their businesses to visitors because of limited time, resources, facilities, and capacities. However, on specific occasions such as their yearly food festival – which is organised and supported by the DMO – there are free guided tours through their farms and fields, as well as other culinary activities where interested guests can taste and buy these products.

Similarly, the manager of the “Netzwerk Kulinarik” of *Agrarmarketing Austria (AMA)* (E10) emphasised this networking idea they want to foster as well. They specifically want to connect different partners of local supply and value chains such as farmers/direct sellers, boutique manufacturers, small-scale and/or family-run local businesses, gastronomes, etc. The same was stated and underlined by the culinary marketing manager of *Salzburger Land Tourismus* (E3),

“We have a lot of strong protagonists here in the Salzburger Land region; producers, gastronomes..., we try to bundle all the things that they have and present them... we try to provide all relevant information for our guests and to communicate them through different channels.” (Culinary marketing manager of Salzburger Land Tourismus, E3)

The economic effect sparked by such initiatives and joint approaches is seen as highly valuable and clearly outperforms the efforts of single players. Several experts mentioned that many small-scale local producers would not be able to survive economically without the impact and income generated by the culinary tourism value chain. Such small players can benefit substantially from the support of regional culinary tourism initiatives, associations, DMOs, etc. Triggering purchases of local food/drink products is seen as a main goal by many of the latter mentioned bodies. Furthermore, local providers are to be seen as a vital part of the whole culinary offer and the culinary experiences at a destination and can, therefore, significantly drive further economic outcomes such as generating overnight stays, customer loyalty, etc., in a destination.

The culinary tourism product developer and manager of the “Slow Food” initiative at *Kärnten Werbung* (E14) stated that working together in such local networks specifically allows to overcome potential constraints in culinary tourism such as limited quantities and to develop a unique culinary offer despite a small variety and quantity of local products,

“In Carinthia, we have a lot of small producers: small-scale farms and businesses... and we don't have a large number of agricultural products either, and so we thought that by focusing on this cooperation aspect and local networks as well as this individual processing, which Slow Food stands for and which is at the same time very natural processing, we can find our chance to position ourselves. So all this coordination between tourism, agriculture and gastronomy - that's, of course, not always easy, but it's a huge project for us, and yes, it definitely holds a lot of opportunities.” (Culinary tourism product developer and manager of the “Slow Food” initiative at Kärnten Werbung, E14)

4.3.3 Discussion

Drawing from the insights gathered through the expert interviews, creating memorable culinary tourism experiences entails a multitude of key factors. Nevertheless, the main determinant of culinary experiences is the actual food and drink offer, which can be characterised as the core product. However, the environment of a culinary experience can be seen as a major enhancer, especially when its design meets travellers' (restorative) needs and expectations. This combination seems to make culinary tourism experiences especially memorable and satisfying, providing chances to further drive behavioural intentions.

The culinary tourism experience itself seems to be multi-faceted, with varying levels of importance in driving the overall experience, as suggested below.

Determinants of memorable culinary tourism experiences

First and foremost, the food and drink offer – which is the core product – must explicitly adhere to the standards anticipated by travellers. Besides possessing high quality, the culinary offer should be based on local/regional sourcing and traditions/recipes to be seen as truly authentic and unique. This claim substantiates the food authenticity dimensions as categorised by Robinson & Clifford (2012, p. 578): they identified *provenance* (e.g., heritage/tradition, local ingredients, uniqueness) and the *production process* as the main dimensions of authentic food besides four further aspects (politics, branding, personal, and social). These authors were furthermore able to show that “[...] revisitation intention is positively correlated with the satisfaction with the perceived authenticity of the food service [...]” (ibid., p. 594).

Nevertheless, only the combination of the core product (food and drink offer) with the culinary tourism setting and experience-related aspects seem to allow the creation of truly unique and finally memorable culinary tourism experiences. Comparable results were found by Jang & Namkung (2009), who tested different restaurant-specific stimuli and found that atmospherics and service enhance positive emotions, while core product attributes, such as food quality, mainly act to relieve negative emotional responses. Their core recommendation for restaurant managers was to not ignore the importance of product quality because it could act as a basic qualifier for restaurants. Additionally, based on the findings of their study on how Chinese tourists evaluate their travel dining experiences, Chang, Kivela, & Mak (2011, p. 315) already provided evidence that contextual factors like experiential factors have a higher impact on the travel dining experience than the actual tangible food quality. Similarly, Harrington, Ottenbacher, Marlowe, & Siguda (2019) found that experience-related dimensions of wine tourism activities and local gastronomic encounters can be considered as “delighters” in the context of wine tourism, with great potential to increase visitors' satisfaction and memorability. Therefore, to design memorable culinary experiences with great potential to trigger subsequent effects, the setting and experience-related aspects must be carefully considered in addition to the core product. The factors mentioned above could be classified as the “satisfiers” or “delighters” of a culinary tourism experience.

The experts also highlighted that the location where the experience is offered should be esthetically pleasing and harmoniously integrated into the overall environment. Specifically, they emphasised that integrating the overarching theme of a destination into

the design of an experience helps provide a unique, authentic and memorable atmosphere. In this context, Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen (2014, p. 304) have proven that especially those who have a casual attitude towards food specifically “value the aspects of the locality”, which is highly shaped by the esthetic value. In the hospitality setting, Choi & Kandampully (2019) have already proven that atmospheric factors, such as room design (incl. aspects such as cleanliness) and service quality factors, contribute significantly to overall customer satisfaction and WOM behaviour. They identified these two as “[...] core factors that differentiate one hotel from another and may be critical in attracting customers to the hotel” (Choi & Kandampully, 2019, p. 47).

Besides the physical environment, aspects of the sensory environment play an important role in shaping tourist satisfaction: The results clearly underline the findings of Calza, Pagliuca, Risitano, & Sorrentino (2020), who researched the cruise environment and its effect on satisfaction, perceived value and behavioural intentions. These authors found out that the onboard physical environment is perceived as a global and holistic experience based on its sensory stimuli (e.g., scents, lighting, music, temperature), which is, in turn, a good predictor of behavioural intentions. Furthermore, they validated that this relationship is strongly mediated by satisfaction (see Calza, Pagliuca, Risitano, & Sorrentino, 2020).

At the same time, Leong, Yeh, Fan, & Huan (2020) also documented the positive impact of physical stimuli on customers’ emotions in the restaurant context: Based on their study of emotions among Michelin-rated restaurant guests, these authors have shown that cuisine creativity drives pleasure and dominance emotions. They have furthermore proven that esthetics help to generate arousal among restaurant guests. Expert 3 also supports the conclusion of Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen (2014), stating that experiences that trigger emotional responses have a greater tendency to become memorable and elicit subsequent behaviour, such as revisits. In the restaurant context, Jang & Namkung (2009) have shown that different stimuli (product, atmospherics, and service) can foster positive or negative emotions and eventually affect behavioural intentions (e.g., recommending, returning) of restaurant guests. Equally, the design and entertainment factors of the eventscape were found to have the greatest impact on arousal and pleasure emotions, with the greatest influence on attendees’ satisfaction and loyalty (Carneiro, Eusebio, Caldeira, & Santos, 2019). These aspects should therefore be seen as important sources of competitive advantage, as already emphasised by Carneiro, Eusebio, Caldeira, & Santos (2019).

Engaging the five senses and providing hands-on experiences were said to trigger emotions and flow experiences substantially. This corroborates the findings of Hernandez-Mogollon, Di-Clemente, & Campon-Cerro (2020, p. 440), who summarised, “Culinary experiences are considered as proper objects to develop experiential encounters at a destination as they elicit positive emotions and feelings that last beyond the journey”. Radic’s (2018) recommendations based on his study of cruise ship experiences can also be reinforced here. He suggested designing them in such a way that guests can experience positive emotions such as happiness, excitement and relaxation. Likewise, novel/positive surprises bear great potential to drive emotions and memorability. The same was highlighted by Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen (2014, p. 304), who ascribe experiences which are considered new and unique with a high potential of becoming memorable. Finally, similar to the focus group results discussed in the chapter earlier, the experts’ statements again corroborate the findings of Buzova,

Sanz-Blas, & Cervera-Taulet (2021), who concluded that all five senses make a significant contribution to a destination's overall sense scape. Therefore, the experts' assumption that a pleasant physical and sensory environment will also drive immediate emotional responses in the experience setting, as well as subsequent behavioural outcomes, can be validated at this point.

In addition to the non-human components presented above, human components play a key role in designing memorable culinary tourism experiences. It is highly recommended to directly involve those people who serve as the driving force and creators behind these experiences, as the specific uniqueness and distinctiveness of culinary experiences are frequently rooted in these human elements and personal interactions. Pleasant personal encounters (e.g., with the host, producer or winemaker) could even be seen as the most powerful tool to create memorable experiences. This is also due to the fact that such encounters can be used for storytelling approaches and are able to evoke emotions. Apart from these personal interactions, narratives based on main actors (producers, chefs, farmers, etc.) and core products (local ingredients, food/drinks served, etc.) serve as another significant driver to foster memorability and perceived uniqueness and can be told via various channels. This corroborates the findings of Mossberg & Eide (2017, p. 1194), who summarised that unique stories which are based on local food products and local culinary heritage are perfectly linked to a given place and therefore hard to copy. They (ibid, p. 1195) conclude that stories are perfectly able to communicate knowledge and finally recommended that culinary stories should be unique, the places should be linked to the stories as well, and the staff should take part in storytelling activities. Such stories should also be easy to communicate and clearly understandable for the specific target group. To give an example here, Mossberg & Eide (2017) showed how to transform menus into experience concepts that facilitate a consistent experience concept in restaurants. Similarly, Slocum & Curtis (2018, p. 164) propose that sharing the story behind the food and providing insights into the history or traditional practices associated with certain foods can enhance tourists' satisfaction. Developing maps or lists that highlight all the offers, e.g., presenting all food trails on a DMO's website, can effectively convey these stories in a unified way. Various communication tools can therefore be seen as excellent conveyors of narratives associated with products, their creators, and the locations where they are cultivated, produced, or processed. At the same time, customers might show heightened interest in discovering insights about the products, their producers, and their origins when these details are woven into engaging stories.

Similarly, all service-related aspects also seem to contribute substantially to a memorable and satisfying culinary tourism experience. Highly individualised offers, as well as overall service quality levels, are to be characterised as delighters of such an experience. Similarly, Radic (2018) has already demonstrated the positive influence of the service quality component on the overall onboard cruise experience. Furthermore, the findings of Chang, Kivela, & Mak's (2011) study on travel dining experiences of Chinese tourists provides a similar conclusion: These authors (ibid., p. 315) provided evidence that service aspects of the culinary tourism experience significantly affect Chinese tourists' travel dining satisfaction.

In line with the evaluations of focus group participants, experts regard the overall social environment as a significant contributor to a successful and unforgettable culinary experience. Positive emotional responses caused by the dining atmosphere as well as

the social interaction with other guests were already verified by the study of Radic et al. (2021) when investigating the cruise ship dining experience scape among female cruise travellers. However, it has to be taken into consideration that while many aspects of the physical, sensory and temporal environment can be deliberately planned, the social environment is usually non-controllable. Rosenbaum & Massiah (2011, p. 475) also highlighted that all stimuli belonging to the physical environment can be “[...] purposively planned and they remain under managerial control [...]” while the service scape does not only comprise physical and therefore controllable dimensions. This means that there are also some subjective and managerially uncontrollable social stimuli which affect customer decisions and interaction behaviours that planners need to understand and manage accordingly (Rosenbaum & Massiah, 2011), as these aspects seem to contribute significantly to the memorability of a culinary experience. Similarly, Hanks & Line (2018, p. 13) highlighted that “[...] social phenomena may exert a significant effect on consumer behaviour” and found that customers’ evaluations of their culinary experience are highly affected by the “[...] similarity, appearance, and behaviour of other customers of the service environment” while acknowledging that this is difficult to control.

When summarising the experts’ evaluation of different experience types and linking that to the 4E model based on Pine & Gilmore (1998), it becomes evident that active participation is regarded as a more powerful tool to create memorable experiences and subsequent economic effects. Nevertheless, it has to be highlighted here again that customers’ expectations may vary considerably, e.g., some travellers might not want to actively participate in an activity as this is perceived as too stressful or demanding. According to the experts, offering different types of experiences is therefore crucial to allow autonomous decisions on what experiences to engage in.

The role of restoration and restorative environments

Furthermore, the role of integrating relaxing and restorative aspects into culinary tourism experiences shall be discussed here. According to the experts, relaxation and restoration components can – in most cases – be easily integrated into the design of culinary tourism environments and related aspects (e.g., temporal, physical, social environment), as eating and drinking are per se characterised as being a relaxing holiday activity. Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen (2014) studied Finnish travellers and their perceptions of culinary-gastronomic experiences and found similar results: Relaxation was a highly valued motive in their sample, which led to their recommendation to simply provide “[...] tourists with time to sit down and enjoy ‘slow food’ “ (ibid., p. 305). At the same time, experts highlighted the need to avoid cluttered and complex designs and to eliminate unnecessary items that could detract from the culinary experience. They emphasised the importance of the visual appeal of a service environment, as also highlighted by Orth & Wirtz (2014) and Orth, Wirtz, & McKinney (2016), which implies reducing the number of objects in the environment, enhancing visual organisation and symmetry, and using fewer colours, textures, and materials to reduce complexity (Orth & Wirtz, 2014). At the same time, environments with moderate complexity are seen to enhance passive restoration (Bornioli & Subiza-Perez, 2023).

Furthermore, relaxing culinary experiences seem to have a great potential to drive further behaviour. This underlines the findings of Backman, Huang, Chen, Lee, & Cheng (2023), who studied this aspect in the wellness tourism context and have proven that

perceived restorative environments are a predictor of intended behaviour, such as re-visiting and recommending. Specifically, the immersion dimension of the 4E model based on Pine & Gilmore (1998) provides many connection points to facilitate relaxation and restoration during active and passive participation, resp. escapist and esthetic experience realms. For travellers who are engrossed by active participation, escapism aspects should be involved in the design of culinary experiences: Providing great freedom and autonomy will be perceived as highly relaxing, as found during the focus group discussions and expert interviews. Experiences to escape from the daily routine and performing activities that allow a traveller to imagine being someone else (e.g., the cheese maker) permit great immersion into the culinary experience and can therefore evoke feelings of relaxation for those people. The same was found by Lunardo & Ponsignon (2020), who proved that visitors are more immersed and show higher levels of satisfaction when experiences can be encountered autonomously. Consequently, their main recommendation is to adopt autonomy (freedom of choice) when designing tourism experiences. As mentioned during the focus group discussions and also by the experts, not all people might be interested in active participation as they perceive this as stressful. Therefore, for those seeking passive participation, the esthetic dimension of the 4E model based on Pine & Gilmore (1998) and therefore the esthetics of the surroundings might be more important to allow this immersion and, consequently, to drive relaxation. Therefore, all aspects related to the physical environment that were discussed above need to be taken into consideration here and designed accordingly.

Additionally, culinary tourism settings appear to be highly qualified to address all aspects of restorative environments as characterised by Kaplan (1995, p. 174) and Letho (2012, p. 332):

- *Being away*: The focus group participants, as well as the experts, agree that culinary experiences are perceived as being more pleasant when enjoying them in extraordinary environments, e.g., local restaurants and culinary events, and the experiences are not the same when just consuming the product (e.g., food souvenir) at home as the environmental aspect is clearly missing. As culinary experiences usually take place in different surroundings and environments compared to the normal living environment, the aspect of being *physically away* is usually given and can be reinforced easily. Related to the physical setting of such environments, the results of the focus group discussions are again supported and underlined by the experts: outdoor and green environments and/or experiences and activities performed in natural and biophilic environments are said to be especially restorative. As eating and drinking are perceived as relaxing activities per se, the aspect of being *mentally away* can be easily touched as well. Here, the experts recommend designing culinary experiences in such a way that they allow one to forget about obligations and to feel free from daily routines and rigid timeframes. Additionally, culinary experiences and products seem to provide another great possibility to evoke feelings of being mentally away: By simply opening a bottle of wine brought as a food souvenir from a past traveller's vacation, a feeling of being mentally away can even be achieved back home and allows to remind them of past culinary tourism experiences and to recollect feelings of relaxation.

- *Fascination*: Culinary experiences are furthermore highly capable of triggering fascination, as eating, drinking, and most other culinary experiences can be attended effortlessly, e.g. strolling through a farmers' market, dining in a beautiful setting with a great view, and tasting regional specialities. The expert also highlighted that natural and outdoor environments, as well as those allowing an indirect experience of nature, can trigger restorative experiences, as they address this aspect of (soft) fascination. This underlines the importance of ART and biophilia concepts as also outlined in this paper. Finally, culinary experiences also offer a valuable opportunity for providers to subtly inform guests about a destination and invite them to explore it. These experiences allow visitors to engage with the destination's various environments and activities that naturally capture attention without requiring intense focus, which can further enhance relaxation and restoration (e.g., expert 5 stated that they invite their "Tafeln im Weingarten" guests to visit local producers and winemakers on the day after the event).
- *Extent*: A setting which allows extensive explorations based on a variety of experiences can also drive the perceived restorative qualities of a culinary tourism environment. Offering autonomous explorations as well as different types of experiences to choose from freely helps create this feeling of extent. Furthermore, culinary experiences can easily provide the feeling of being in a different world just because of different and unfamiliar tastes, which again drives the extent dimension. Additionally, it was shown that culinary activities (e.g., shopping for food items and preparing meals) are often perceived differently while on vacation.
- *Compatibility*: Meeting pre-trip expectations and providing an environment that fits the individual traveller's purposes and inclinations are important aspects of compatibility. This was also highlighted by Harrington, Ottenbacher, Marlowe, & Siguda (2019) by stressing potential gaps that might occur between expectations and actual experiences in the wine tourism context based on the disconfirmation paradigm as outlined by Pizam & Milman (1993) and Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry (1985). The focus group participants, as well as the experts interviewed in the current study, clearly addressed this issue by stating that the expectations related to culinary experiences offered need to be met. A congruently designed environment will therefore address this compatibility issue, allowing for restoration and ensuring the traveller's satisfaction. In their study on the influence of service scape density on interpersonal dimensions, Hanks, Line, & Kim (2017) already documented that the optimal appearance of rooms, seating strategies, as well as built and people density influence service quality perceptions and vary across different restaurant types and depends on travellers' expectations. Knowing the specific guests' expectations and meeting them appropriately in a given environment is therefore essential, as emphasised by the experts.
- *Discord*: Negative cues and distractions need to be avoided, as outlined by many experts, as they hinder relaxation effects. Similar to the experts' evaluation, the focus group participants also highlighted that a clean environment, a clear arrangement of the physical setting (e.g., clear signage) and avoiding perceptions of crowded places (e.g., due to dense seating facilities) clearly help to reduce stress and facilitate relaxation.

Tourist satisfaction

The experts outlined that culinary tourism motivations, needs, and expectations might vary across different target groups. Consequently, studying their motivations and needs and designing experiences that meet their expectations is crucial to driving tourism satisfaction and subsequent outcomes such as loyalty and advocacy.

The importance of considering diverse expectations, motivations and needs is also a main issue discussed in the tourism literature: Chang, Kivela, & Mak (2011, p. 315) highlighted that the gastronomic identity and the service levels to be expected at a destination should be clearly communicated to potential tourists as these aspects contribute substantially to the formulation of expectations and finally to the level of satisfaction. Likewise, based on the results of their analysis of the nature-based tourism experience scape, Fossgard & Fredman (2019) concluded that adapting to guests' needs is a key dimension when designing experience scapes, regardless of the activity type. Similarly, Martin, Izquierdo, & Laguna-Garcia (2021) highlighted that tourists' behaviour is influenced by their motivation and interest in local food and verified that travellers who visit a destination specifically because of its cuisine show higher intentions to return as well as to recommend the cuisine and the typical dishes.

Nevertheless, many current practical examples show there is still a clear need for further improvement and professionalisation, as indicated by the experts, due to unknown expectations and motivations. A tourism consultant and experience design expert (E9) highlighted that culinary tourism is now in the position where spa & wellness tourism was 20 years earlier: culinary tourism is reaching a certain significance at the moment, where it can be considered as an independent topic respectively as a specific vacation type on its own. Culinary reasons are becoming a primary and exclusive travel motive. Besides, culinary experiences are always a cross-cutting issue for all vacation types. This is the reason why he thinks that managers and planners must pay great attention to all aspects of a culinary experience in order to stay competitive and achieve high guest satisfaction.

Although substantial evidence related to travellers' expectations and motivations and tourist satisfaction can be found in tourism literature, the experts acknowledged that the planning phase and dealing with customers' expectations seem to be underestimated by tourism practitioners designing culinary experiences. This underlines the findings of Stuart (2006, p. 150), who highlighted the importance of designing memorable experiences while acknowledging that an understanding of how to design, develop and deliver such experiences is virtually non-existent in companies.

The experts agree that many of the aspects which are able to substantially drive tourist satisfaction require significant personal human engagement and well-trained staff. Chang, Kivela, & Mak (2011, p. 316) also highlighted the need for adequate training to support culinary tourism providers in their roles as culinary brokers, interpreters and facilitators. Similarly, the importance and the need for proper selection and training of all front-line service providers was also highlighted by Stuart (2006) in order to implement great performances.

Nevertheless, the experts clearly acknowledged that the current labour shortage is a main challenge that has to be considered in this context. A tourism consultant and

experience design expert (E9) highlighted that all customer touchpoints where personal encounters happen might suffer a lot from this current problem, as quite often, only a very limited number of staff members are well-trained and have enough professional background and education to reply adequately to inquiries and questions of customers. However, insufficient customer service and quality might quickly lead to negative impressions. Similarly, the Head of Product at *IDM Südtirol* (E6) mentioned current difficulties in finding appropriate staff. However, they see that more and more providers try *“to concentrate on their job as being a host rather than doing five jobs simultaneously, e.g., being the hotelier and host and at the same time working as a waiter, cook, receptionist, etc.”*. He sees that approaches like this allow for creating a memorable culinary tourism experience because of simply being present, being able to tell the stories of the region and its (culinary) offer and creating emotions. At the same time, this might mean a “reduction” of the offer (e.g., fewer dishes on the menu and self-service buffets while increasing the food quality) to provide this time for personal interactions. Researching and knowing the contribution of each element of the culinary experience to tourist satisfaction and the potential effects of changes is therefore seen as crucial.

Customer value and economic impacts of culinary tourism experiences

The experts suggest that culinary tourism experiences have great potential in driving economic effects, including immediate revenue generation as well as extended impacts based on travellers’ product/brand-related outcomes (e.g., intention to recommend and revisit).

In the same vein, Martin, Izquierdo, & Laguna-Garcia (2021) have already proven that local cuisine, as well as the sensorial experience, influence the intention to repeat and recommend the experience. They specifically found that people who tried iconic dishes showed a greater intention to return to the destination, and those who had generic experiences with local cuisine showed higher intentions to recommend the experience.

Nevertheless, many experts believe that culinary tourism needs to be further professionalised, especially to reach this point where the culinary offer becomes a decisive factor in the decision-making process of (potential) travellers and to drive subsequent effects sustainably. Following a strategic and planned approach is therefore recommended, as sustainable economic effects are then more likely to occur during as well as after a culinary experience.

In the experts’ view, the most important and substantial outcome that culinary experiences can trigger is direct spending while travellers are on vacation. Several experts trust that pleasant and relaxing culinary tourism experiences lead to customers being willing to spend more. Furthermore, food souvenir buying can be stimulated. Purchasing souvenirs is not only an important source of income for local producers during the vacation but also serves as a starting point to trigger further economic outcomes beyond the journey and extend customer value: 1) Various buying channels can be promoted during souvenir purchasing in order to trigger re-purchases; 2) contact details of purchasers can be collected in order to use them for CRM activities; 3) travellers might spread positive WOM when purchasing the food/drink product as a gift for others; and 4) travellers are reminded of their trip and might feel the wish for revisiting a destination after the consumption.

Furthermore, a tourism management and experience design professor (E11) concluded that immediate spendings, e.g., for food and food souvenirs, create direct value on the one hand. On the other hand, these products reinforce the image of the destination as their branding is based on the destination and vice versa; the branding of the destination is based on these products (e.g., olive oil regions, wine regions, etc.). Therefore, a thematic design along the whole customer journey is needed in order to ensure these mutual effects go beyond the effects for individual providers. Similarly, the managing director of *Weintourismus Burgenland* (E13) reported that based on their recent guest surveys, it became obvious that travellers to Burgenland come exactly from those regions and countries where their main wine-selling markets are located. He therefore concluded that local agricultural products, in this case wines from Burgenland, and tourism destinations benefit from each other, and all marketing efforts will therefore positively and mutually influence both areas.

This outcome also underlines the conclusions of Testa, Galati, Schifani, Di Trapani, & Migliore (2019), who studied culinary tourism experiences in agri-tourism. They summarised that local food and beverage offers create new job opportunities and new added value in a destination, especially since small-sized farms might not be able to compete due to an increasingly globalised market (Testa, Galati, Schifani, Di Trapani, & Migliore, 2019).

Finally, the following table (Table 8) summarises the focal constructs and related findings as well as their implications.

Focal construct	Found elements	Implications
<i>Determinants of memorable culinary tourism experiences</i>	- Local agricultural and food products (quality, localness/regional/seasonality, authenticity) - Design of culinary experiences (active participation, attracting the five senses and evoking positive emotions, novelty, and positive surprises) - Setting/environment (physical, sensory, social environments) - Personal encounters and direct communication	- Culinary products possessing certain qualities are the starting point for the creation of authentic and unique culinary experiences, which are typically sought by both culinary as well as average/non-culinary travellers. Nevertheless, availability (quality- and quantity-wise, by season) might be an issue. - Combining culinary with other tourism experiences bears great potential in reaching many target groups with varying interests and can enhance memorability. Experiences that allow active participation seem to have a higher potential of becoming memorable. Nevertheless, a wide variety of experience types should be offered to meet the demands of different target groups. Furthermore, culinary experiences are especially capable of attracting the five senses and evoking positive emotions and flow experiences. Novelty and positive surprises have great potential to drive memorability. - The perception of the setting/environment helps to differentiate the experience from other offers/destinations and makes the experience especially memorable. Environmental aspects can be seen as an important source of competitive advantage. The physical setting should harmoniously integrate with the overall environment and theme, reinforcing the destination's key topic(s). Sensory stimuli should be carefully planned to contribute to the overall sense scape, which can be seen as a main determinant of further behavioural intentions. A pleasant social environment is also a main contributor to a successful and memorable experience. However, it contains subjective and managerially uncontrollable factors. - Culinary experiences should include the direct involvement of those who are the drivers and creators of those experiences. Human components seem to have a strong impact on memorability.

Table 8 Continued

	• Storytelling and themes • Service-related aspects (service quality, individualised services) • Aspects related to the temporal, physical and social environment • Offer- and service-related aspects	• Unique stories based on local food products are hard to copy and make a great contribution to memorability. Furthermore, following a well-integrated thematic design along the whole customer journey fosters memorability and can eventually impact post-travel behaviour (e.g., telling those stories to friends back home). • Providing excellent service and offering individualised offers based on the guests' needs is an indicator of professionalism and a main driver of tourist satisfaction. • Culinary tourism settings appear to be highly qualified to address all aspects of restorative environments (e.g., being away, fascination, extent, compatibility). Furthermore, the immersion dimension of the 4E model seems to provide many connection points to facilitate relaxation and restoration in the culinary tourism context. • Providing enough time and flexibility helps to create a relaxing temporal environment. Avoiding negative disturbances (e.g., noisiness, uncleanliness, missing signage/information) is furthermore important in order to create a relaxing physical environment and needs to be handled by the operator/manager. • Outdoor and green environments with a biophilic design are characterised as especially restorative. A setting that allows a pleasant enjoyment of a culinary experience together with other fellow travellers (e.g., appropriate seating facilities) helps to reduce stress levels and characterises a restorative social environment. • Eating and drinking are perceived as relaxing holiday activities per se. Encountering activities autonomously and providing freedom to decide on what activities to engage in can foster restoration and relaxation. Well-trained and responsive staff is also seen as an important contributor to relaxation.
<i>The role of restoration and restorative environments</i>		
<i>Ensuring tourist satisfaction</i>	• Meeting customers' expectations and designing the experiences according to customers' motivations and preferences • Clear communication of experiences to be expected • Considering the whole customer journey and experiences in all phases • Dealing with negative cues	• The specific expectations of different target groups need to be studied and communicated through appropriate channels, as the level of fulfilment considerably drives tourist satisfaction and further intended behaviour. Therefore, monitoring the experiences delivered and adapting them if needed is highly recommended. • The customer experience begins in the planning phase and covers post-travel experiences as well. All potential touchpoints and related experiences along the whole customer journey need to be considered and carefully designed as they have a great impact on the overall experience and satisfaction. Studying and determining "must-have" factors and "delighters" can help to understand their contribution to overall satisfaction. • Negative cues can have a significant impact on overall satisfaction and need to be handled and communicated accordingly and proactively.
<i>Customer value and economic impacts of memorable culinary tourism experiences</i>	• Immediate spendings • Food souvenirs • Loyalty/advocacy • Destination/product image effects	• The most important economic outcome is seen in direct, on-site spending for local products. • Offering the possibility to buy food souvenirs maximises the immediate economic effect. However, an easy and convenient purchasing opportunity and appropriate solutions related to logistics are required. • Culinary experiences have a high potential to positively affect customer loyalty and advocacy (e.g., WOM, re-purchasing local food online). • Building strong local networks and integrating all partners into the design and delivery of culinary experiences can foster further economic effects and help support local and small-scale producers. Memorable culinary experiences can reinforce the image of the destination, and conversely, the overall image of a tourist destination can strengthen the branding of local agricultural and food products.

Table 8: Focal constructs and related expert interview findings

4.3.4 Contribution and evaluation of results

This part of the research aimed to understand the determinants of memorable culinary tourism experiences based on the tourism experts' perspective as well as to assess the role of such experiences in creating customer value. Furthermore, this research approach tried to capture the experts' opinions on how to design memorable and restorative culinary tourism settings. Finally, the results of the expert interviews were compared to the outcome of the focus group discussions to contrast both perspectives and to generate research hypotheses and the research models, which are presented and tested later in the sequence of this study (see studies 4 and 5).

Bringing in the perspective of tourism practitioners was important at this stage, as they are directly involved in the operation and management of culinary tourism businesses and activities. The interviewed experts were also asked to assess and verify the results of the focus group discussions, which not only helped to link the demand- and supply-side perspectives but also strengthened the overall validity of this research. Furthermore, the experts highlighted best practices as well as new and innovative approaches to designing culinary tourism experiences, which resulted in several practical recommendations (see chapters 4.3.3 and 5.2).

The interviewed tourism managers, consultants and researchers provided valuable insights into the factors that contribute to memorable culinary experiences. They agree that culinary experiences are greatly shaped by factors such as the local agricultural and food offer, its quality and related experiences, food presentation and communication, and service quality. At the same time, they highlight that these dimensions can be deliberately influenced and managed by providers, while non-controllable factors of an experience, such as the social environment, also exist.

They emphasise that culinary tourism experiences should be designed to generate immediate outcomes for travellers, such as meeting their (restorative) needs and expectations, which enhances vacation satisfaction and memorability. Additionally, they argue that these immediate customer effects will influence further behavioural intentions, thereby increasing customer value for the destination and culinary tourism providers.

To conclude, the findings underline the main outcomes of the content analysis as well as the focus group discussion and also highlight the importance of a culinary tourism setting in creating memorable experiences and subsequent effects. However, considering the role of the restorativeness of an environment was a rather new and unexpected approach for most interviewed experts. While the potential of (culinary) tourism experiences to foster restoration and relaxation is widely acknowledged, the specific attributes and characteristics of restorative environments were difficult for many experts to assess, leading to the decision to conduct an experiment and a survey to further explore this aspect. Consequently, the results of the focus group discussions, as well as the expert interviews, were used as input for developing the research models, the research hypotheses, and the data collection instruments for the experiment and the survey as presented in subsequent chapters (see studies 4 and 5).

4.4 Experiment on the effects of perceived biodiversity of culinary tourism settings (study 4)

Earlier sections highlighted the limited knowledge regarding the specific characteristics that contribute to the restorativeness of a culinary tourism environment. Schebella, Weber, Schultz, & Weinstein (2019) specifically claim there is only a limited number of studies exploring the well-being benefits of exposure to natural environments with varying ecological characteristics, e.g., biodiversity. Insights from the literature review, focus group discussions, and expert interviews suggest that natural and biophilic design elements could enhance restorative effects and positively influence behavioural intentions. Therefore, to further explore this, an experimental approach was employed in this phase of the study to investigate how perceived biodiversity levels in different culinary tourism settings impact both restorative effects and behavioural intentions (study 4). The findings aim to provide recommendations for optimising the design of culinary tourism environments. In order to validate the results for the wine tourism context, the experiment was replicated for the specific context of wine tourism (study 4.1).

4.4.1 Research model and hypotheses

Experimental research methods are widely adopted in the fields of marketing and psychology. However, they remain underutilised in hospitality and tourism studies (Fong, Law, Tang, & Yap, 2016). To advance the theory in the field of hospitality and tourism and foster maturation, Fong, Law, Tang, & Yap (2016), Dolnicar & Ring (2014), Lynn & Lynn (2003) and Leung, Fong, Xue, & Mattila (2024) advise to use experimental designs.

Based on the results of the exploratory stage, the (culinary) tourism experience literature as well as restoration theories, the following assumptions were made, resulting in the research model presented in Figure 22 and the hypotheses proposed below:

- There is strong evidence that exposure to natural environments supports restoration. Specifically, biophilic designs using green atmospherics and incorporating natural elements provide restorative qualities that lead to various benefits such as stress relief and improved mental and physical health. Consequently, they can foster positive responses and behaviours (see e.g., Vujcic et al., 2017; Lee, 2019; Kumar, Purani, & Viswanathan, 2020; Rosenbaum, Ramirez, & Camino, 2018). Biophilic service environments with greater perceived biodiversity were found to effectively restore consumers' attention and improve their mood, leading to service scape preference and effective service encounters (Purani & Kumar, 2018). Similarly, Schebella, Weber, Schultz, & Weinstein's (2019) research indicates that how people subjectively perceive biodiversity – rather than its objective measurements – is a strong indicator of the positive impact it has on their subjective well-being.
- Places that facilitate the renewal of personal adaptive resources to manage everyday life are known as restorative environments (Berto, 2014). However, there is still a limited understanding of the relationship between the perceived restorativeness of an environment and its potential restoration effects in various contexts (Liu et al., 2021). When examining the connection between environmental design and its restorative impact in the tourism context, it is

crucial to consider the role of perceived restorativeness. This is particularly relevant for the tourism industry, as leisure and vacation activities in out-of-home environments serve as key coping strategies for managing stress and maintaining health and well-being (Lehto, 2012). For instance, Han, Moon, & Hyun (2019) highlighted the importance of the surrounding environment on guests' well-being, noting that travellers often enhance their well-being through specific environmental qualities and physical attributes.

- Kumar, Purani, & Sahadev's (2013) model suggests that consumers perceive physical elements or attributes of the service scape in varying degrees of complexity, typicality, familiarity, visual scale, coherence, legibility and mystery, leading to perceived visual service scape esthetics. These perceptions lead to affective and cognitive responses, resulting in esthetic responses and preferences that eventually drive behavioural intentions (Kumar, Purani, & Sahadev, 2013). At the same time, earlier studies provide evidence that environments with greater biodiversity are perceived as more visually appealing (see e.g., Hoyle, Hitchmough, & Jorgensen, 2017; Kirillova & Lehto, 2016), and the subjective perception of esthetics can trigger well-being effects (see e.g., Gunnarsson, Knez, Hedblom, & Ode Sang, 2016).

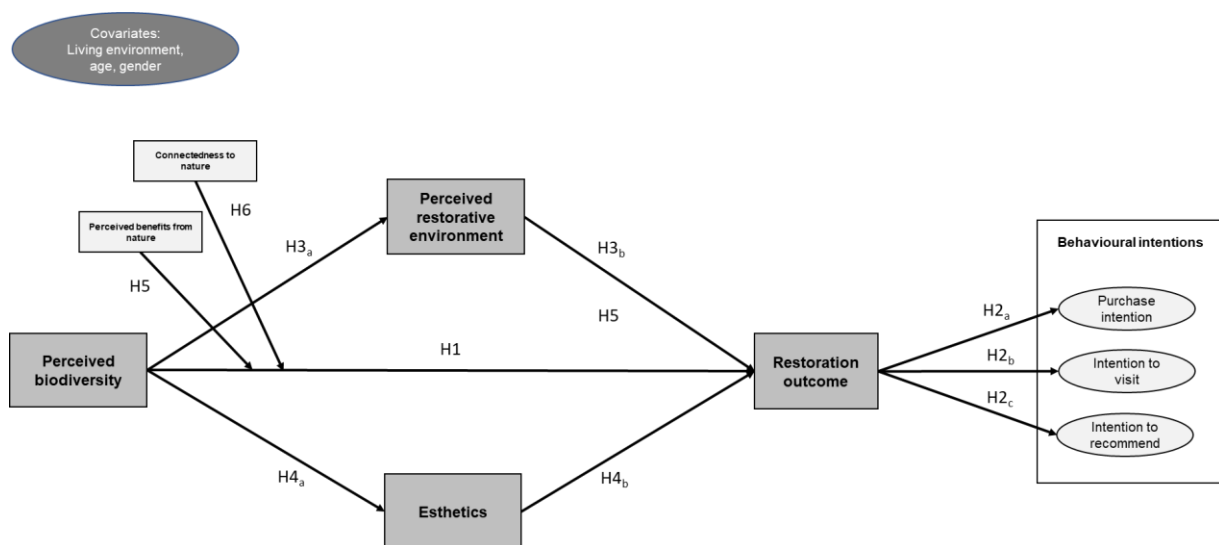


Figure 22: Proposed research model for the experiment

Hypotheses development

The participants of the focus group discussions mentioned that they prefer green environments and environments featuring biophilic designs for their culinary tourism experiences as they perceive them as more restorative. Specifically, they highlighted that green and blue spaces, green elements, and nature-oriented designs contribute to their relaxation and restoration, an effect confirmed by experts during the interviews.

Collado, Staats, Corraliza, & Hartig (2016) conclude that research provides considerable evidence underlining that restoration is more likely to happen in environments with direct contact with nature. Grigoletto et al. (2023) provided evidence that visiting green

spaces improves mental health and well-being, with stronger restorative effects expected for individuals with poorer mental health.

Fisher et al. (2021) explored the relationship between perceptions of green, waterway, and dense urban spaces and well-being. They discovered that certain features of urban green and blue spaces impact human well-being. Areas perceived as rich in species, featuring natural sounds like birdsong, appearing natural rather than artificial, and feeling safe were considered more restorative. They confirmed that this perceived restorativeness enhances wellbeing effects. Similarly, Allard-Poesi, Matos, & Massu (2022) confirmed that the perceived characteristics of nature near urban residences (e.g., undomesticated, proximity) directly and indirectly affect various dimensions of citizens' well-being, including psychological, physical, environmental, and resource-related aspects.

Schebella, Weber, Schultz, & Weinstein (2019) found that perceived biodiversity is a strong predictor of subjective well-being effects, highlighting that subjectively perceived biodiversity, rather than objective measures, predicts subjective well-being benefits more effectively. For urban parks, Goncalves et al. (2021) showed that perceived biodiversity (besides satisfaction and connection to place) is the most important predictor of mental restoration. In the field of tourism, Han, Yu, and Hyun (2020) found that a green indoor environment can be a key driver for enhancing hotel guests' well-being and perception of mental health.

It is therefore assumed that:

Hypothesis 1: The perceived biodiversity of culinary tourism environments has a significant and positive effect on restoration outcome.

Biophilic design is a well-studied issue in the retailing and shopping context; e.g., Tifferet & Vilnai-Yavetz (2017) confirmed the phytophilic effect on approach behaviours and found that store atmospherics, including natural elements like plants, can significantly influence consumers' pleasure, perceptions of service quality, satisfaction and willingness to pay. Furthermore, Rosenbaum, Otalora, & Ramirez (2016) found that shoppers were significantly more likely to recommend shopping malls that featured restorative elements, such as greenery. Esan-Ojuri & You (2021) provided evidence that biophilic design attributes positively impact consumer responses (intention to purchase and intention to recommend) in retail settings. The benefits of biophilic design in eliciting positive consumer responses have even been demonstrated in 3D Virtual Reality (VR) shopping environments (Sina & Wu, 2023).

Research on the effects of biodiversity and biophilic design within the tourism sector is limited, with only a handful of studies focusing on hotel design. For the lodging industry context, Lee (2019) has shown that biophilic designs elicit stronger positive emotional and behavioural responses than the standard design, using a scenario-based experiment. Nanu, Ali, Berezina, & Cobanoglu (2020) studied biophilic hotel lobby design and its effect on the intention to book. They found that lobby interior design has a significant impact on the intention to book, and that biophilic design impacts the satisfaction and emotion of guests across all generations.

Similarly, participants in the focus group discussions expressed a preference for green and biodiverse environments for their culinary tourism experiences, indicating a higher likelihood of visiting such settings. Likewise, the experts estimate that green environments might be more appealing and engaging to visitors, resulting in stronger behavioural intentions.

Therefore, it shall be tested if:

Hypothesis 2: The perceived biodiversity of culinary tourism environments has a significant and positive effect on behavioural intentions.

More specifically:

Hypothesis 2a: Restoration outcome has a significant and positive effect on purchase intention.

Hypothesis 2b: Restoration outcome has a significant and positive effect on the intention to visit.

Hypothesis 2c: Restoration outcome has a significant and positive effect on the intention to recommend.

The focus group participants emphasised that settings with biophilic and nature-oriented designs are perceived as restorative. Additionally, culinary tourism settings possessing certain restorative qualities (such as extent, fascination, and compatibility) were said to drive their ultimate restoration effect. Similarly, the experts highlighted that specific environmental qualities (e.g., temporal and physical aspects of the experience) will drive restoration outcome. Therefore, the role of the perceived restorative environment shall be considered when studying the effect of biodiversity on restoration.

In the context of urban parks, Goncalves et al. (2021) found that park qualities and biodiversity drive perceived restorativeness besides user perceptions. At the same time, Qiu, Wang, Ren, Zhang, & Wang (2022) claim that tourist destinations play a vital role in helping travellers to recover from stress and mental fatigue and to promote restoration, as they are the places where these effects occur. Their study shows that the restorative qualities of a destination have positive effects, specifically on hedonic and eudaemonic well-being (Qiu, Wang, Ren, Zhang, & Wang, 2022). Wyles et al. (2019) found that visits to locations with higher qualities, such as protected or designated areas like nature reserves, and locations having a stronger connectedness to nature are perceived as more restorative and result in greater restorative outcomes. Subiza-Pérez et al. (2021) have shown that the perceived restorative potential of an environment is the strongest predictor of subjective restoration in both indoor and outdoor settings. In the same vein, Han, Moon, & Hyun (2019) emphasised the importance of the surroundings on guests' (emotional) well-being, as travellers often enhance their well-being through specific environmental qualities and physical attributes, such as a calm atmosphere, an appealing décor, comfortable settings, cleanliness, pleasant music, and cosy furnishings when enjoying hospitality or tourism experiences. The authors (ibid.) found that qualities of both indoor and outdoor environments can contribute to emotional well-being, which in turn enhances outcomes like guest retention.

In the context of health research based on the national walking program in England, Marselle, Irvine, Lorenzo-Arribas, & Warber (2016) found that perceived restorativeness mediated the effects of perceived bird biodiversity, naturalness, and walking intensity on positive and negative affect as well as happiness. For urban park settings, Hung (2025) found that perceived biophilic design and perceived restorativeness had significant direct effects on subjective vitality, with perceived naturalness as a mediator.

It is therefore assumed that:

Hypothesis 3: The perceived restorative environment (PRE) mediates the positive relationship between perceived biodiversity and restoration outcome.

More specifically:

Hypothesis 3a: Perceived biodiversity has a significant and positive effect on PRE.

Hypothesis 3b: PRE has a significant and positive effect on restoration outcome.

Based on the focus group discussions, it can be concluded that pleasant environments drive travellers' restoration effects. Participants specifically highlighted the role of esthetically pleasing settings in enhancing their overall culinary experiences. In particular, aspects such as a harmonious design fitting to the entire destination were addressed here. They also mentioned that outdoor and natural environments in specific have a greater overall esthetic appeal.

Goncalves et al. (2021) found that people perceive existing biodiversity predominantly through visual cues. Biodiversity can therefore be seen as a crucial factor for improving human aesthetic appreciation of landscapes, with significant implications for well-being studies (Fairchild, Weedon, & Griffin, 2022). For coastal settings, Fairchild, Weedon, & Griffin (2022) found that managing environments for biodiversity supports esthetic, educational, and well-being benefits.

Gunnarsson, Knez, Hedblom, & Ode Sang (2016) investigated green spaces in cities and their contribution to the quality of life for city residents. They found that biodiversity directly impacts perceptions, with people valuing green spaces more when biodiversity is high compared to when it is low. Additionally, these authors propose that "subjective" esthetic and sound-related perceptions of urban greenery are in line with the "objectively" measured biodiversity.

Kirillova & Lehto (2016) claim that visitors' perceptions of a destination's restorative and esthetic qualities are interconnected. As a result, a high environmental restorative potential is likely to lead to favourable esthetic judgments. Similarly, Hoyle, Hitchmough, & Jorgensen (2017) found strong correlations between perceived attractiveness and respondents' perceptions of perceived biodiversity indicators, as well as between perceived attractiveness and restorative effects, when surveying people walking through contrasting areas of planting. Therefore, environments with greater biodiversity are perceived as more visually appealing (Hoyle, Hitchmough, & Jorgensen, 2017).

It is therefore hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 4: Esthetics mediate the positive relationship between perceived biodiversity and restoration outcome.

More specifically:

Hypothesis 4_a: Perceived biodiversity has a significant and positive effect on esthetics.

Hypothesis 4_b: Esthetics have a significant and positive effect on restoration outcome.

Woodside & Dubelaar (2002) highlight in their Theory of Tourism Consumption Systems (TCS) that thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes might impact pre- and post-travel behaviour as well as the actual on-site tourism experiences. For the current study, the role of connectedness to nature and expected benefits from nature seems especially relevant, as the focus group discussion results indicate that travellers with positive attitudes towards the environment and greater connectedness to nature as well as with stronger pro-environmental beliefs might place greater value on green environments, potentially enhancing their restorative effects from culinary experiences in related settings.

Qiu, Sha, & Scott (2021, p. 13) highlight that restoration in the context of nature-based tourism is a result of various restorative triggers, including visitor motivations and characteristics. Similarly, Bilgic & Ebbini (2023) emphasise that individuals' preferences and attitudes play a crucial role in the restorative outcomes associated with specific aspects of biophilic design, such as organised complexity, which was covered in their study. Lee, Tao, Douglas, & Oh (2023) have shown that in a luxury hotel environment, incorporating biophilic design elements enhances guests' esthetic appreciation, sense of escapism, perceived economic value, and overall attitude toward the hotel, and customers' environmental beliefs significantly influence their experiential values.

The concept of connectedness to nature has been developed to address the issue of nature disconnection (Ward-Smith, Naidoo, Olvitt, & Akhurst, 2020). Restall & Conrad (2015) explain that connectedness to nature refers to how people identify with and form relationships with the natural environment. Mayer & McPherson Frantz (2004) view nature connectedness as an "individuals' experiential sense of oneness with the natural world" (ibid., p. 504). Restall & Conrad (2015) also conclude that various terms, such as nature-relatedness and emotional affinity toward nature, are used interchangeably with connectedness to nature. They acknowledge that, despite focusing on different aspects of connectedness to nature, these measures exhibit substantial similarity.

The literature suggests that nature-orientedness and connectedness to nature should be considered potential influencers when investigating restorative effects: Subiza-Pérez et al. (2021) provide evidence that restoration effects are significantly and positively related to nature-orientedness. In the same vein, Mayer & McPherson Frantz (2004) emphasise that a connection to nature is a key predictor of both ecological behaviour and subjective well-being.

Subiza-Pérez et al. (2021) found that nature-oriented individuals are more inclined to spend leisure time in natural settings. At the same time, according to Dzhambov

(2014), believing in the benefits of nature significantly predicts how much a person actually gains from contact with nature. By fostering this belief, experiences can enhance people's well-being and overall health outcomes from exposure to nature (Dzhambov, 2014). In this context, perceived benefits of nature encompass social benefits (e.g., harmony when communicating with others and understanding other people), relaxation and well-being benefits (e.g., feeling happy, reducing anxiety, forgetting trouble), and physiological benefits (e.g., physical health) (Dzhambov, 2014, p. 111).

Khozaei, Carbon, Nia, & Kim (2022) have already shown that perceived benefits of nature play an important role in driving tourists' preferences for hotels with biophilic attributes. Agri-tourism experiences could have significant potential to highlight and enhance travellers' perceived benefits from nature (see Barbieri, Sotomayor, & Aguilar, 2019): As environmental concerns and awareness, such as protecting natural resources and conserving habitats grow among travellers, agricultural settings used for culinary tourism could significantly enhance these perceived benefits, extending beyond just food production (Barbieri, Sotomayor, & Aguilar, 2019). Simultaneously, a destination's ecosystems not only provide the resources necessary to deliver the products that satisfy travellers' hunger, but they also offer intangible benefits such as recreational opportunities and esthetic experiences based on these natural settings (Derek, 2021). Therefore, it is assumed that perceived benefits from nature play a crucial role as an influencing factor in enhancing restorative outcomes within the realm of culinary tourism.

Consequently, it shall be tested if:

Hypothesis 5: The relationship between perceived biodiversity and restoration outcome is moderated by the perceived benefits from nature such that the positive effect of perceived biodiversity on restoration outcome strengthens as perceived benefits from nature increase.

Hypothesis 6: The relationship between perceived biodiversity and restoration outcome is moderated by connectedness to nature such that the positive effect of perceived biodiversity on restoration outcome strengthens as an individual's connectedness to nature increases.

The focus group participants stated that they prefer outdoor settings for culinary experiences, and these settings are perceived as being more memorable and more restorative. This was also underlined by the experts who gave examples of culinary outdoor tourism settings that outweigh indoor settings in several outcome dimensions, such as overall guest satisfaction, memorability and restorativeness, probably due to their ability to attract different senses and their esthetic appeal.

While much of the literature explores the differences in restoration effects between natural and built environments (e.g., Pasanen, Ojala, Tyrväinen, & Korpela, 2018; Van den Berg, Koole, & van der Wulp, 2003; Korpela, De Bloom, & Kinnunen, 2015), comparisons between indoor and outdoor spaces remain limited. Hartig, Korpela, Evans, & Garling (1997, p. 180) suggest varying levels of restorative potential across different

physical environments. Natural outdoor environments offer the highest restorative potential, followed by natural indoor spaces, built outdoor environments, and, lastly, built indoor environments.

One specific example of comparing outdoor and indoor settings is the study of Subiza-Pérez et al. (2021) on favourite indoor and outdoor urban places, showing that outdoor settings provide greater subjective restorative outcomes compared to indoor settings. Furthermore, the study of Li et al. (2021) shows that outdoor amenities that enhance moments of leisure have the most significant impact on physical and mental health recovery among Chinese national park visitors. Nisbet & Zelenski (2011) demonstrated that their study participants experienced significantly improved mood after outdoor walks in nearby natural settings compared to indoor walks.

It is therefore assumed that:

Hypothesis 7: Culinary outdoor tourism settings elicit stronger restoration outcome compared to indoor environments.

4.4.2 Methodological approach

Experiments allow the investigation of cause-and-effect relationships and help to overcome the limitations of purely descriptive research (Lynn & Lynn, 2003; Leung, Fong, Xue, & Mattila, 2024). When focusing on the tourism context, experiments specifically allow to understand influences on consumer and tourist behaviour and to propose corresponding actions (e.g., related to product design) (Lynn & Lynn, 2003), which is the main aim of this part of the study.

The experiment at hand uses a factorial between-subjects design to study the effect of culinary tourism settings (indoor vs. outdoor) and their perceived biodiversity level (high vs. low) on restoration outcome and behavioural intentions. The results shall be used to formulate recommendations for tourism decision-makers regarding the design of culinary tourism settings.

4.4.2.1 Justification and description of the research approach

This experiment tries to investigate the effect of culinary tourism settings (indoor vs. outdoor) and their perceived biodiversity level (high vs. low) on restoration outcome and behavioural intentions. Therefore, as this study wants to understand the effects of multiple input variables (factors), a factorial design was chosen to guide the selection and arrangement of treatment combinations that need to be followed (Mukerjee & Wu, 2006). Factorial designs measure the effects of two or more independent variables and help to understand potential interactions (Malhotra, Birks, & Wills, 2012, p. 392).

For this experiment, a full factorial design encompassing all possible treatment combinations (Mukerjee & Wu, 2006, p. 2) was implemented. A full factorial approach using a 2 (high vs. low biodiversity) x 2 (outdoor vs. indoor setting) design was followed to study potential interactions among variables (Fong, Law, Tang, & Yap, 2016). This 2 x

2 design results in 4 unique experimental conditions (“cells”), where each combination corresponds to a distinct combination of the two factors’ levels (Collins, Dziak, & Li, 2009, p. 204). Table 9 shows a two-dimensional table showing every possible combination of treatments (stimuli) as suggested by Malhotra, Birks, & Wills (2012, p. 392).

For the experiment, a between-subjects design was applied to avoid carryover effects and order effects (Kim, Kim, Jhang, Kwon, & Baah, 2023, p. 3571; Keren, 2014, p. 271). However, between-subjects designs might neglect decision-making processes that occur when customers are exposed to multiple products simultaneously, which is usually a common real-life scenario. This framing of decisions can influence choices and could only be studied using within-subjects designs (Charness, Gneezy, & Kuhn, 2012).

Nevertheless, a between-subjects design was followed for this experiment to avoid the effects mentioned above. Therefore, each participant was randomly presented with one stimulus only (Keren, 2014, p. 257), which allows to receive causal estimates by comparing the behaviour of participants across different experimental conditions (Charness, Gneezy, & Kuhn, 2012). Hereby, a balanced design was followed, meaning that an equal number of participants was assigned to each stimulus (Collins, Dziak, & Li, 2009, p. 205).

As randomisation is one basic principle in designing experiments (Jiju, 2023, p. 8), random assignment – as one measure to achieve internal validity and to avoid experimental bias (see Jiju, 2023, p. 8; Lynn & Lynn, 2003, p. 77; Malhotra, Birks, & Wills, 2012, p. 392) – was performed by presenting one of the four stimuli randomly to the participants using the random trigger function of the survey software Unipark.

Following the recommendations of Fong, Law, Tang, & Yap (2016), a pilot test was conducted to perform manipulation checks, enhancing internal validity (Kim, Kim, Jhang, Kwon, & Baah, 2023; Leung, Fong, Xue, & Mattila, 2024).

To do this, 35 pilot test respondents were asked to rate the four environments according to their overall perceived biodiversity on a scale ranging from 1 (very low) to 7 (very high). The manipulation check results showed significant differences in the expected directions based on Mann-Whitney U tests: indoor ($M_{\text{high\_biodiversity}}=4.50$ vs. $M_{\text{low\_biodiversity}}=1.90$, $U=9.50$, $p=.05$) and outdoor ($M_{\text{high\_biodiversity}}=4.86$ vs. $M_{\text{low\_biodiversity}}=3.00$, $U=4.00$, $p<.05$). These results suggest that the manipulation of the biodiversity level was successful.

		Setting	
		Outdoor	Indoor
Perceived biodiversity level	High biodiversity		
	Low biodiversity		

Table 9: 2 x 2 factorial design

Note: Images were generated using Leonardo.ai

4.4.2.2 Sampling and data collection

Viglia & Dolnicar (2020) highlight that a key issue in recruiting participants for experiments is the question of the sample's representativeness to enhance research validity. An a priori description of the profile of the target population and selecting participants who meet these criteria accordingly increases external validity (Viglia & Dolnicar, 2020).

According to Butcher & Yodsuwan (2024, p. 269), selecting an appropriate database, using panel data and applying data filters can increase “causal realism” in experiments, but most often at high costs. Therefore, many researchers use convenience samples, as summarised by Viglia & Dolnicar (2020, p. 8), while highlighting the critical aspect of research validity, which centres on the characteristics of the studied samples. Consequently, describing the actual study population is essential, besides using screening and filter questions as a simple approach to help move the sample closer to a representative sample in the sense of finding eligible participants meeting the pre-defined criteria (Butcher & Yodsuwan, 2024).

At this point, the basic design principle of blocking (Jiju, 2023, p. 10) also seemed relevant. As those who do not travel at all or who have never visited culinary tourism environments might have different viewpoints, these travellers' characteristics serve as blocks.

Based on these considerations, a convenience sampling approach was employed for the experiment at hand, nevertheless adhering to the recommendation of including only participants who truly represent the chosen target population. Consequently, only people travelling at least occasionally and who are familiar with visiting culinary tourism environments were recruited for this study. Furthermore, respondents needed to be aged 18 years or older. The recruitment of participants was done using the researcher's personal networks as well as the researcher's institution. Furthermore, as Doebel & Frank (2023) propose working in teams to pool resources and samples, students of two undergraduate tourism study programmes were asked to share the project idea and to invite potential interviewees to the project.

Viglia & Dolnicar (2020, p. 9) point out that “[...] there is no single optimal sample size for experiments”, while highlighting that sample size definitions should follow the concept of the probability of making errors in hypothesis testing. Fong, Law, Tang, & Yap (2016) state in this context that (true) experimental designs usually use fewer subjects. Nevertheless, many authors recommend moving away from simple rules such as “50 samples per experimental cell” (see e.g., Kim, Kim, Jhang, Kwon, & Baah, 2023; Lynn & Lynn, 2003; Leung, Fong, Xue, & Mattila, 2024). Viglia & Dolnicar (2020, p. 9) emphasise that it is good practice to supplement the results with an effect size measure (such as Cohen's *d*). The recruitment approach presented above resulted in a total sample size of $n=722$, leading to the effect size measures indicated below.

Data collection was done online using the Unipark survey tool. Two language versions (English and German) were offered to the respondents. The four stimuli used during this experiment were assigned randomly to the participants based on Unipark's random trigger function. Fieldwork was done from April to May 2024.

Ethical research behaviour was kept in mind at all stages of the research. Participation in the experiment as well as in the survey was voluntary, and respondents had the right to refuse to answer any question. Participants were given the information that any personal information or data is treated as confidential and anonymous and that they have the right to access research findings at any time. All aspects of the research were designed with the intention not to mislead the participants regarding any aspect of the research, as suggested by Jennings (2010, p. 99). Specifically, efforts were made to ensure that participants did not feel suspicious of the tactics employed in the experimental scenario, as emphasised by Kim, Kim, Jhang, Kwon, & Baah (2023, p. 3588); for example, the research purpose was clearly communicated. The experiment was presented professionally and credibly, and clear instructions were given to the participants (see Leung, Fong, Xue, & Mattila, 2024).

4.4.2.3 Data collection instrument and operationalisation of concepts and variables

The questionnaire used for data collection comprised the following sections (the full version of the data collection instrument can be found in Appendix 7):

- Introduction
- Demographic part
- Part A (current mood state, need for deceleration, exposure to nature, perceived benefits from nature)

- Part B (presentation of visual stimuli)
- Part C (evaluation of environment shown in part B)

The introduction provided relevant information related to the research project and informed participants about ethical issues (data privacy and anonymity). The demographic part covered questions on age, gender, nationality, a characterisation of the current living environment and the frequency of visiting tourism environments for culinary experiences.

It has to be noted that the questionnaire included additional items beyond those relevant to the current study, as it was also used for other studies within the researcher's network.

Key constructs covered in parts A, B and C were operationalised as follows:

Part A

Participants were asked to evaluate their current mood state based on Peterson & Sauber (1983), followed by the need-for-deceleration (Sager, Timm, Hoffmann, & Orth, 2023), exposure to nature (Kamitsis & Francis, 2013) and perceived benefits from nature (Khozaei, Carbon, Nia, & Kim, 2022).

Part B

The pictures shown in part B represent tourism scenes in four different environments (indoor vs. outdoor and low vs. high biodiversity). One picture was randomly assigned to each participant. The pictures were generated using a free AI image creation tool (Leonardo.ai). The prompts to create these pictures were 1) culinary tourism experiences, high biodiversity, outdoor dining; 2) culinary tourism experiences, low biodiversity, outdoor dining; 3) culinary tourism experiences, high biodiversity, indoor dining; and 4) culinary tourism experiences, low biodiversity, indoor dining. 10-12 pictures were created for each environment. Pictures showing people or animals were excluded right away. Two tourism scholars evaluated the remaining pictures to ensure they accurately depict their respective environments while maintaining consistency across all images (e.g., seating facilities, table décor, and table arrangement are visible on all pictures, as well as equal resolution and size of images). A final choice was made based on these evaluations. The final pictures used for the experiment are shown in Table 9. As it can be seen, the selected pictures highlight biodiversity primarily through plant species richness, while other aspects of direct experiences with nature (such as animals, fire, and light) as well as indirect elements (like naturalistic shapes, forms, and geometries (Kellert & Calabrese, 2015, p. 10) are not reflected. According to Ha & Kim (2021), building on the insights of Fuller et al. (2007) as well as Qiu, Lindberg, & Nielsen (2013), the perception of plant species richness is the most noticeable aspect of biodiversity that people can reliably assess, and it closely corresponds to actual biodiversity levels. Similarly, Goncalves et al. (2021) also provided evidence that people perceive existing biodiversity mainly through visual cues. They found that, in the context of urban parks, biodiversity perception is mainly dominated by tree diversity perception. Therefore, the finally chosen pictures mainly highlight plant species richness.

Part C

Based on the stimuli presented in Part B, respondents were asked to evaluate the following aspects of the shown culinary tourism setting: perceived biodiversity (Gyllin & Grahm, 2005), connectedness to nature (Mayer & McPherson Frantz, 2004), restoration outcome (Korpela, Ylén, Tyrväinen, & Silvennoinen, 2008; Pasanen, Ojala, Tyrväinen, & Korpela, 2018), perceived restorative environment (Qiu, Jin, & Scott, 2021), esthetics (Vilnai-Yavetz & Rafaeli, 2006), service scape preference (Purani & Kumar, 2018), dining atmospherics (Liu & Jang, 2009), emotional responses (Bigné, Andreu, & Gnoth, 2005), purchase intention, word-of-mouth and intention to visit.

Participants were asked to engage in specific scenarios based on the settings they were presented with in Part B (e.g., likelihood to recommend and visit this setting). Therefore, following the recommendations of Kim, Kim, Jhang, Kwon, & Baah (2023), a high level of realism should be maintained. This was ensured by avoiding highly hypothetical situations (e.g., culinary tourism environments that are similar to the four presented settings are likely to be encountered by occasional travellers or may have been experienced by them previously), as Leung, Fong, Xue, & Mattila (2024) suggest designing scenarios of mundane reality that mirror real-life experiences. Furthermore, a pre-test with 35 people was performed to make sure that the given scenarios were understood correctly and that responses were reported properly.

Table 10 provides an overview of the operationalisation of the experiment's concepts and variables, key statistics, as well as their reliability and validity assessment. The scales presented in Table 10 can be considered as reflective measures following the classification of Rose, Borriello, & Pellegrini (2023, p. 8). Therefore, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, average variance extracted and item-to-factor loadings were calculated to assess their internal consistency and reliability.

The internal consistency of the scales of all main constructs clearly exceeds Cronbach's alpha level of 0.7 (at least "acceptable"), as suggested by Fantapié Altobelli (2011, p. 165). Furthermore, the composite reliabilities of main constructs range from 0.87 to 0.97, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.6 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). All average variance extracted (AVE) values exceed the recommended threshold of 0.5, directly confirming convergent validity and indirectly supporting discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Finally, all item-to-factor loadings exceed the cut-off point of .4, as recommended by Keenan & Stevens (2016).

These assessments were achieved after removing the item "This place is different from where I usually live" for the aspect of "Being Away" in PRE. This was done because the initial investigation showed that removing this item considerably increases Cronbach's alpha (from .64 to .81), CR (from .81 to .91), AVE (from .60 to .84) and item-to-factor-loadings (from >.49 to >.92), which also resulted in better results related to reliability and validity assessment for PRE overall (Cronbach's alpha from .94 to .95; CR from .94 to .95; AVE from .57 to .61; item-to-factor loadings from >.31 to >.55).

Purchase intention, intention to recommend, intention to visit, and esthetics were regarded as single-item measures, following Bergkvist & Rossiter (2007) who conclude that there is no significant difference in predictive validity between single-item

measures and multiple-item measures when assessing constructs involving concrete singular objects.

For all scaling questions, a 7-point Likert-type interval scale ranging from 1 “strongly disagree” to 7 “strongly agree” was provided for recording the answers of the respondents.

Constructs and related items	Source(s)	M	SD	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted	Item-to-factor-loading
Perceived benefits from nature	Khozaei, Carbon, Nia, & Kim (2022)						
Interacting with nature makes me happy.							
Interacting with nature keeps me optimistic.							
I feel relaxed when I think of nature.							
I am more positive when I think of nature.							
Visualising natural scenes makes me happy.							
I am more capable of gathering my thoughts on the things I need to do when I am close to nature.							
To maintain physical health, I have to interact with nature.		5.33	1.12	.90	.92	.53	>.60
I feel uneasy when I am apart from nature for a long time.							
Not interacting with nature poorly affects my physical health.							
Not interacting with nature affects my ability to easily cope with unpleasant thoughts.							
In order not to feel anxious, I have to interact with nature.							
Connectedness to nature	Mayer & McPherson Frantz (2004), Navarro et al. (2022)						
I feel a sense of oneness with the natural world around me.							
I think of the natural world as a community which I belong to.		4.23	1.72	.88	.93	.81	>.77
I imagine myself to be part of a larger cyclical process of living.							
Perceived restorative environment (PRE)	Qiu, Jin, & Scott (2021)						
Extent							
There is a clear order in the physical arrangement of this place.							
Everything matches the overall environment.		4.78	1.30	.71	.90	.64	>.75
This place seems limitless to allow exploration.							
Compatibility							
This culinary experience there allows to follow my own pace.							
I am able to encounter culinary experience there autonomously.		4.55	1.41	.88	.91	.68	>.76
This place meets my expectations.							
There are few boundaries to limit my possibility for moving around.							
This place suits my personality.							

Table 10 Continued							
Fascination							
There are many interesting things in this place that draw my attention.							
This place makes me wonder about things.	4.45	1.61	.87	.92	.79	>.88	
I am engrossed by this place.							
Being Away							
This place gives me a break.							
This place is a refuge from unwanted distractions.	4.73	1.59	.81	.91	.84	>.92	
Restoration Outcome Pasanen, Ojala, Tyrväinen, & Korpela (2018)							
After visiting this environment, I would feel re-stored and relaxed.							
I would feel calmer after being in this environment.							
My concentration and alertness clearly increase there.	4.66	1.58	.95	.96	.79	>.85	
I get new enthusiasm and energy for my everyday routines from this environment.							
I can forget everyday worries there.							
Visiting this tourism environment is a way of clearing and clarifying my thoughts.							
Dining Atmospherics Liu & Jang (2009)							
I like the ambience of this environment (lighting, colors, etc.).							
I like the design of this environment (décor, style, furnishing, setting, etc.).	4.94	1.59	.91	.94	.84	>.90	
I like the spatial layout of this environment (seat space, privacy, etc.).							
Esthetics Vilnai-Yavetz & Rafaeli (2006)							
The scene shown in the photograph is visually appealing.	5.34	1.73	-	-	-	-	
Service scape Preference Purani & Kumar (2018)							
I like this service scape very much.							
I prefer this service scape over all other service scape of this kind I have ever been/seen.	4.53	1.64	.81	.91	.84	>.92	
Intended behaviour							
Word-of-mouth							
Purchase intention	5.05	1.65	.95	.97	.90	>.95	
Intention to visit							

Table 10: Operationalisation of the experiment's constructs and variables and key statistics

4.4.2.4 Sample description and demographics

In total, 722 participants took part in the experiment. The average time to complete the questionnaire was approx. 10 minutes.

The experiment participants are distributed across various age groups. The majority of respondents fall into the 18-29 age bracket, comprising 58.7% of the sample. This is followed by the 30-50 age group, accounting for 22.9% of participants and by the age group >50 (18.4%). The mean age of all participants amounts to 32.6, with a standard deviation of 15.01 (Min=18; Max=84). Among the experiment participants, 237 identified as male (32.8%), 465 identified as female (64.4%), and 20 participants identified as non-binary or preferred not to disclose their gender (2.8%). The experiment includes participants from a diverse range of nationalities. The majority of respondents are from

Austria, comprising 55.8% of the sample. This is followed by Hungary, accounting for 6.6% of participants and Italy, accounting for 5.5% of participants. Participants can be characterised as being rather frequent visitors to culinary tourism environments, as 35.9% of all participants visit such settings at least once a month or more often. Related to the living environment of participants it can be said that 64.4% live in completely or rather urban areas, while 35.5% report that they live in rather or completely rural areas.

Table 11 summarises the demographic structure of the sample.

Item	Sample (n)	%	Item	Sample (n)	%
Age			Nationality		
18-29	424	58.7%	Austria	403	55.8%
30-50	165	22.9%	Hungary	48	6.6%
>50	133	18.4%	Italy	40	5.5%
Gender			Germany	33	4.6%
Male	237	32.8%	Slovakia	32	4.4%
Female	465	64.4%	Romania	23	3.2%
Non-binary	8	1.1%	Czech Republic	15	2.1%
I prefer not to say	12	1.7%	Poland	13	1.8%
Frequency of visiting culinary tourism environments			Other	115	16.0%
Once a month or more often (1)	259	35.9%	Living environment		
(2)	114	15.8%	Completely urban	229	31.8%
(3)	113	15.7%	Rather urban	236	32.7%
(4)	102	14.1%	Rather rural	178	24.7%
(5)	46	6.4%	Completely rural	78	10.8%
(6)	28	3.9%			
Once a year or less (7)	60	8.3%			

Table 11: Demographic profile of experiment sample

4.4.3 Findings

When starting data analysis, consistency checks were conducted to ensure that data were logically consistent and not out of range (Malhotra et al., 2012, p. 597). SPSS version 29.0 was used for performing all analyses.

4.4.3.1 Comparative analysis of culinary tourism environments with varying biodiversity levels

To investigate and compare the evaluations of the four culinary tourism environments, non-parametric tests were conducted as both Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests showed that all interval-scaled items departed significantly from normality ($p < .001$). Therefore, Kruskal-Wallis tests were performed to investigate differences in assessments across the four stimuli.

Figure 23 presents the overall perceived biodiversity of the four culinary tourism environments. The outdoor, high biodiversity environment received the highest rating for overall perceived biodiversity, followed by the indoor, high biodiversity environment. The outdoor, low biodiversity environment ranked third, while the indoor, low biodiversity environment received the lowest rating for overall perceived biodiversity. Similarly,

various biodiversity items differ across the four culinary tourism environments, as summarised in Appendix 15.

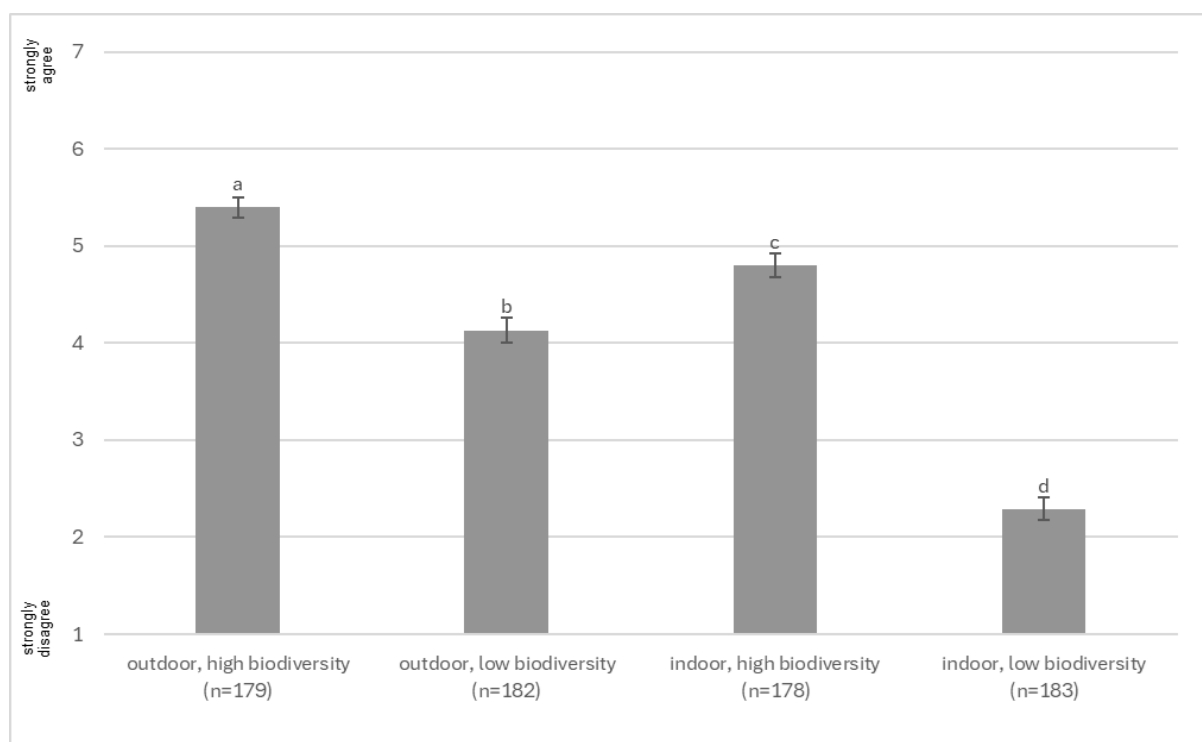


Figure 23: Perceived biodiversity of culinary tourism environments

The column graph presents arithmetic means for all environments on a 7-point Likert-type interval scale (1 “strongly disagree” – 7 “strongly agree”). The error bars present standard errors of the mean. Results are based on a Kruskal Wallis test: $\chi^2 (3, 721)=249.45, p<.001$. Lowercase letters indicate significant differences based on post-hoc comparisons ($p<.05$).

Figure 24 shows the restoration outcome when viewing the four scenes. The outdoor, high biodiversity environment received the highest evaluations related to restoration outcome. In contrast, indoor environments with low biodiversity were assessed as the lowest. Indoor, high biodiversity environments and outdoor, low biodiversity environments were assessed in a similar way related to restoration outcome.

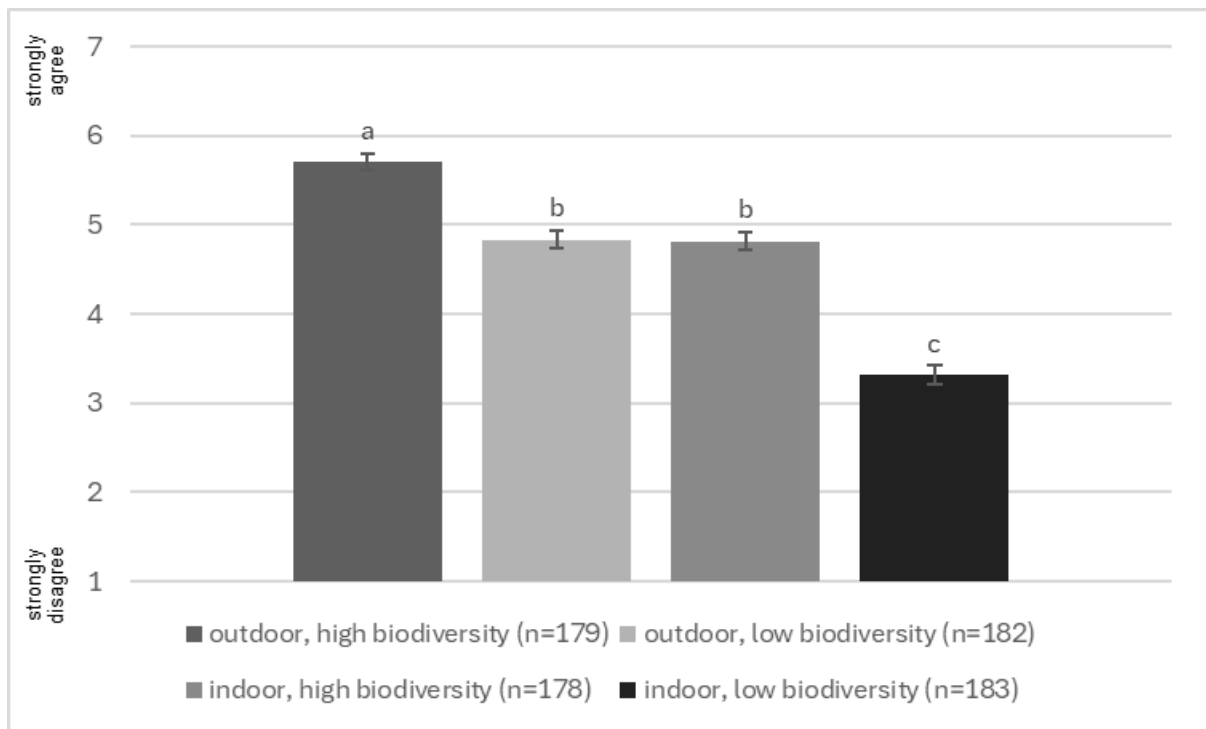


Figure 24: Restoration outcome in different environments

The column graph presents arithmetic means for all environments on a 7-point Likert-type interval scale (1 “strongly disagree” – 7 “strongly agree”). The error bars present standard errors of the mean. Results are based on a Kruskal Wallis test: $\chi^2(3, 722)=212.80, p<.001$. Lowercase letters indicate significant differences based on post-hoc comparisons ($p<.05$).

A two-way ANOVA was conducted to study the main and interaction effects of the biodiversity level and setting on restoration outcome. A statistically significant interaction effect was found between biodiversity level and setting on restoration outcome ($F(1, 718)=9.85, p<.01, \eta^2=.02$). Nevertheless, the effect size can be regarded as small (see Cohen, 1988). Simple main effects analysis shows that outdoor environments provide higher restoration outcome than indoor environments ($F(1, 718)=150.07, p<.001, \eta^2=.17$). Similarly, high biodiversity environments provide higher restoration outcome than low biodiversity environments ($F(1, 718)=144.77, p<.001, \eta^2=.17$). Both effect sizes can be classified as large (see Cohen, 1988). From the data, it can therefore be concluded that the restoration outcome was assessed significantly higher for outdoor environments compared to indoor environments, providing evidence for supporting H7.

Figure 25 displays the interaction effect between biodiversity level and setting, suggesting that both high biodiversity and outdoor settings independently and interactively enhance restoration outcome. The diverging lines for the two environments indicate that as perceived biodiversity increases, the effect on restoration outcome is significantly stronger for indoor environments, confirming the interaction effect described earlier.

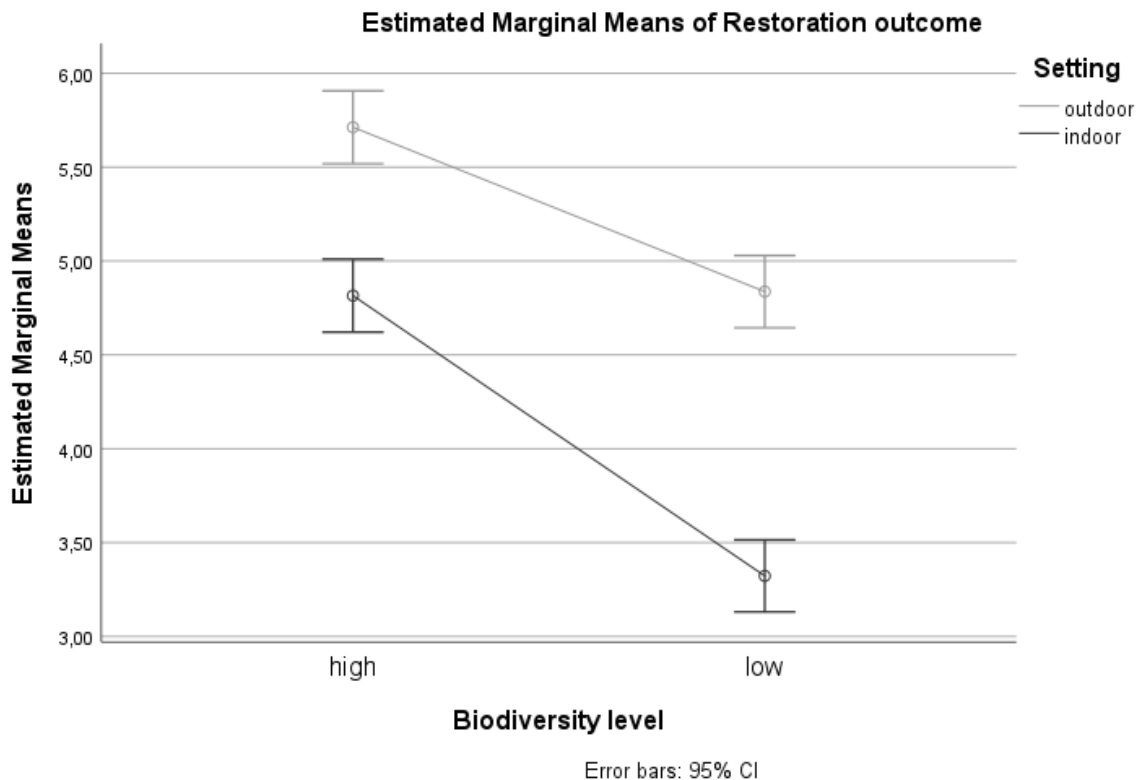


Figure 25: Testing for main and interaction effects of the biodiversity level and setting on restoration outcome

The line chart presents estimated marginal means for all restoration outcome on a 7-point Likert-type interval scale (1 “strongly disagree” – 7 “strongly agree”). The error bars present the 95% confidence interval. Results are based on a two-way ANOVA: $F(3, 718)=102.13$, $p<.001$.

To summarise, environments with high biodiversity, especially when located outdoors, are highly effective in promoting restorative outcomes. In contrast, environments lacking natural elements and biodiversity, particularly when indoors, are less effective in providing restorative benefits.

Figure 26 shows the assessments of the perceived restorative environment for all four settings. Similar to the results on restoration presented earlier, the outdoor, high biodiversity environment received the highest evaluations in all dimensions (extent, being away, fascination and compatibility). In contrast, indoor, low biodiversity environments were assessed as the lowest in relation to the dimensions above. The evaluations of indoor, high biodiversity environments and outdoor, low biodiversity environments do not differ significantly from each other and are located between the other two environments.

Perceived restorative qualities of an environment are therefore influenced by both its setting (indoor vs. outdoor) and its level of biodiversity. As the outdoor, high biodiversity environment is perceived as the most restorative across all dimensions, it can be assumed that natural settings with high biodiversity are seen as highly beneficial for restoration. Conversely, indoor, low biodiversity environments are perceived as the least restorative, scoring lowest in all dimensions. This suggests that environments lacking in natural elements and biodiversity may fail to provide the engagement needed for

restoration. Interestingly, the evaluations for indoor, high biodiversity environments and outdoor, low biodiversity environments fall between the extremes and do not differ significantly from each other. This indicates that introducing biodiversity into indoor settings can improve their restorative qualities, making them comparable to outdoor environments with lower biodiversity.

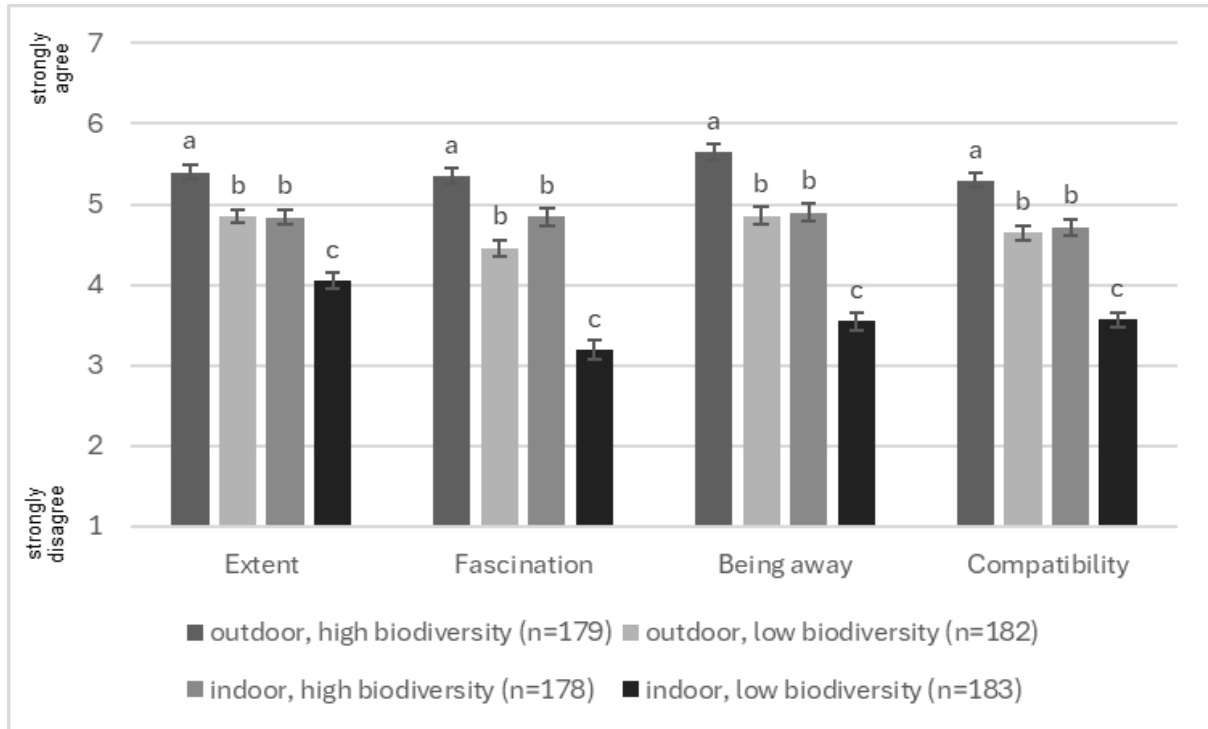


Figure 26: Perceived restorative environment dimensions of different environments

The column graph presents arithmetic means for all environments on a 7-point Likert-type interval scale (1 “strongly disagree” – 7 “strongly agree”). The error bars present standard errors of the mean. Results are based on Kruskal Wallis tests: $\chi^2_{\text{extent}} (3, 722)=107.69, p<.001$; $\chi^2_{\text{fascination}} (3, 722)=168.96, p<.001$; $\chi^2_{\text{being away}} (3, 722)=167.57, p<.001$; $\chi^2_{\text{compatibility}} (3, 722)=147.08, p<.001$. Lowercase letters indicate significant differences based on post-hoc comparisons ($p<.05$).

Figure 27 summarises the assessments related to purchase intention, word-of-mouth, and intention to visit. Again, the outdoor, high biodiversity environment received the highest evaluations across all three categories: purchase intention, word-of-mouth, and intention to visit. In contrast, the indoor, low biodiversity environment received the lowest evaluations.

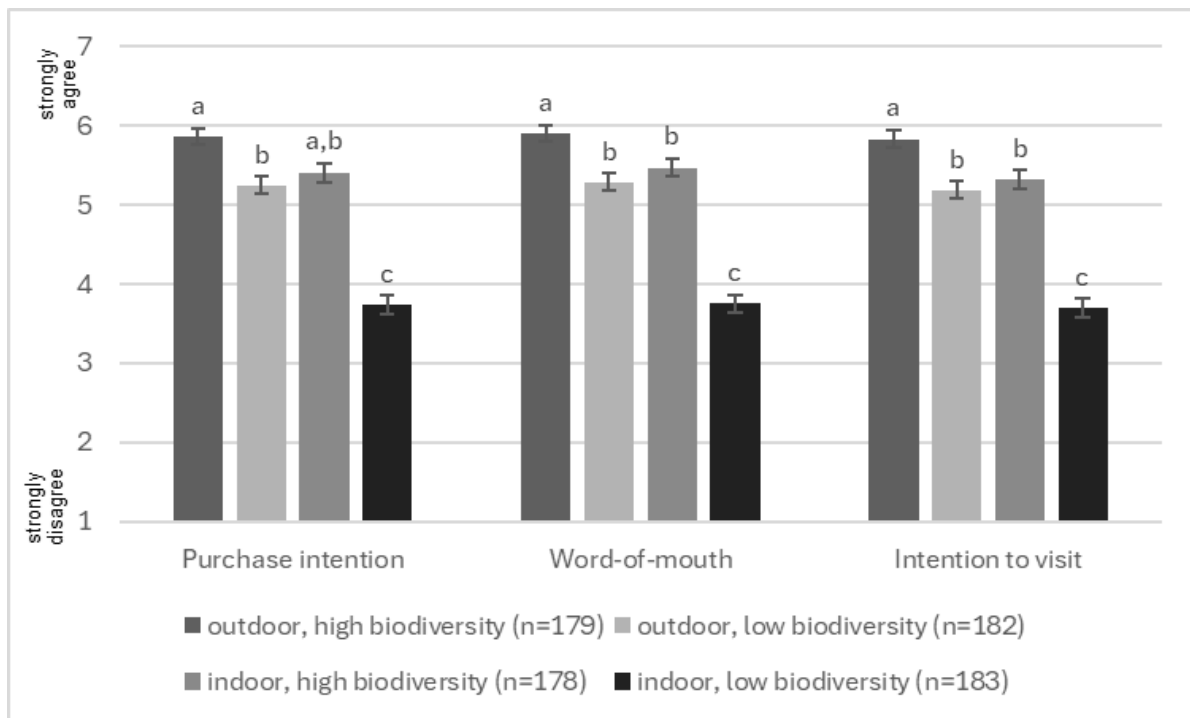


Figure 27: Purchase intention, word-of-mouth and intention to visit related to different environments

The column graph presents arithmetic means for all environments on a 7-point Likert-type interval scale (1 “strongly disagree” – 7 “strongly agree”). The error bars present standard errors of the mean. Results are based on Kruskal Wallis tests: $\chi^2_{\text{purchase intention}}(3, 722)=153.50, p<.001$; $\chi^2_{\text{word-of-mouth}}(3, 722)=169.80, p<.001$; $\chi^2_{\text{intention to visit}}(3, 722)=146.81, p<.001$. Lowercase letters indicate significant differences based on post-hoc comparisons ($p<.05$).

To study the main and interaction effects of the biodiversity level and setting on intended behaviour, another two-way ANOVA was conducted. A statistically significant interaction effect was found between biodiversity level and setting on intended behaviour ($F(1, 718)=23.92, p<.001, \eta^2=.03$). Nevertheless, the effect size is again small (see Cohen, 1988). Simple main effects analysis shows that outdoor environments trigger greater behavioural intentions than indoor environments ($F(1, 718)=84.80, p<.001, \eta^2=.11$). Similarly, high biodiversity environments trigger greater behavioural intentions than low biodiversity environments ($F(1, 718)=114.64, p<.001, \eta^2=.14$). These effect sizes can be categorised as moderate to large (see Cohen, 1988).

Figure 28 displays the interaction effect between biodiversity level and setting, indicating that both high biodiversity and outdoor settings independently and interactively enhance behavioural intentions. The diverging lines for the two environments indicate that as perceived biodiversity increases, the effect on intended behaviour is significantly stronger for indoor environments, confirming the interaction effect described earlier.

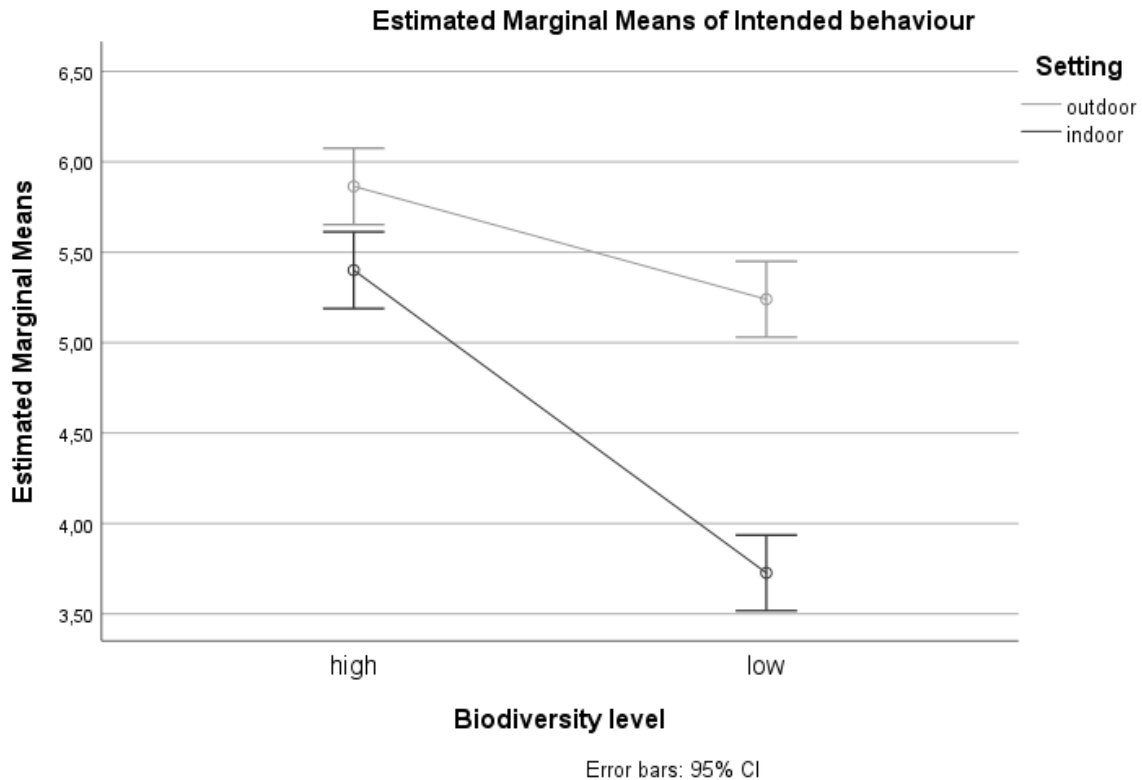


Figure 28: Testing for main and interaction effects of the biodiversity level and setting on intended behaviour

The line chart presents estimated marginal means for all intended behaviour on a 7-point Likert-type interval scale (1 “strongly disagree” – 7 “strongly agree”). The error bars present the 95% confidence interval. Results are based on a two-way ANOVA: $F(3, 718)=74.97, p<.001$.

Overall, intentions related to the purchase intention, word-of-mouth, and visiting the environment are therefore significantly influenced by both the setting (indoor vs. outdoor) and the level of perceived biodiversity (high vs. low). Environments rich in natural elements and biodiversity seem to be best in encouraging people not only to visit and make purchases but also to recommend these environments to others. Environments lacking natural elements and biodiversity, particularly when indoors, seem less appealing to individuals, negatively affecting the likelihood of purchasing, visiting, or recommending these environments.

Finally, further Kruskal Wallis tests show that the assessments of esthetics, dining scape preferences, dining atmospherics (see Appendix 16) and emotional responses (see Appendix 17) also differ across the four environments; again, with significantly higher ratings for outdoor and high biodiversity environments.

4.4.3.2 Model and hypotheses testing

The PROCESS macro for SPSS was used to test the conceptual model and the research hypotheses outlined in section 4.4.1, as it facilitates the execution of a moderated mediation analysis using a regression-based approach. Mediation analysis is used to study mechanisms by which interventions affect later outcomes (Rudolph,

Williams, & Díaz, 2024). A moderation analysis is suitable when the moderator is anticipated to influence specific structural paths. However, identifying potential moderators needs to be backed by relevant theory, and using qualitative input such as focus groups and expert interviews is highly recommended (Memon et al., 2019). Both were performed (see studies 2 and 3) to develop hypotheses for studies 4 and 5 (see chapters 4.4.1 and 4.5.1).

A moderated mediation analysis combines both mediation and moderation analyses to examine whether the mediation effect of an independent variable on a dependent variable through a mediator is influenced by a moderator variable. Therefore, it can test if the strength or direction of the mediation effect changes depending on the level of the moderator (Hayes, 2013). All following outputs report non-standardised coefficients (B), as generated by the PROCESS macro. These coefficients represent the raw change in the dependent variable for a one-unit change in the predictor variable without standardising. This means the coefficients are in the original units of the variables (Hayes, 2013).

Based on theoretical input as well as the focus group discussions and expert interview results, the research model was developed (see chapter 4.4.1), necessitating the use of 4 and 5 for the analyses (see Hayes, Montoya, & Rockwood, 2017). The variables in these moderated mediation analyses showed an approximately linear relationship, as determined by visual inspection of the scatterplots after LOESS smoothing. All continuous variables were mean-centered (Hayes, 2013). Perceived biodiversity was seen as the independent variable (X), restoration as the dependent variable (Y), PRE as a mediator (M), and connectedness to nature, as well as perceived benefits from nature as moderators (W). The living environment (urban vs. rural), age, and gender were treated as covariables.

When testing this model, it can be seen that perceived biodiversity has statistically significant direct and indirect effects on restoration outcome (see Table 12).

Predictors	<i>B</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Outcome: PRE ($R^2=.44$)				
Biodiversity	.44	.02	22.60	<.001
Outcome: Esthetics ($R^2=.34$)				
Biodiversity	.51	.03	17.44	<.001
Outcome: Restoration outcome ($R^2=.77$)				
PRE	.91	.04	20.67	<.001
Esthetics	.04	.03	1.36	>.05
Direct effect of Biodiversity on Restoration Outcome				
<i>B</i> =.11, SE=.02, 95% CI [.07;.16]				
Total effect of Biodiversity on Restoration Outcome				
<i>B</i> =.53, SE=.03, 95% CI [.48;.58]				

Table 12: Testing for mediation between biodiversity and restoration outcome (study 4)
n=721. CI=confidence interval. HAYES PROCESS Model 4 (Hayes, 2013). Bootstrap sample=5,000. The table reports unstandardised coefficients (B). Significant (*p*<.001, *p*.01, *p*<.05) coefficients in bold.

According to the results of the mediation analysis using Hayes Process model 4, it can be seen that the direct positive effect of biodiversity on restoration outcome is statistically significant (*B*=.11, *t*(3, 717)=4.97, *p*<.001), which supports H1. When entering PRE as a mediator into the model, it is shown that perceived biodiversity predicts PRE

as a mediator significantly and positively ($B=.44$, $t(1, 719)=22.60$, $p<.001$), which in turn predicts restoration outcome significantly ($B=.91$, $t(3, 717)=20.67$, $p<.001$). These results support H3, and more specifically H3_a and H3_b. Hence, partial mediation is observed, as both the direct effect of perceived biodiversity on restoration outcome and the indirect effect through PRE are significant. Therefore, PRE partially explains how perceived biodiversity influences restoration outcome. Nevertheless, the indirect mediation effect can be classified as strong (proportion of mediation=.79), meaning that a major part of the total effect is indirect (Preacher & Kelley, 2011).

Introducing esthetics as a mediator shows that perceived biodiversity predicts esthetics significantly and positively ($B=.51$, $t(1, 719)=17.44$, $p<.001$), but it does not predict restoration outcome significantly ($B=.04$, $t(3, 717)=1.36$, $p>.05$). Since esthetics does not significantly influence restoration outcome, it cannot be seen as a mediator in this relationship, leading to the decision to reject H4 and H4_b. Nevertheless, perceived biodiversity predicts esthetics, which means that H4_a can be accepted.

To summarise, the direct effect of perceived biodiversity on restoration outcome (c') is significant, with a coefficient of $B=0.11$. This indicates that perceived biodiversity continues to have a modest direct influence on restoration outcome, even when PRE is included as a mediator. While this suggests that perceived biodiversity retains a moderate direct effect beyond what is accounted for by the mediating variable, a portion of its impact on restoration outcome remains unexplained. Introducing esthetics as an additional mediator does not provide further explanatory value in this context. A discussion of this outcome, as well as areas for further research to clarify this relationship, are discussed in chapter 4.4.5.

The role of connectedness to nature and perceived benefits from nature as moderators and further covariates

When introducing connectedness to nature as well as perceived benefits from nature as moderators (W) (Model 5, Hayes, 2013) to test H5 and H6, it can be seen both perceived benefits from nature ($B=.11$, $t(7, 712)=3.66$, $p<.001$) and connectedness to nature ($B=.16$, $t(7, 712)=5.04$, $p<.001$) increase restoration outcome (see Table 13). However, the interaction effect for biodiversity x BfN remains insignificant ($\Delta R^2=.00$, $F(1, 711)=1.10$, $p>.05$, 95% CI[-.02;.05]). Therefore, H5 is rejected, as no significant moderation effect was found. However, results show a statistically significant interaction effect for biodiversity x CtN ($\Delta R^2=.002$, $F(1, 711)=4.37$, $p<.05$, 95% CI[-.04;-.003]). Nevertheless, practical significance – suggesting a meaningful impact in practice – is questionable. The negative interaction effect for biodiversity x CtN suggests that the strength of the relationship between biodiversity and restoration outcome decreases as CtN increases. This would lead to the assumption that the beneficial effects of biodiversity on restoration outcomes are less pronounced for people with higher CtN values, which suggests a different direction of the moderation effect compared to the postulation proposed in H6. This leads to the assumption to reject H6. At the same time, this statistically significant result seems to have a rather limited practical effect due to the very small effect size (see e.g., Gelman & Stern, 2006), this might potentially be due to the larger sample size or low variability in data (see e.g., Cohen, 1988; Murphy & Myers, 2004). Therefore, it can be concluded that the moderators CtN

and BfN do not significantly change the relationship between biodiversity and restoration outcomes in practical terms and that the effect of biodiversity and restoration outcomes remains basically consistent across different levels of CtN and BfN.

Additionally, covariates were introduced into Model 5 to control for the effect of living environment, age and gender. Including these covariates in the model did not result in statistically significant effects (see Table 13), suggesting that these variables do not affect the relationships between perceived biodiversity and PRE or between perceived biodiversity and restoration outcome. All primary relationships remain unchanged, suggesting that these variables are not influencing the model's components here.

The results provide evidence that perceived biodiversity has a consistent effect on restoration outcome across all genders and age groups and regardless of the living environment. Table 13 summarises the different effects of introducing the above-mentioned moderators and covariates.

Predictors	<i>B</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Outcome: PRE (R²=.44)				
Biodiversity	.43	.02	22.18	<.001
Living environment	-.02	.04	-.42	>.05
Gender	-.03	.07	-.38	>.05
Age	-.00	.00	-.91	>.05
Outcome: Esthetics (R²=.35)				
Biodiversity	.51	.03	17.14	<.001
Living environment	-.01	.06	-.26	>.05
Gender	-.12	.11	-1.12	>.05
Age	-.01	.00	-1.94	>.05
Outcome: Restoration outcome (R²=.77)				
Biodiversity	.12	.02	5.39	<.001
PRE	.87	.05	19.20	<.001
Esthetics	.04	.03	1.40	>.05
BfN	.11	.03	3.66	<.001
Biodiversity x BfN	.02	.02	1.05	>.05
CtN	.16	.03	5.04	<.001
Biodiversity x CtN	-.02	.01	-2.09	<.05
Living environment	.01	.03	.40	>.05
Gender	.08	.05	1.52	>.05
Age	.00	.00	-.12	>.05
Conditional Direct Effects of Biodiversity on Restoration Outcome through BfN				
BfN	Effect	Boot LLC	Boot ULC	
-1.12	.10	.04	.16	
.00	.12	.08	.16	
1.12	.14	.09	.19	
Conditional Direct Effects of Biodiversity on Restoration Outcome through CtN				
CtN	Effect	Boot LLC	Boot ULC	
-1.72	.09	.03	.15	
.00	.06	.01	.11	
1.72	.02	-.04	.08	

Table 13: Testing for moderated mediation (study 4) with connectedness to nature and perceived benefits from nature as further moderators (W)

n=720. CI=confidence interval. HAYES PROCESS Models 5 (Hayes, 2013). Bootstrap sample=5,000. The table reports unstandardised coefficients (*B*). Significant ($p<.001$, $p<.01$, $p<.05$) coefficients in bold.

Effects of perceived biodiversity on specific behavioural intentions

For testing H2_a, H2_b, and H2_c, regression analyses were performed to investigate whether and to what extent restoration outcome impacts the specific behavioural intentions to purchase, visit and recommend. For this, a simple linear regression analysis was conducted to evaluate the extent to which restoration outcome could predict purchase intention as one specific behavioural outcome. A statistically significant regression model was identified, indicating a meaningful relationship between the variables ($B=.77$, $F(1, 720)=684.53$, $p<.001$). The adjusted R^2 is .49, specifying that restoration outcome explained approximately 49% of the variance in purchase intention. Additionally, a further simple linear regression analysis investigating the extent to which restoration outcome could predict intention to visit also shows a significant effect ($B=.75$, $F(1, 720)=570.74$, $p<.001$). The adjusted R^2 is .44, indicating that restoration outcome explained approximately 44% of the variance in intention to visit. Finally, a simple linear regression analysis investigating the extent to which restoration outcome could predict intention to recommend as on specific behavioural outcome also revealed a significant effect ($B=.74$, $F(1, 720)=625.49$, $p<.001$). The adjusted R^2 is .46, demonstrating that restoration outcome explained approximately 46% of the variance in intention to recommend. Therefore, H2_a, H2_b, and H2_c can be accepted. At the same time, all effect sizes can be classified as large (see Cohen, 1988). Figure 29 summarises the results related to testing for moderated mediation and the hypotheses tests for study 4.

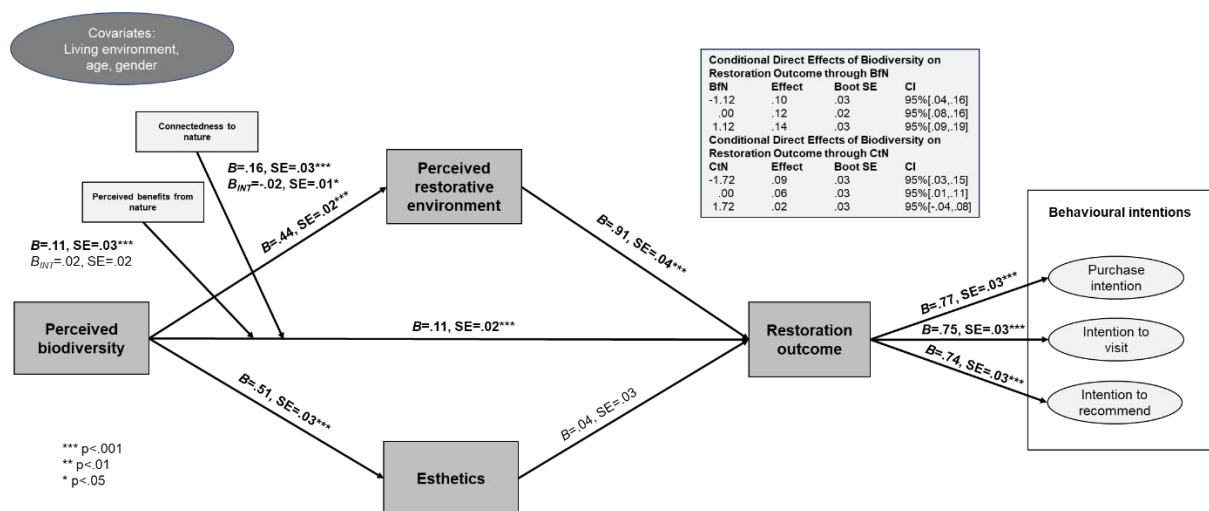


Figure 29: Testing for moderated mediation (study 4)

$n=721$. CI=confidence interval. HAYES PROCESS Model 5 (Hayes, 2013). Bootstrap sample=5,000. Linear regression (method: enter). The figure reports unstandardised coefficients (B). Significant (***) $p<.001$, (**) $p<.01$, (*) $p<.05$) coefficients in bold.

Table 14 provides a summary of all hypotheses tests and results as outlined above.

Serial no.	Hypotheses	Analysis	Test statistic	p value	Results
H1	BDIV→REST	Mediation test, Process macro, Model 4	$B=.11$	<.001	Supported
H2 _a	REST→PURCHASE_INT	Simple linear regression	$B=.77$	<.001	Supported
H2 _b	REST→VISITING_INT	Simple linear regression	$B=.75$	<.001	Supported
H2 _c	REST→WOM_INT	Simple linear regression	$B=.74$	<.001	Supported
H3 _a	BDIV→PRE	Mediation test, Process macro, Model 4	$B=.44$	<.001	Supported
H3 _b	PRE→REST	Mediation test, Process macro, Model 4	$B=.91$	<.001	Supported
H4 _a	BDIV→ESTH	Mediation test, Process macro, Model 4	$B=.51$	<.001	Supported
H4 _b	ESTH→REST	Mediation test, Process macro, Model 4	$B=.04$	>.05	Rejected
H5	BDIVxBfN→REST	Moderated mediation test, Process macro, Model 5	$B_{INT}=.02$	>.05	Rejected
H6	BDIVxCtN→REST	Moderated mediation test, Process macro, Model 5	$B_{INT}=-.02$	<.05	Rejected
H7	SET(outdoor vs. indoor)→REST	Two-way ANOVA	$\eta^2=.17$	<.001	Supported

Table 14: Results of experiment hypotheses tests

4.4.4 Validation study (study 4.1)

Replication is an important principle in experimental research, as it helps to better and more accurately assess how different factors or their combinations affect results (Jiju, 2023, p. 9). Therefore, to further assess the experimental and predictive validity of the experiment presented above, focusing on culinary tourism environments, the experiment was replicated for the specific context of wine tourism, as wine tourism can be seen as an important subset of culinary tourism (Hall & Mitchell, 2005). Although validation and replication studies are not frequently conducted and published in the marketing field, Darley (2000) strongly advocates for such systematic replication studies to facilitate generalisations and advance marketing knowledge. To improve the quality of such efforts, he (ibid.) recommends conducting these studies early in the development of a particular research topic, allowing for a timely evaluation of the original findings.

Therefore, after finishing the main experiment, exactly the same methodological approach (data collection instrument and developing visual stimuli, sampling and data collection approach, and data analysis procedures) was used to replicate the study for the wine tourism context (study 4.1). Fieldwork for this validation study was done from

September to November 2024. Table 15 shows the two-dimensional table with all possible combinations of treatments (stimuli) for the validation study based on the wine tourism context. Analogous to the main experiment, the pictures were generated using a free AI image creation tool (Leonardo.ai). The prompts to create these pictures were 1) outdoor wine tasting, wine glasses and wine bottles, wine tourism, high biodiversity; 2) outdoor wine tasting, wine glasses and wine bottles, wine tourism, low biodiversity; 3) indoor wine tasting, wine glasses and wine bottles, wine tourism, high biodiversity; and 4) indoor wine tasting, wine glasses and wine bottles, wine tourism, low biodiversity.

		Setting	
		Outdoor	Indoor
Perceived biodiversity level	High biodiversity		
	Low biodiversity		

Table 15: 2x2 factorial design for validation study in the wine tourism context

Note: Images were generated using Leonardo.ai

To perform a manipulation check, 27 pilot test respondents were asked to rate the four wine tourism environments according to their overall perceived biodiversity on a scale ranging from 1 (very low) to 7 (very high). The manipulation check results showed significant differences in the expected directions based on Mann-Whitney U tests: indoor ($M_{\text{high\_biodiversity}}=4.33$ vs. $M_{\text{low\_biodiversity}}=1.86$, $U=4.00$, $p<.05$) and outdoor ($M_{\text{high\_biodiversity}}=5.86$ vs. $M_{\text{low\_biodiversity}}=4.29$, $U=9.50$, $p=.05$). These results suggest that the manipulation of the biodiversity level was successful.

Table 16 provides an overview of the operationalisation of the concepts and variables used for this experiment, their key statistics, as well as their reliability and validity assessment for the validation study in the context of wine tourism. All procedures were conducted in alignment with the main experiment.

Constructs and related items	Source(s)	M	SD	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted	Item-to-factor loadings
Perceived benefits from nature Khozaei, Carbon, Nia, & Kim (2022)							
Interacting with nature makes me happy.							
I feel relaxed when I think of nature.							
Interacting with nature keeps me optimistic.							
I am more positive when I think of nature.							
Visualizing natural scenes makes me happy.							
To maintain physical health, I have to interact with nature.							
I am more capable of gathering my thoughts on the things I need to do when I am close to nature.		4.84	1.18	.91	.92	.53	>.65
I feel uneasy when I am apart from nature for a long time.							
Not interacting with nature poorly affects my physical health.							
Not interacting with nature affects my ability to easily cope with unpleasant thoughts.							
In order not to feel anxious, I have to interact with nature.							
Connectedness to nature Mayer & McPherson Frantz (2004), Navarro et al. (2022)							
I feel a sense of oneness with the natural world around me.							
I think of the natural world as a community which I belong to.		4.16	1.55	.84	.90	.76	>.86
I imagine myself to be part of a larger cyclical process of living.							
Perceived restorative environment (PRE) Qiu, Jin, & Scott (2021)							
Extent							
There is a clear order in the physical arrangement of this place.							
Everything matches the overall environment.		4.87	1.12	.62	.80	.57	>.70
This place seems limitless to allow exploration.							
Compatibility							
This culinary experience there allows to follow my own pace.							
This place meets my expectations.							
I am able to encounter culinary experience there autonomously.		4.66	1.18	.81	.87	.56	>.68
There are few boundaries to limit my possibility for moving around.							
This place suits my personality.							
Fascination							
There are many interesting things in this place that draw my attention.							
This place makes me wonder about things.		4.54	1.25	.73	.85	.65	>.79
I am engrossed by this place.							
Being Away							
This place gives me a break.							
This place is a refuge from unwanted distractions.		4.94	1.16	.56	.78	.56	>.90

Table 16 Continued						
Restoration Outcome Pasanen, Ojala, Tyrväinen, & Korpela (2018)						
After visiting this environment, I would feel restored and relaxed.						
I would feel calmer after being in this environment.						
I can forget everyday worries there.						
Visiting this tourism environment is a way of clearing and clarifying my thoughts.	4.73	1.28	.90	.92	.67	>.68
My concentration and alertness clearly increase there.						
I get new enthusiasm and energy for my everyday routines from this environment.						
Dining atmospherics Liu & Jang (2009)						
I like the ambience of this environment (lighting, colors, etc.).						
I like the spatial layout of this environment (seat space, privacy, etc.).	5.17	1.24	.81	.89	.72	>.84
I like the design of this environment (décor, style, furnishing, setting, etc.).						
Esthetics Vilnai-Yavetz & Rafaeli (2006)						
The scene shown in the photograph is visually appealing.	5.76	1.25	-	-	-	-
Service scape preference Purani & Kumar (2018)						
I like this service scape very much.						
I prefer this service scape over all other service scape of this kind I have ever been/seen.	4.78	1.30	.66	.85	.75	>.86
Intended behaviour						
Word-of-mouth						
Purchase intention	5.16	1.34	.87	.92	.80	>.86
Intention to visit						

Table 16: Operationalisation of experiment variables and key statistics for validation study in the wine tourism context

In total, 330 participants took part in the validation study. The average time to complete the questionnaire was approx. 10 minutes. Table 17 summarises the demographic structure of the validation study sample. The validation study participants tended to be younger than those in the main experiment. Additionally, visits to wine tourism environments were less frequent compared to culinary tourism environments. Nearly half of the respondents (47.0%) reported visiting wine tourism environments only once a year or less, compared to just 8.3% in the main experiment, where the focus was on visits to culinary tourism environments. The distribution of gender and living environment mirrors that of the main experiment.

Item	Sample (n)	%	Item	Sample (n)	%
Age			Nationality		
18-29	278	84.2%	Austria	127	38.5%
30-50	32	9.7%	China	31	9.4%
>50	20	6.1%	Poland	18	5.5%
Gender			Hungary	17	5.2%
Male	123	37.3%	France	16	4.8%
Female	200	60.6%	Spain	13	3.9%
Non-binary	3	0.9%	Finland	12	3.6%
I prefer not to say	4	1.2%	Germany	10	3.0%
Frequency of visiting wine tourism environments			Bulgaria	10	3.0%
Once a month or more often (1)	33	10.0%	Slovakia	8	2.4%
(2)	17	5.2%	Other	68	20.6%
(3)	16	4.8%	Living environment		
(4)	34	10.3%	Completely urban	105	31.8%
(5)	30	9.1%	Rather urban	111	33.6%
(6)	45	13.6%	Rather rural	83	25.2%
Once a year or less (7)	155	47.0%	Completely rural	31	9.4%

Table 17: Demographic profile of experiment sample for validation study in the wine tourism context

A two-way ANOVA was again conducted to study the main and interaction effects of the biodiversity level (high vs. low) and setting (indoor vs. outdoor) on restoration outcome in the wine tourism context. Similar to the main experiment, there was a statistically significant, yet small, interaction effect between biodiversity level and setting on restoration outcome ($F(1, 326)=7.61$, $p<.01$, $\eta^2=.02$). Simple main effects analysis showed that outdoor environments provide higher restoration outcome than indoor environments ($F(1, 326)=38.09$, $p<.001$, $\eta^2=.11$), and similarly, high biodiversity environments provide higher restoration outcome than low biodiversity environments ($F(1, 718)=5.11$, $p<.05$, $\eta^2=.02$). From the data, it can be concluded that the restoration outcome was assessed significantly higher for outdoor wine tourism environments compared to indoor wine tourism environments, confirming the result of the main experiment.

Furthermore, testing mediation between biodiversity and restoration outcome using Hayes Process Model 4 yields similar results in the wine tourism context as those observed in the culinary tourism context (see Table 18).

Predictors	<i>B</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Outcome: PRE ($R^2=.26$)				
Biodiversity	.32	.04	8.76	<.001
Outcome: Esthetics ($R^2=.11$)				
Biodiversity	.25	.04	6.02	<.001
Outcome: Restoration outcome ($R^2=.64$)				
PRE	.81	.07	12.74	<.001
Esthetics	.07	.05	1.27	>.05
Direct effect of Biodiversity on Restoration Outcome				
<i>B</i> =.10, SE=.03, 95% CI [.04;.17]				
Total effect of Biodiversity on Restoration Outcome				
<i>B</i> =.38, SE=.04, 95% CI [.30;.46]				

Table 18: Testing for mediation between biodiversity and restoration outcome for validation study in the wine tourism context (study 4.1)

n=330. CI=confidence interval. HAYES PROCESS Model 4 (Hayes, 2013). Bootstrap sample=5,000. The table reports unstandardised coefficients (*B*). Significant ($p<.001$, $p<.01$, $p<.05$) coefficients in bold.

According to the results of the mediation analysis using Hayes Process model 4, it can be seen that the direct positive effect of biodiversity on restoration outcome is statistically significant ($B=.10$, $t(1, 328)=3.07$, $p<.01$). When entering PRE as a mediator into the model, it can be seen that perceived biodiversity predicts PRE as a mediator significantly and positively ($B=.32$, $t(1, 328)=8.76$, $p<.001$), which in turn predicts restoration outcome significantly ($B=.81$, $t(3, 326)=12.74$, $p<.001$). Hence, similar to the main experiment, partial mediation is observed, as both the direct effect of perceived biodiversity on restoration outcome and the indirect effect through PRE are significant. Introducing esthetics as a mediator shows that perceived biodiversity predicts esthetics significantly and positively ($B=.25$, $t(1, 328)=6.02$, $p<.001$). Still, it does not predict restoration outcome significantly ($B=.07$, $t(3, 326)=1.27$, $p>.05$). Since esthetics does not significantly influence restoration outcome, it cannot be seen as a mediator in this relationship in the validation study either. These results are again coherent with the main experiment in the culinary tourism context.

Furthermore, analogous to the main experiment, a moderated mediation analysis was run to examine the influence of perceived biodiversity on restoration outcome and whether CtN and BfN moderate this relationship. For both moderators, the main effects were found to be significant ($B_{CtN}=.20$, $t(7, 322)=4.31$, $p<.001$; $B_{BfN}=.17$, $t(7, 322)=4.08$, $p<.001$), while both interaction terms remain insignificant (CtN: $\Delta R^2=.00$, $F(1, 324)=1.07$, $p>.05$, 95% CI[-.01,.05]; BfN: $\Delta R^2=.00$, $F(1, 324)=2.32$, $p>.05$, 95% CI[-.01,.08]) and do not contribute to explaining additional variance. Similar to the main experiment, the moderated mediation analysis therefore confirms that CtN and BfN are associated with increases in restoration outcome. Nevertheless, CtN and BfN do not moderate the effect of perceived biodiversity on restoration outcome, as no significant interaction terms were found.

Figure 30 summarises the results of testing the moderated mediation model used during the main experiment within the context of wine tourism (study 4.1).

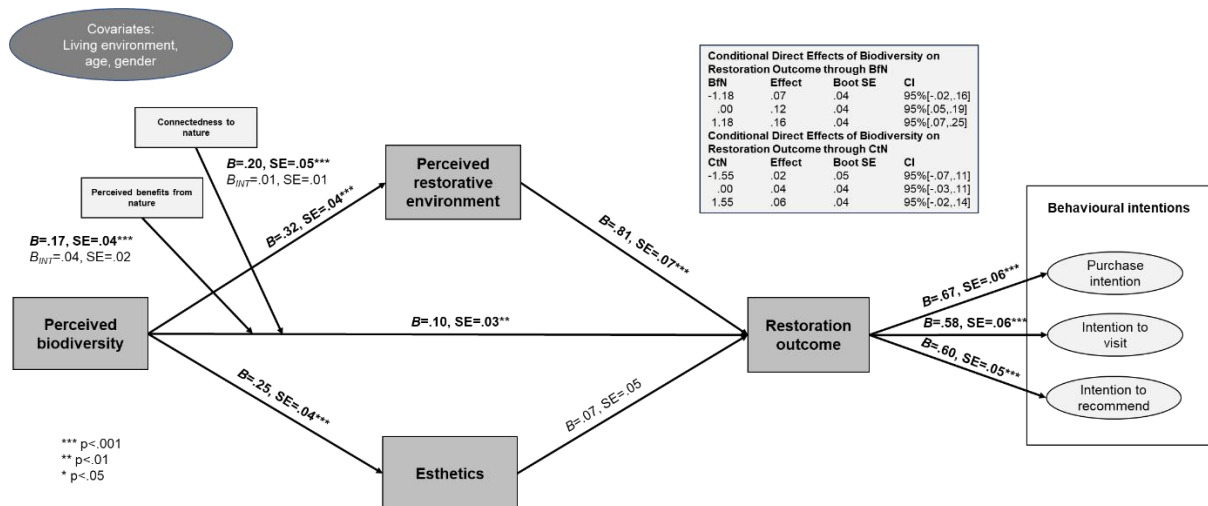


Figure 30: Testing for moderated mediation (study 4.1)

n=330. CI=confidence interval. HAYES PROCESS Models 5 (Hayes, 2013). Bootstrap sample=5,000. Linear regression (method: enter). The figure reports unstandardised coefficients (B). Significant (***)p<.001, (**)p<.01, (*)p<.05) coefficients in bold.

Table 19 provides a comparison of the test statistics for the main experiment and the validation study. It can be seen that the results of the validation study confirm the direct positive effect of biodiversity on restoration outcome with comparable effect sizes. Consistent with the findings from the main experiment, partial mediation was observed in the wine tourism context as well. Both the direct effect of perceived biodiversity on restoration outcome as well as the indirect effect via PRE were significant, while the path esthetics on restoration outcome remained insignificant. The effects of perceived biodiversity on PRE, as well as of PRE on restoration outcome, seem to be slightly less pronounced in wine tourism environments. Visitors to wine tourism settings, and dedicated wine tourists in particular, might prioritise experiences like wine tasting over the restorative qualities of biodiversity, potentially reducing the mentioned effects' sizes. At the same time, such visitors might be more accustomed to wine tourism settings and have specific expectations towards features of such settings (e.g., layout of tasting rooms, structure of the experience), potentially diminishing the relevance of biodiversity and restorative environments. Similarly, perceived biodiversity and restoration outcome seem less effective in triggering behavioural outcomes in wine tourism environments, as smaller effect sizes can be observed for purchasing intention, visiting intention and recommendation intention compared to culinary tourism settings. Consistent with the outcomes of the main experiment, when introducing connectedness to nature and perceived benefits from nature as additional moderators, similar patterns emerged: both perceived benefits from nature and connectedness to nature increase restoration, while the interaction effect with perceived biodiversity remains insignificant (or negligible in practical terms) on restoration outcome. Finally, statistically significant interaction and main effects were found for both contexts when testing the influences of the perceived biodiversity level and setting on restoration outcome. Results indicate that for the two contexts, both high biodiversity and outdoor settings independently and interactively enhance restoration outcome.

Paths and main effects	Test statistic main experiment (culinary tourism setting)		Test statistic validation study (wine tourism setting)	
		p value		p value
BDIV→REST	B=.11	<.001	B=.10	<.01
BDIV→PRE	B=.44	<.001	B=.32	<.001
PRE→REST	B=.91	<.001	B=.81	<.001
BDIV→ESTH	B=.51	<.001	B=.25	<.001
ESTH→REST	B=.04	>.05	B=.07	>.05
REST→PURCHASE_INT	B=.77	<.001	B=.67	<.001
REST→VISITING_INT	B=.75	<.001	B=.58	<.001
REST→WOM_INT	B=.74	<.001	B=.60	<.001
BDIV→PURCHASE_INT	B=.52	<.001	B=.36	<.001
BDIV→VISITING_INT	B=.53	<.001	B=.32	<.001
BDIV→WOM_INT	B=.52	<.001	B=.32	<.001
BDIV→BfN→REST	B=.11	<.001	B=.17	<.01
BDIVxBfN→REST	B=.02	>.05	B=.04	>.05
BDIV→CtN→REST	B=.16	<.001	B=.20	<.001
BDIVxCtN→REST	B=-.02	<.05	B=.01	>.05
SETxBDIV→REST	$\eta^2=.02$	<.01	$\eta^2=.02$	<.01

Table 19: Comparison of test statistics for the main experiment (study 4) and validation study (study 4.1)

Investigating age and gender as covariates suggests a consistent effect across all age groups and genders in both contexts. This uniformity may stem from the broad appeal of culinary and wine tourism experiences among various customer segments, showing less sensitivity to demographic factors compared to other influences such as personal interest and attitudes (e.g., foodies, wine connoisseurs). Earlier studies suggesting that demographic criteria alone are insufficient for segmenting culinary and wine tourists – while highlighting a greater significance of other factors such wine-specific motivations and wine involvement (see e.g., Choi, Huang, Flaherty, & Khazaei, 2017; Mitchell, Hall, & McIntosh, 2000; Nella & Christou, 2014; Pratt, 2011) – may reinforce this result.

4.4.5 Discussion

Restoration and the role of the perceived restorative environment

The experiment's results show a significant interaction effect between biodiversity level and setting and reveal that both high biodiversity and outdoor settings independently and interactively enhance restoration outcome. However, the impact of perceived biodiversity on restoration outcome is significantly stronger in indoor environments as perceived biodiversity increases. Based on the results, environments with high biodiversity, especially when located outdoors, are therefore highly effective in promoting restorative experiences. The natural richness and biodiversity likely evoke feelings of being immersed in and rejuvenated by nature. In contrast, environments that lack natural elements and biodiversity, particularly when indoors, are less effective in providing restorative benefits. This outcome aligns with the results of Young, Hofmann, Frey, Moretti, & Bauer's (2020) study on psychological restoration in urban gardens, which found that greater biodiversity, measured by the variety of plant species, is positively linked to psychological restoration for gardeners.

At the same time, Mayer, McPherson Frantz, Bruehlman-Senecal, and Dolliver (2009) argue that natural and biophilic environments also tend to engage a broader range of senses. Their study on the effects of nature exposure found that real nature engages multiple senses and offers significantly greater psychological benefits than virtual environments (Mayer, McPherson Frantz, Bruehlman-Senecal, & Dolliver, 2009). A similar result was also achieved in the context of break environments by Sona, Dietl, & Steidle (2019). They (ibid.) found that sensory-enriched settings are perceived as more pleasant and restorative (fascination/being away). Finally, focus group discussions and expert interviews revealed that nature-oriented culinary settings have significant potential for sensory enrichment as they engage all five senses. Therefore, this stimulation seems to be particularly effective in promoting restorative effects, as suggested by Sona, Dietl, & Steidle (2019). Evidence was found that this approach is effective even within the context of the virtual environment, as also followed during the current study: Mayer, McPherson Frantz, Bruehlman-Senecal, & Dolliver (2009) found that real nature offers significantly greater psychological benefits than virtual environments. Nevertheless, they (ibid.) acknowledge that simulations can still be satisfying substitutes to a certain extent, primarily relying on visual input. However, as real nature engages multiple senses (Mayer, McPherson Frantz, Bruehlman-Senecal, & Dolliver, 2009), further experiments using real-world scenarios are recommended at this point.

When investigating the results related to the PRE assessment of different environments, it was found that the outdoor, high biodiversity environment achieves the highest ratings across all PRE dimensions (extent, being away, fascination, and compatibility) for culinary tourism settings, while the indoor, low biodiversity environment scores the lowest. The results of this study support the conclusion of Ha & Kim (2021), following Kaplan and Kaplan (1989), that greater biodiversity enhances soft fascination, allowing people to enter a state of involuntary attention. The high biodiversity environments (outdoor and indoor) scored highest in the fascination dimension of PRE in comparison to low biodiversity outdoor and indoor environments. Fascination therefore seems to be a key component of restorative environments, which capture attention effortlessly and allow the mind to rest and recover from mental fatigue.

When studying the effect of perceived biodiversity and restoration outcome and using PRE as a mediator, significant direct and indirect effects on restoration outcome can be observed: Perceived biodiversity affects restoration outcome directly and positively. Furthermore, biodiversity significantly and positively predicts PRE as a mediator, which in turn predicts restoration outcome significantly. Therefore, PRE has to be seen as a mediator beyond the direct and positive effect of perceived biodiversity on restoration outcomes, confirming a partial mediation.

While a certain portion of the effect of perceived biodiversity on restoration outcome remains unexplained by PRE as a mediator, introducing esthetics as a further mediator does not add further explanations to this relationship. Although perceived biodiversity enhances esthetic perceptions, they do not significantly enhance restoration outcome. This contradicts Twedt, Rainey, & Proffitt's (2019) suggestion that natural environments are often perceived as more restorative, potentially due to their visual appeal. In the current study, using the contexts of wine and culinary tourism, perceived biodiversity was found to enhance esthetic appeal. However, these perceptions did not have a statistically significant effect on the restoration outcome. Esthetics fail to show

a mediating effect here. This implies that the esthetic appeal of biodiversity might not be sufficient on its own to affect restorative benefits. Practitioners can therefore not only rely on the esthetic appeal of a tourism setting. Instead, they need to design environments beyond the esthetic appeal of biodiversity and incorporate PRE elements to enhance restoration outcome.

The mediation analysis suggests that PRE significantly enhances restoration outcome. It was proven that the perceived restorative environment with qualities (such as fascination and compatibility) strongly drives the restoration outcome. This underscores the conclusions of Qiu, Sha, and Scott (2021, p. 13), which highlight that restorative experiences result from various restorative triggers, where destination attributes play a major role. Nevertheless, as partial mediation was observed, PRE only partially explains the impact of perceived biodiversity on the restoration outcome. While the mediation effect itself can be classified as strong, which means that a major part of the total effect is indirect, it should be acknowledged that multiple mechanisms might contribute to the restorative process. These mechanisms are also likely to vary depending on the situation, person, and elements of the setting (Twedt, Rainey, & Proffitt, 2019). Researching further mechanisms that explain the links between biodiversity and restorative outcome seems a promising avenue for further study. Aspects such as activities performed by visitors (e.g., outdoor walks, picnics, tastings, and farm visits) and cognitive engagement (e.g., learning about a destination's natural resources and offerings and its biodiversity) during culinary and wine tourism experiences might provide further insights here.

Taken together, the findings align with numerous previous studies (see e.g., Collado, Staats, Corraliza, & Hartig, 2016; Goncalves et al., 2021; Grigoletto et al., 2023; Han, Yu, and Hyun, 2020; Schebella, Weber, Schultz, & Weinstein, 2019) showing that higher biodiversity levels and naturalness promote restoration and provide evidence that this relationship holds true in the context of culinary and wine tourism settings. At the same time, the overall qualities of the environment, and the perceived restorativeness of environments in particular, can be enhanced by greater biodiversity, which further amplifies the restoration effect. This also confirms earlier studies on the importance of environmental qualities of restorative tourism settings (see e.g., Han, Moon, & Hyun, 2019; Qiu, Wang, Ren, Zhang, & Wang, 2022; Subiza-Pérez et al., 2021; Wyles et al., 2019).

Perceptions of environments with varying levels of biodiversity and related behavioural intentions

The comparative analysis of different culinary tourism environments revealed that culinary tourism settings with high biodiversity, both indoor and outdoor, received the highest ratings for dining atmosphere and service scape preferences, purchase intention, word-of-mouth, and intention to visit. Regression analyses showed that restoration outcome significantly impacts specific behavioural intentions related to purchase intention, intention to visit and intention to recommend. In tourism, where relaxation is a primary driver of many activities, restoration effects are therefore of great importance to drive the overall experience and resulting behavioural outcomes. The results highlight the importance of creating biodiverse and also outdoor spaces in culinary and wine tourism settings to not only enhance restoration but also improve guest satisfaction and positively influence further behavioural intentions.

Prior research substantiates these findings: Purani & Kumar (2018) confirmed that biophilic service scapes have restorative effects on consumers' psychological states, attention, and mood, which subsequently enhance their service preferences and behaviours. For the field of tourism, Lee (2019) specifically suggests incorporating biophilic design into hotels, as it connects with travellers on a deeper level and can provide a competitive advantage. By creating spaces where guests can reconnect with nature, hotels can increase guests' mental benefits, leading to more positive perceptions of their stay and influencing their future behaviours.

Similarly, Song, Ali, Cobanoglu, Nanu, & Lee (2022) concluded that incorporating biophilic design into a hotel's physical environment enhances the overall hotel experience, positively impacting guest satisfaction, booking intentions, loyalty, and word-of-mouth recommendations. Furthermore, it has already been shown that a biophilic design may not only serve as a considerable differentiator fostering financial benefits for the company, such as higher room rates (Song, Ali, Cobanoglu, Nanu, & Lee, 2022), but also lead to superior quality perceptions (Lee, 2019). In the same vein, Lo, Mohamad, Songan, & Yeo (2012) demonstrated that outdoor activities have a positive relationship with tourists' satisfaction.

Additionally, Purcell, Peron, & Berto (2001) showed a strong correlation between preference ratings and restorative value, revealing that natural scenes were the most preferred, while more built and familiar environments received lower ratings in both preference and restorative value. Gunnarsson, Knez, Hedblom, & Ode Sang (2016) discovered that people place much greater value on green spaces with high biodiversity compared to those with low biodiversity. This study at hand also provided evidence for this relationship in the culinary and wine tourism context with a high correlation between service scape preference and restoration outcome, underlining the importance of creating culinary tourism environments that trigger customers' preferences and encourage visits. Focus group participants particularly emphasised that their preferred settings for culinary tourism activities possess specific characteristics, such as a biophilic design. Earlier studies in the tourism context come to the same conclusion. Lee, Tao, Douglas, & Oh (2022) discovered that in a luxury hotel segment, biophilic design led to improved esthetic perceptions, escapism, economic value, and a more favourable attitude toward the hotel.

The role of travellers' characteristics, attitudes and contextual factors

Qiu, Sha, & Scott (2021, p. 13) emphasise that – besides a destination's attributes – various other restorative triggers, such as visitor motivations and visitor characteristics, have to be considered to understand restorative outcomes. Similarly, Bilgic & Ebbini (2023) emphasise that individuals' preferences and characteristics significantly influence the restorative effects of specific elements of biophilic design, such as organised complexity. This led to the decision to further investigate perceived benefits from nature, connectedness to nature of travellers as well as the respondents' characteristics in this study to examine the role of these aspects.

The results of this study contrast with the findings of Wyles et al. (2019) and Lee (2019) related to demographic influences: While the study of Wyles et al. (2019) showed that

females and older adults report greater restoration from nature visits, perceived biodiversity had a consistent effect on restoration across both genders and all age groups in the study at hand.

To further reflect on the characteristics of the participants, the living environment was examined as an additional covariate: A key element to achieve the feeling of “being away” is the difference between experienced environments (Hartig, 2004), suggesting that natural environments might be perceived as more restorative for urban residents (Young, Hofmann, Frey, Moretti, & Bauer, 2020). However, this study showed that the living environment does not affect the relationship between perceived biodiversity and restoration.

Nevertheless, data analysis has shown that perceived benefits from nature and connectedness to nature increase restoration outcome, supporting the view that individuals’ preferences and attitudes play a role here. These findings support the view of Mayer, McPherson Frantz, Bruehlman-Senecal, & Dolliver (2009), who argue that connectedness to nature should be considered when investigating nature's effects on well-being. They (ibid.) recommend that when designing environments, it is essential to not only focus on how nature can foster restoration and reduce stress but also to consider how it emphasises connectedness to nature. Similarly, Khozaei, Carbon, Nia, & Kim (2022) emphasise that a hotel’s location and environment are crucial in fulfilling people's need for a connection with nature. Therefore, designers of culinary tourism environments are advised to address the travellers’ desire to connect with nature in order to maximise restoration outcome.

However, no significant interaction effect was found for biodiversity x perceived benefits from nature as well as for biodiversity x connectedness to nature on restoration outcome. This implies that restorative outcomes for individuals who perceive high vs. low benefits from nature or who feel strongly vs. weakly connected to nature are universal, as biodiversity does not interact with these two aspects. Even individuals with strong nature connections and who expect great benefits from nature do not experience additional restorative gains from higher biodiversity.

Related to the context, the results suggest that the direct positive effect of perceived biodiversity on restoration outcome is evident in both broader culinary tourism environments and in more specific wine tourism settings. Nevertheless, the effects of perceived biodiversity on PRE, as well as of PRE on restoration outcome, seem to be slightly less pronounced in wine tourism environments. Similarly, perceived biodiversity and restoration seem to trigger behavioural intentions more strongly in culinary tourism environments than in wine tourism environments.

This could be due to the fact that in culinary tourism, biodiversity may more directly and immediately influence expectations for the food experience, such as the use of natural, seasonal ingredients. This could lead to a wider range of associations with the natural environment and the culinary resources of a destination, such as farms, food markets, orchards, and restaurants. This underscores the importance of linking food biodiversity with local cuisine, as it can support sustainable tourism, where local gastronomy plays a central role, as emphasised by Legrad, Hindley, & Laeis (2020). Likewise, Berno (2020) underscores the need to strengthen the relationship between food production, culinary providers, and tourist consumption to boost demand for

locally grown and sourced products, promoting both biodiversity and sustainability in the culinary tourism context. However, associations with biodiversity in the wine tourism context may be more centred on elements such as (monoculture) vineyards, wine production processes, and controlled processes and environments, which may evoke fewer connections to biodiversity. Additionally, wine tourists might prioritise other factors over biodiversity, such as educational experiences (Charters & Ali-Knight, 2000) or purchasing opportunities (Chen, Goodman, Bruwer, & Cohen, 2016).

To summarise, perceived biodiversity influences restoration outcome directly and indirectly, indicating that perceived biodiversity is a direct driver of restoration outcomes besides its indirect effect through the perceived restorative environment. Creating culinary and wine tourism environments with a higher perceived biodiversity, e.g., through a greater variety of plants, can therefore directly enhance the sense of restoration. At the same time, designing an environment according to the PRE dimensions, and addressing connectedness to nature and perceived benefits from nature, enhances restoration outcome. Finally, stronger behavioural intentions are likely to occur with higher restoration outcome.

Finally, Table 20 summarises the results related to all focal constructs and related implications.

Focal construct	Main results	Implications
<i>Perceptions of environments with varying levels of biodiversity and behavioural intentions</i>	• The outdoor environment with high biodiversity outperformed in all biodiversity and perceptual aspects. • Settings with high biodiversity, both indoor and outdoor, received high ratings for esthetics, dining atmosphere, service scape preferences, purchase intention, word-of-mouth, and intention to visit. In contrast, the indoor environment with low biodiversity received the lowest.	• Given their superior performance in both biodiversity and perceptual aspects, high biodiversity and outdoor environments can be key to enhancing restorative culinary tourism experiences for travellers while supporting nature-positive and regenerative tourism efforts at a destination. • Tourism businesses should prioritise incorporating diverse natural elements in outdoor and indoor settings. This approach not only maximises restoration, but also fosters positive behavioural intentions, contributing to the development of resilient and sustainable tourism destinations. • Since indoor high biodiversity environments are rated similarly to outdoor low biodiversity environments, tourism businesses can improve indoor settings by introducing more biodiversity, most importantly through plants. This approach can mimic the positive effects of outdoor environments, enhancing the esthetic appeal, tourists' restoration and behavioural outcomes, particularly in spaces where outdoor settings are not feasible (e.g., urban restaurants and hotels). • Culinary tourism businesses in competitive markets can differentiate themselves particularly by adopting high biodiversity and biophilic designs.
<i>Restoration outcome and the role of perceived restorative environments</i>	• High biodiversity environments, especially outdoors, are most effective in promoting restorative experiences. • The outdoor, high biodiversity environment achieved the highest ratings across all PRE dimensions. • PRE is an important mediator in the relationship between perceived biodiversity and restoration outcome. • Restoration is a significant driver of behavioural intentions in culinary and wine tourism.	• Culinary tourism experiences should showcase the distinctiveness and richness of the biodiversity in the region, e.g., through emphasising and promoting unique and local ingredients such as herbs, wines, etc. • Introducing biodiversity into indoor settings can specifically improve their restorative qualities. • Advertising and promotion material should highlight the restorative aspects of culinary tourism settings. They could emphasise that providers do not offer only culinary experiences but also restorative benefits, e.g., based on biodiversity efforts. This appeal to restoration and well-being aligns with travellers' increasingly sought-after motivations for travelling. • Culinary tourism managers can design restorative environments by integrating all PRE dimensions and biodiversity aspect to trigger restoration and behavioural intentions through, e.g., the creation of esthetic dining spaces with natural elements, greenery, and relaxing atmospheres.

Table 20 Continued

The role of travellers' characteristics and attitudes

- The effect of perceived biodiversity on restoration does not depend on gender, age, or living environment.
- Perceived benefits from nature and connectedness to nature enhance restoration effects.
- In culinary tourism, promoting biodiversity as a restorative feature could also be tied to different well-being benefits, e.g. stress reduction, mindful engagement, and learning opportunities.
- The direct and indirect effects of biodiversity on restoration outcome are universal, potentially enhancing the restoration outcome for all travellers, regardless of their demographic background.
- Given that perceived benefits from nature and connectedness to nature drive restoration outcome, culinary tourism managers could prioritise creating experiences that connect visitors with both the environment and local cuisine, e.g., through farm-to-table experiences, seasonal and regional ingredients and menus, collaborations with local chefs and farmers, etc.
- An exposure to biodiversity could further enhance perceived benefits from nature and connectedness to nature, potentially leading to increasing sustainable tourism behaviour and practices, ensuring the development of nature-positive and resilient tourism destinations.

Table 20: Focal constructs and related findings of the experiment and implications

4.4.6 Contribution and evaluation of results

Keniger, Gaston, Irvine, & Fuller (2013) highlighted that the specific characteristics of settings (e.g., biodiversity, disturbance levels, proximity, accessibility) most crucial for promoting beneficial outcomes like physical health, cognitive performance, and well-being remain unknown. Twedt, Rainey, & Proffitt (2019) emphasised that the environmental properties that predict restorative potential are still uncertain in the literature. At the same time, the results of the focus group discussions and expert interviews conducted during the exploratory phase of this research could not fully explain this topic. However, certain tendencies indicated that outdoor, natural, and biophilically designed culinary tourism settings were seen as more attractive and restorative.

Therefore, this part of the study aimed to investigate the role of perceived biodiversity in driving restoration outcome in culinary and wine tourism settings using an experiment with a 2 x 2 factorial design. The results support the idea that culinary and wine tourism environments with greater perceived biodiversity lead to greater restoration outcome and that PRE has to be seen as an important mediator of this relationship. Therefore, this study provided evidence that perceived biodiversity enhances restoration outcome directly and indirectly through PRE in culinary and wine tourism settings. The study also showed that incorporating biodiversity into culinary tourism settings enhances the esthetic appeal of a tourism environment. Nevertheless, the esthetic appeal does not enhance restoration outcome. At the same time, the experiments' results indicate that for culinary and wine tourism contexts, both high biodiversity and outdoor settings independently and interactively enhance restoration outcome.

This study contributes to the literature by demonstrating that settings with higher perceived biodiversity, both indoors and outdoors, receive better ratings for esthetics, dining atmosphere, service preferences, purchase intention, word-of-mouth, and intention to visit. In contrast, indoor environments with low biodiversity receive significantly lower ratings here.

Finally, the findings provide an understanding of how personal characteristics and attitudes could play a role in this context. It was shown that the positive effect of perceived biodiversity on restoration outcome is universal, regardless of age, gender, and living environment. In contrast, people's sense of connection to nature and perceived benefits enhance restoration outcome. However, no interaction effect was found between perceived biodiversity and perceived benefits from nature, nor between perceived biodiversity and connectedness to nature, on restoration outcome. This indicates that potential interactions influencing the strength or direction related to restoration outcome are non-existent.

4.5 Online survey among travellers on direct and indirect outcomes of culinary tourism experiences (study 5)

Leung, Fong, Xue, & Mattila (2024) and Kim, Kim, Jhang, Kwon, & Baah (2023) criticised that many experimental studies employ a single experimental design method, potentially compromising external validity in establishing causal relationships from these experiments. The latter suggested using complementary methods such as field surveys and qualitative data analysis to "[...] enhance validity and generalizability" (Kim, Kim, Jhang, Kwon, & Baah, 2023, p. 3579). Therefore, in the next stage of this study, a large-scale online survey was conducted to explore the role of restoration and perceived restorative environments in driving culinary tourists' behaviour. Culinary tourism experiences are seen as antecedents here, evoking immediate effects, which, in turn, drive subsequent behavioural outcomes. This aligns with the idea of Woodside & Dubelaar's (2002) Theory of Tourism Consumption Systems (TCS), which tries to understand how different elements of a travel experience might be connected and to improve the overall travel experience.

The results of the literature review, the focus group discussions, and the expert interviews led to the assumption that culinary tourism experiences specifically trigger direct effects related to satisfaction, restoration, memorability, and indirect effects related to behaviour. Therefore, this part of the research aims to investigate the relationships between culinary experiences and resulting behavioural outcomes (advocacy, loyalty and product-related buying behaviour). Herbey, mediating effects of restoration, satisfaction, and memorability are investigated. Finally, the role of the tourism environment, particularly the perceived restorativeness of the environment, as a moderator is evaluated. As this requires the quantification of data as well as the application of statistical analysis, a quantitative approach was followed (study 5).

4.5.1 Research model and hypotheses

Based on the results of the exploratory stage, the (culinary) tourism experience literature, as well as tourism satisfaction and restoration theories, the following assumptions were made, resulting in the research model presented in Figure 31 and the hypotheses proposed below:

- The Theory of Tourism Consumption Systems (TCS) developed by Woodside & Dubelaar (2002) suggests that visitor behaviour and related experiences at

the destination influence their post-trip evaluations, which finally result in conations (e.g. willingness to recommend and willingness to revisit).

- Focus group discussions and expert interviews identified experiential dimensions, food-related aspects, and service quality as the main determinants of an on-site culinary experience. The primary immediate outcomes found were satisfaction, memorability, and restoration, which in turn influence further behaviour. Product-related behaviours (e.g., souvenir purchases), loyalty, and advocacy were classified as the most important ones. Although emotions are seen as potentially influencing these relationships, they were not included in the model, as post-travel assessments of an experience's immediate emotions might be biased due to transience and misattribution (see e.g., Schacter, 1999) and usually require in-situ measurement (see e.g., Liu, Sparks, & Coghlan, 2016). However, the current study asks for past vacation experiences.
- As discussed by Brakus et al. (2009, p. 66), experiences directly and indirectly affect different consequences, such as satisfaction and loyalty and therefore customer lifetime value. Numerous earlier studies verify that (culinary) tourism experiences are a main driver of tourism satisfaction and subsequent behavioural intentions (e.g., Godovykh & Tasci, 2020; Liu et al., 2016; Maunier & Camelis, 2013; Ali, Ryu, & Hussain, 2016; Kastenholz, Carneiro, Marques, & Loureiro, 2018; Harrington, Ottenbacher, Marlowe, & Siguda, 2019; Fee, 2015; Kim, 2018; Rasoolimanesh, Seyfi, Rather, & Hall, 2022).
- Previous research also indicates that culinary experiences are strongly linked with memorability (e.g., Hernandez-Mogollon, Di-Clemente, & Campon-Cerro, 2020) due to their potential to engage all five senses (Vignolles & Pichon, 2014) and their tendency to be extraordinary and novel (Stone, Soulard, Migacz, & Wolf, 2018; Stone, Migacz, & Sthapit, 2022), which was also highlighted in the exploratory part of this study.
- The role of tourism settings and service/experience scapes in creating memorable tourism experiences was highlighted in many earlier studies (e.g., Abubakar & Mavondo, 2014; Sthapit et al., 2024a) and environmental contexts as well as destination attributes need to be considered when studying restorative experiences and outcomes in specific (Qiu, Sha, & Scott, 2021). A few authors have already investigated the role of restoration and other quality-of-life effects evoked by tourism experiences and provide evidence that they impact behavioural intentions (e.g., Saayman, Li, Uysal, & Song, 2018; Björk, 2018; Uysal, Sirgy, Woo, & Kim, 2015).
- Earlier studies also highlighted the importance of travellers' characteristics, attitudes, motivations, etc., when investigating culinary tourism experiences (e.g., Ignatov & Smith, 2006; Yun, Hennessey, & MacDonald, 2011; Sanchez-Canizares & Castillo-Canalejo, 2015). Following the idea of Tung & Ritchie (2011, p. 1375), who state that the demographic background of an individual influences the recall of experiences, the travellers' characteristics (gender, age) are seen as covariates in the statistical analysis of this study.

These assumptions are reflected in the following proposed research model:

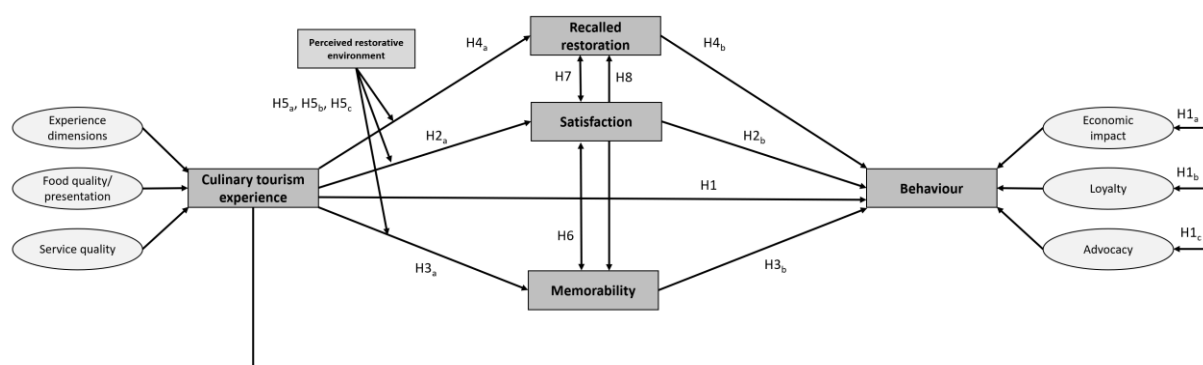


Figure 31: Proposed research model for the survey

Hypotheses development

Participants in the focus group discussions noted that positive culinary tourism experiences usually increase their intention to show future behaviours, such as recommending or revisiting. However, based on the discussions, it can also be assumed that travellers' characteristics and personalities, as well as the context, seem to influence their inclination and the strength of their further behavioural actions.

The study of Tung & Ritchie (2011) supports a direct and positive relationship between tourism experiences as well as future behavioural intentions. To date, tourism experiences have been found to positively affect different post-trip behaviours, such as revisiting intention and loyalty (e.g., Cole & Scott, 2004; Kao, Huang, & Wu, 2008; Folgado-Fernandez, Campon-Cerro, & Hernandez-Mogollon, 2019). For the food tourism context, Taylor, DiPietro, & Fung So (2018) have shown that the experiential value of pop-up dining experiences is positively associated with behavioural intentions, specifically with the intention to spread positive WOM, return intentions and willingness to pay.

During the focus group discussions, it was found that experiencing culinary specialties produced at the destination appears to increase travellers' likelihood of purchasing the same products or products from the same category upon returning home. Additionally, experts specifically highlighted the economic value that food experiences, culinary souvenirs and related post-trip purchase behaviour might generate.

In the same vein, Mossberg (2007) emphasises that souvenir purchasing plays a crucial role in tourism consumption, influenced by the overall tourism experience of visitors. Such products are reminders of an experience that differs from the daily routine and which would otherwise remain as intangible memories. Therefore, marketing managers should capitalise on this by designing product-service combinations, as positive on-site experiences can trigger subsequent purchases. Expanding on this notion, Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen (2016) highlight that food experiences encompass a dynamic dimension, extending lived experiences as numerous travellers bring back food souvenirs and share food experiences and souvenirs with friends and relatives. Consequently, these aspects have to be considered in destination marketing and branding, as these food souvenirs have great

potential in driving economic consequences for the destination. Finally, Altintzoglou, Heide, & Borch (2016) highlighted that several factors influence tourists in choosing and buying food and food souvenirs, such as food quality, local origin and perceived authenticity.

The focus group discussions also revealed that travellers are more inclined to revisit a specific destination when they have had positive culinary experiences there. Nevertheless, travellers' characteristics and personalities might influence this relationship. Folgado-Fernandez, Hernandez-Mogollon, & Duarte (2017) demonstrated that gastronomic experiences exert a positive influence on destination image and loyalty, and Hernandez-Mogollon, Di-Clemente, & Campon-Cerro (2020) have shown that culinary tourism experiences impact experience loyalty besides satisfaction. Agyeiwaah, Otoo, Suntikul, & Huang (2019) provided evidence indicating that the culinary tourist experience is positively linked with both culinary tourist satisfaction and loyalty.

Finally, following the focus group discussions, it can be assumed that travellers are eager to recommend positive culinary experiences. Participants agreed that they would recommend a positive (culinary) holiday experience and share such holiday experiences online and offline (e.g., personal word-of-mouth, personal online networks). Experts also agreed that culinary experiences should be designed to elicit positive WOM and eWOM. As food is a major component of the tourism experience (Agyeiwaah, Otoo, Suntikul, & Huang, 2019, p. 298) and local cuisine can be seen as a main attractor for tourists to a destination, it is essential to enhance tourist satisfaction and advocacy by providing memorable and positive culinary tourism experiences (Ryu & Jang, 2006). Adongo, Anuga, & Dayour (2015) suggest that the provision of memorable local food experiences is a viable approach for generating referral marketing.

Specifically, Martin, Izquierdo, & Laguna-Garcia (2021) showed the positive impact of a culinary experience on future trips and recommendations, which primarily hinge on the overall perceived value of the destination's gastronomic offerings in terms of quality, service, and price. Additionally, recommendation behaviour is influenced by the authenticity and sensorial experience of local food. Smith, Costello, & Muenchen (2010) demonstrated that food event tourist experiences might trigger several positive effects: They (ibid.) were able to show that satisfaction has a significant positive effect on outcome variables such as word-of-mouth behaviour and repeat patronage intentions among food event tourists.

Concluding, it is therefore assumed that:

Hypothesis 1: Culinary tourism experiences have a significant and positive effect on behavioural outcomes.

More specifically:

Hypothesis 1a: Culinary tourism experiences have a positive effect on economic impact beyond the journey.

Hypothesis 1b: Culinary tourism experiences have a significant and positive effect on loyalty.

Hypothesis 1c: Culinary tourism experiences have a significant and positive effect on advocacy.

Nevertheless, it should be acknowledged that tourism experiences may also trigger indirect effects in addition to the aforementioned direct effect on behaviour: Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello (2009) specifically suggest that the relationship between experience and loyalty is mediated by satisfaction. Similarly, Han & Ryu (2009) found that customer satisfaction has a mediating role in the relationship between the physical environment of a restaurant experience and customer loyalty (besides price perception). In the same vein, participants of the focus group discussions also noted that when their satisfaction levels are high, they are more inclined to show specific subsequent behaviours. Based on the findings of the focus group discussions and expert interviews, culinary experiences that meet travellers' expectations and adhere to certain quality standards are likely to result in a high level of satisfaction, which in turn, drives further behavioural intentions.

In the culinary tourism context, Hernandez-Mogollon, Di-Clemente, and Campon-Cerro (2020) demonstrated that local food, when experienced through high-quality interactions, plays a crucial role in ensuring tourist satisfaction. Ladhari, Brun, & Morales (2008) found that emotions and perceived service quality are the main sources of dining satisfaction. Taylor, DiPietro, & Fung So (2018) have verified that the experiential value of pop-up dining experiences leads to increased levels of relationship quality, as reflected in satisfaction. Similarly, the study of Tung & Ritchie (2011), using in-depth interviews to analyse the dimensions of memorable tourism experiences, suggests a direct and positive relationship between tourism experiences and the level of trip satisfaction. To date, several studies have confirmed that tourism experiences positively affect satisfaction (e.g., Cole & Scott, 2004; Kao, Huang, & Wu, 2008; Ali, Amin, & Cobanoglu, 2016; Mehmetoglu & Engen, 2011).

Besides this positive effect of (culinary) tourism experiences on satisfaction, several scholars also investigated the role of tourists' satisfaction and driving further behavioural intentions and found strong correlations as well (e.g., Agyeiwaah, Adongo, Dimache, & Wondirad, 2016; Quintal & Polczynski, 2010; Adongo, Anuga, & Dayour, 2015; Su & Hsu, 2013). For the culinary tourism context, Ladhari, Brun, & Morales (2008) demonstrated that in the restaurant industry, customer satisfaction significantly influences recommendations, loyalty, and the willingness to pay more.

This study therefore hypothesises that:

Hypothesis 2: Satisfaction mediates the positive relationship between culinary tourism experience and behaviour.

More specifically:

Hypothesis 2a: Culinary tourism experiences have a significant and positive effect on satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2b: Satisfaction has a significant and positive effect on behaviour.

Kim (2014) states that novel experiences and experiences that are emotional in nature are remembered better. Culinary experiences are seen as highly memorable as they are usually extraordinary (Stone, Soulard, Migacz, & Wolf, 2018). By the same token,

Westbrook & Oliver (1991) highlight that experiences during a traveller's consumption process elicit emotions, and they argue therefore that this has a strong impact on consumers' memory and memorability. Similarly, Hernandez-Mogollon, Di-Clemente, & Campon-Cerro (2020) conclude that culinary experiences are powerful objects to develop experiential encounters at a destination which are capable of fostering positive emotions and feelings that persist beyond the journey by showing that culinary tourism experience quality is a strong predictor of memorability. Loureiro (2014) also showed that experiences play an important role in the formation of positive emotions as well as memory. The findings of the focus group discussions underscore all these facets. At the same time, the interviewed experts also highlighted these issues and viewed culinary tourism experiences as highly capable of triggering positive memories.

Based on the scale of Kim et al. (2012) to measure memorable tourism experiences, Adongo, Anuga, & Dayour (2015) specifically suggest that memory has to be seen as an important mediator of behavioural intentions in the culinary tourism context and tends to influence post-purchase behaviour positively. Similarly, based on her findings, Loureiro (2014) concluded that memories are important predictors of recommendation and return intentions related to rural destinations. Finally, Sthapit et al. (2024a) have proven that creating memorable wine tourism experiences is positively associated with tourists' future intentions to buy wine from a winery.

It is therefore assumed that:

Hypothesis 3: Memorability mediates the positive relationship between culinary tourism experience and behaviour.

More specifically:

Hypothesis 3a: Culinary tourism experiences have a significant and positive effect on memorability.

Hypothesis 3b: Memorability has a significant and positive effect on behaviour.

The focus group discussions revealed that culinary tourism activities are regarded as highly relaxing and contribute to the restorative effect of a vacation. The interviewed travellers believe that restorative effects based on culinary experiences can be achieved easily, as they offer an escape from the usual environment and daily stress at home, which are key travel motivations for many tourists.

The literature presents a few cases where food experiences drive well-being and quality of life improvements. For instance, Hernandez-Mogollon, Di-Clemente, and Campon-Cerro (2020) provided evidence that experiencing local food through high-quality interactions enhances the quality of life for tourists, suggesting that travellers feel better after their culinary experience. For hot spring tourists, Lin (2014) has shown that cuisine experience affects psychological well-being, and cuisine experience and psychological well-being influence tourists' revisiting and recommendation intentions. For the context of wine tourism, Sthapit et al. (2024a) have proven that memorable wine tourism experiences drive the eudaemonic well-being of tourists, which is positively related to tourists' future intentions to purchase wine from a winery.

Consequently, this study hypothesises that:

Hypothesis 4: Recalled restoration mediates the positive relationship between culinary tourism experience and behaviour.

More specifically:

Hypothesis 4_a: Culinary tourism experiences have a significant and positive effect on recalled restoration.

Hypothesis 4_b: Recalled restoration has a significant and positive effect on behaviour.

However, it might not only be the food and its experience that contributes to restorative and well-being effects and further immediate outcomes: Participants of the focus groups emphasised that a relaxing and pleasant environment is crucial for achieving relaxation and restorative effects as well as overall satisfaction. Nevertheless, they addressed varying levels of importance in the immediate food experience as well as the environmental aspects. Similarly, the experts highlighted that the culinary tourism environment should be designed to be perceived as relaxing to facilitate restoration and memorability, while acknowledging that the actual food and the setting where it is consumed might be more or less important under specific circumstances. Therefore, the combination of the culinary tourism experience together with the perceived restorativeness of the environment where it is consumed might influence resulting restoration, satisfaction and memorability levels.

Similarly, Cutler & Carmichael (2010, p. 10) acknowledge that relaxation is an important personal realm and suggest that pleasing physical aspects of a tourism setting can lead to more positive evaluations and outcomes of experiences. The role of tourism settings influencing such effects was also highlighted by Packer (2014), who assumed that environmental attributes, including aspects of physical, sensory, social, cognitive, and temporal environments, are necessary conditions for restorative experiences to occur.

The restorative potential of various settings, including residential areas, workplaces, schools, and care facilities, has been studied extensively, showing positive effects on psychological restoration (Collado, Staats, Corraliza, & Hartig, 2016). While natural settings are often associated with higher restoration, other built environments can also provide restorative experiences. Environments with attributes that facilitate recovery from mental fatigue contribute to restoration and well-being effects of specific experiences (Packer & Bond, 2010). Wyles et al. (2019) found for example that visits to locations with higher qualities, such as protected or designated areas like nature reserves, are perceived as more restorative and result in greater restorative outcomes. Subiza-Pérez et al. (2021) have shown that the perceived restorative potential of an environment is the strongest predictor of subjective restoration in both indoor and outdoor settings. For the tourism context, Backman, Huang, Chen, Lee, & Cheng (2023) showed, for example, that restorative wellness environments play a crucial role in enhancing positive emotions, life satisfaction, and visitor loyalty when encountering wellness tourism experiences. Similarly, Han, Moon, & Hyun (2019) emphasised the importance of the surroundings on guests' (emotional) well-being, as travellers often enhance their well-being through specific environmental qualities and physical attributes. Finally, Zhang, Zhang, Yang, & Ma (2024) demonstrated that perceived

restorativeness is an important factor influencing visitors' well-being effects of nature tourism experiences.

While the literature offers some insights into the role of an environment's perceived restorativeness in linking experiences to restoration outcome, its impact on tourists' satisfaction and memorability remains largely unexplored. However, as highlighted above, the results of the focus group discussions and expert interviews suggest that PRE could also strengthen the effect of culinary tourism experiences on satisfaction and memorability.

Consequently, this study posits that:

Hypothesis 5_a: The relationship between culinary tourism experiences and restoration is moderated by perceived restorative environment (PRE) such that the positive effect of culinary tourism experiences on restoration strengthens as PRE increases.

Hypothesis 5_b: The relationship between culinary tourism experiences and satisfaction is moderated by perceived restorative environment (PRE) such that the positive effect of culinary tourism experiences on satisfaction strengthens as PRE increases.

Hypothesis 5_c: The relationship between culinary tourism experiences and memorability is moderated by perceived restorative environment (PRE) such that the positive effect of culinary tourism experiences on memorability strengthens as PRE increases.

The focus group discussions indicate that satisfied travellers tend to have stronger and more vivid memories of their culinary experiences, reinforcing many findings in the tourism literature highlighting this positive relationship between memorability and satisfaction. For instance, Ali, Ryu, & Hussain (2016) were able to show that creative tourists' experiences are a good predictor of their memories, satisfaction, and behavioural intentions and that there is a positive relation between satisfaction and memories. Similarly, Sie, Phelan, & Pegg (2018) showed that specific dimensions of memorable experiences are linked to overall satisfaction with educational tour packages. In the context of heritage tourism, Rasoolimanesh, Seyfi, Rather, and Hall (2022) found that higher tourist satisfaction leads to greater memorability for the tourist. The same was found for the rural tourism experience by Kastenholz, Carneiro, Marques, & Loureiro (2018), which shows a significant positive and direct effect of memory on satisfaction. In the same vein, Hernandez-Mogollon, Di-Clemente, and Campon-Cerro (2020) also demonstrated a strong correlation between memorability and satisfaction within the context of culinary tourism. For wine tourism, Sthapit et al. (2024a) have demonstrated that tourists' ability to recall wine tourism experiences is positively influenced by their level of experiential satisfaction.

Consequently, this study hypothesises that:

Hypothesis 6: There is a significant and positive correlation between satisfaction and memorability.

While immediate guest satisfaction and its correlatedness to restoration is under-researched, Chen, Petrick, and Shahvali (2016) provided initial evidence that tourism

recovery experiences positively impact overall life satisfaction. Similarly, Backman, Huang, Chen, Lee, & Cheng (2023) demonstrated that restorative wellness experiences positively influence life satisfaction as well as individuals' loyalty and intention to revisit. Nevertheless, the focus group participants highlighted that feeling restored and relaxed is strongly linked to a satisfying on-site holiday experience. They highlighted that restorative vacation experiences will most likely result in higher guest satisfaction.

Studies on well-being as the broader construct, consisting of meaningfulness, pleasure and release, support this outcome of the exploratory phase and provide evidence that well-being and tourism satisfaction are positively correlated. For example, Bagheri, Guerreiro, Pinto, & Ghaderi (2023) highlighted that tourist well-being significantly influences tourist satisfaction as well as loyalty, as positive experiences boost both satisfaction and behavioural intentions. Finally, Sthapit et al. (2024b) found a positive relationship between experiential satisfaction with a smart hotel experience and hedonic well-being.

Drawing from this broader context, this study therefore hypothesises that:

Hypothesis 7: There is a significant and positive correlation between restoration and satisfaction.

The experts emphasised that culinary tourism experiences perceived as restorative, particularly those occurring in restorative environments, have significant potential to be highly memorable. Likewise, focus group participants were able to vividly recall various environmental aspects that contributed to the restorative nature of their experiences and discussed the positive effects of restoration.

Using studies from the broader well-being literature again, Sthapit, Björk, & Coudounaris (2023) found that there is a positive correlation between memorable well-being tourism experiences and tourists' subjective well-being. Specifically, their findings suggest that the higher the amount of refreshment (besides novelty, experience co-creation, involvement and appeal of the experience scape), the stronger the experience's memorability. Similarly, Yi, Fu, Lin, & Xiao (2022) found that psychological well-being and subjective well-being are significantly and positively associated with memorability in the heritage tourism context. Furthermore, Sthapit et al. (2024b) found a positive relationship between the memorability of a smart hotel experience and hedonic well-being.

Therefore, this study posits that:

Hypothesis 8: There is a significant and positive correlation between restoration and memorability.

4.5.2 Methodological approach

Online surveys are commonly used in tourism research, with the core benefits of low cost and fast response time (Hung & Law, 2011). Both aspects were of importance for the research at hand resulting in the decision to use a quantitative online survey approach to study memorable culinary tourism experiences.

4.5.2.1 Justification and description of the research approach

Tung & Ritchie (2011) suggest using quantitative approaches to evaluate memorable tourism experiences and their relationship with outcome variables such as satisfaction and future behavioural intentions. Similarly, Stone, Soulard, Migacz, & Wolf (2018) recommended using quantitative approaches when trying to identify elements of memorable food/drink experiences and connect them to satisfaction and repeat visitation. These considerations led to the decision to use a quantitative method. An online survey was used to generate the necessary data.

4.5.2.2 Data collection and sampling

The worldwide internet usage is increasing. In 2023, the share of EU internet users was 92% (European Commission, 2023); the same figure amounts to 95% for Austria (Statistik Austria, 2023) and Germany (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2023). At the same time, the groups of travellers and internet users are highly overlapping: The internet is the most important source of information in trip planning (Xiang, Magnini, & Fesenmaier, 2015). Even for target groups with lower internet penetration (e.g., seniors), travellers within these groups are typically active internet users, increasingly searching for travel information and making bookings online (ÖIAT, 2014). Xiang, Magnini, & Fesenmaier (2015) showed that the Internet has become the most important travel planning tool across all generations. Therefore, it was decided to conduct the survey online.

The advantages of online surveys are the greater perceived anonymity of respondents (Kumar, 2014, p. 181) and high flexibility of respondents when filling in the questionnaire (Veal, 2006, p. 244). These benefits result in a greater willingness to participate in the study as well as to give honest and well-reflected answers, which consequently generates higher-quality data (Malhotra, Birks, & Wills, 2012). At the same time, online surveys allow an extensive geographical coverage (Veal, 2006, p. 244), which is especially useful when investigating international travellers, as intended in the current study.

The target population of this study consists of national and international tourists aged 18 years or above who travel at least occasionally for leisure purposes. Following Wu, Cheng, and Ai's (2018) idea, travellers who had travelled within the last year were recruited predominantly, as the 12-month time frame allows recall ability for most respondents (Wu, Cheng, & Ai, 2018).

A convenience approach was used to draw the sample, as there are no sampling frames available that allow the application of probability sampling techniques. Recruitment was done using the researcher's personal networks as well as the researcher's institution. While convenience sampling is widely used in research due to its low costs

and easy application, it has a high chance of being biased (Doebel & Frank, 2023). Nevertheless, Doebel & Frank (2023) suggest three paths that can be followed in order to resolve this tension, which were followed for this online survey: First, they stress variation in sampling, especially when expecting differences across socioeconomic and cultural contexts. Therefore, a broad variety of samples related to age and nationality was recruited for the study at hand. Secondly, Doebel & Frank (2023) recommend using online methods to allow the recruitment of diverse samples, which was also done for the current study. Finally, Doebel & Frank (2023) propose working in teams as it allows pooling of resources and samples. This idea was followed by involving students of three undergraduate study programmes in the project. All students were invited to distribute the survey link in their personal networks, as these (mostly international) students share different cultural backgrounds and languages. Therefore, pooling samples from these study groups “[...] that vary on dimensions of theoretical interest can be a helpful alternative to achieve theoretically-relevant variation”, as highlighted by Doebel & Frank (2023, p. 7).

To ensure sampling equivalence as a crucial aspect of cross-cultural research, the recommendation of enlisting parallel respondents, as suggested by Buil, de Chernatony, & Martinez (2012), was followed. To do this, respondents with similar characteristics across all groups were sought. Finally, data collection equivalence was achieved by standardising the online survey's setting, instructions, procedures, and time frames, following the recommendations given by Buil, de Chernatony, & Martinez (2012), as this ensures consistency and comparability of the data collected across different contexts (Buil, de Chernatony, & Martinez, 2012).

Fieldwork was done from December 2023 to May 2024 using the Unipark platform. In total, a sample size of $n=1,464$ was achieved, which equals a confidence interval of $\pm 2.6\%$ (Veal, 2006, p. 290) and allows for a deeper investigation of subgroups (e.g., age group comparisons).

4.5.2.3 Data collection instrument and operationalisation of concepts and variables

Based on all previous results (content analysis, focus group discussions and expert interviews) as well as existing literature, the final questionnaire was developed. In order to ensure content validity of the measurement concepts covered, different expert groups – as suggested by Hwang & Lyu (2015) – were involved when reviewing the final version of the questionnaire: two academics with a focus on researching (culinary) tourism as well as tourism environments and two practitioners working in culinary tourism were asked to evaluate the questionnaire. Based on this input, the contents and scales, the structure of the questionnaire, and its online presentation were improved.

Besides the English version of the questionnaire, a German version was developed. Therefore, the questionnaire was established in English based on the original wording of the concepts and scales used and then translated into German. Here, it has to be considered that a key point regarding measure equivalence is the focus on translation equivalence, which involves ensuring that translated measures or tools maintain the same meaning, effectiveness, and accuracy as the original versions (see Brislin, 1970; Buil, de Chernatony, & Martinez, 2012; Kumar, 2020). This is crucial when applying the same measure across different languages or cultural contexts (Buil, de

Chernatony, & Martinez, 2012), which was done during the current study. Therefore, in order to ensure measurement equivalence for the translations in different language versions of the questionnaire, the most common method of back-translation (Buil, de Chernatony, & Martinez, 2012) was used. Therefore, two bilingual experts translated the German questionnaire, which was developed by the researcher, back into English. After comparing the translated versions with the initial English questionnaire and analysing and discussing disagreements, the German questionnaire was finalised. In the next step, a pre-test with five bilingual members of the survey's target group was carried out in order to identify problems and potential misunderstandings as well as to minimise errors and biases, as suggested by Buil, de Chernatony, & Martinez (2012). Here, the think-aloud method, as well as cognitive probing techniques, were used as recommended by Collins (2003). After this step, a few formulations were adapted to ensure better comprehensibility.

The final questionnaire consists of the following parts (see also Appendix 8):

- Part 1: Introduction
- Part 2: Screening questions
- Part 3: Evaluation of the most current trip

The introduction provided relevant information on the research project and informed participants about ethical issues (data privacy and anonymity). The screening part covered questions on age, gender, nationality, and general travel behaviour. Respondents who did not travel for leisure purposes were screened out. Then, the remaining survey respondents were asked to recall their latest vacation and to consider the most memorable culinary tourism experience during this vacation while filling out the questionnaire. As highlighted above, travellers having travelled within the last year were recruited predominantly as Wu, Cheng, & Ai (2018) suggest that the 12-month time frame allows recall ability. All subsequent questions focused on the most recent vacation, particularly the respondents' most memorable culinary experiences during their trips.

The results of the content analysis, the focus group discussions, the expert interviews, and relevant literature were used to develop the questionnaire and all items investigating this most recent and memorable culinary experience. Tables 21 to 23 provide an overview of the constructs and their operationalisation, key statistics, and their reliability and validity assessment. All scales can be considered as reflective measures following the considerations of Rose, Borriello, & Pellegrini (2023, p. 8). Therefore, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, average variance extracted and item-to-factor loadings were calculated for their reliability and validity assessment. The scales used in the survey were assessed analogously to the experiment. As shown in tables 21 to 23, the internal consistency of all main constructs exceeds Cronbach's alpha level of 0.7 (at least "acceptable"), as suggested by Fantapié Altobelli (2011, p. 165). Furthermore, the composite reliabilities range from 0.80 to 0.95, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.6 (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). All average variance extracted (AVE) values are close to or surpass the suggested threshold of 0.5, directly confirming convergent validity and indirectly supporting discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). In the two cases where the AVE is close to the cutoff of 0.5 (PRE and 4E scales),

the convergent validity of the constructs remains acceptable, as the composite reliability is significantly higher than 0.6, which corresponds to Fornell & Larcker's (1981) guidelines. Finally, all item-to-factor loadings exceed the cut-off point of .4 as recommended by Keenan & Stevens (2016). For all scaling questions, a 7-point Likert-type interval scale ranging from 1 "strongly disagree" to 7 "strongly agree" was provided for recording the respondents' answers.

Table 21 summarises all constructs and related items used to capture the respondents' evaluations of their most memorable culinary tourism experience during their most recent vacation. Based on the results of focus group discussions and expert interviews, the main determinants are service quality-related aspects, experiential factors, and food-related experiences (including food quality and experience as well as food presentation and communication).

Constructs and related items	Source(s)	M	SD	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted	Item-to-factor loadings
Culinary tourism experience	Singh & Singh (2019), Pine & Gilmore (1998), Hosany & Witham (2010), Oh, Fiore, & Jeoung (2007), Robinson & Clifford (2012), Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen (2014)	5.21	.93	.76	.85	.61	>.66
Service quality	Singh & Singh (2019)						
The service staff was nice and friendly.							
The services provided were impressive.		5.76	1.13	.84	.90	.76	>.85
The service staff offered customised services.							
4E	Pine & Gilmore (1998), Hosany & Witham (2010), Oh, Fiore, & Jeoung (2007)	4.77	1.13	.93	.93	.46	>.49
Education							
It stimulated my curiosity to learn new things.							
This experience made me more knowledgeable.							
It was a real learning experience.		4.19	1.64	.92	.94	.75	>.83
I learnt a lot during this culinary experience.							
The experience really enhanced my skills.							
Entertainment							
This culinary activity was fun.							
This culinary activity was entertaining.							
This culinary experience was amusing.		5.22	1.18	.80	.87	.57	>.60
This culinary experience was captivating.							
This culinary activity included positive surprises.							

Table 21 Continued						
Esthetics						
It was pleasant just being there.						
The setting of the culinary experience was attractive and esthetically pleasing.						
The setting provided pleasure to my senses.	5.58	1.16	.82	.88	.65	>.78
The setting pays close attention to design details.						
Escapism						
I completely escaped from my daily routine.						
I felt like I was in a different time or place.						
The experience let me imagine being someone else (e.g., the olive oil producer).	4.16	1.44	.76	.84	.58	>.55
I felt I played a different character there (e.g., being the cheese maker).						
Food quality and experience Robinson & Clifford (2012), Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen (2014)						
The social environment of the culinary experience was pleasant (e.g., travel companions, locals).						
The food and drinks I consumed there were of high quality.						
The food and drinks I consumed there were truly authentic for the region I visited.	5.60	1.18	.82	.87	.58	>.63
The food and drinks I consumed there represent the destination's culture.						
The dishes/food and drinks I consumed there were locally produced.						
Food presentation and communication Robinson & Clifford (2012), Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen (2014)						
The food and drinks offered during this culinary experience are based on a common overall theme.						
The food and drinks I consumed tell interesting stories about their producers, the region, etc.	4.22	1.64	.73	.85	.66	>.78
During this culinary experience I was able to get in touch with the producer(s) (e.g., wine maker).						

Table 21: Operationalisation of culinary tourism experience and key statistics

Table 22 provides an overview of the operationalisation of the perceived restorative environment (PRE), restoration, satisfaction, and memorability (as covered in part 3 of the questionnaire), key statistics, and their reliability and validity assessment.

Constructs and related items	Source(s)	M	SD	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted	Item-to-factor loadings
Perceived restorative environment (PRE)	Qiu, Jin, & Scott (2021)	5.19	1.04	.90	.95	.45	>.52
Extent							
Everything matched the overall environment.							
There was a clear order in the physical arrangement of this place.		5.14	1.17	.62	.80	.58	>.72
This place seemed limitless to allow exploration.							
Compatibility							
This place met my expectations.							
This culinary experience allowed to follow my own pace.							
This place suited my personality.		5.30	1.10	.74	.83	.50	>.60
I was able to encounter this culinary experience autonomously.							
There were few boundaries to limit my possibility for moving around.							
Fascination							
There were many interesting things in this place that drew my attention		4.97	1.40	.79	.88	.71	>.83
This place made me wonder about things.							
I was engrossed by this place.							
Being Away							
This place gave me a break.							
This place was different from where I usually live.		5.28	1.23	.62	.80	.57	>.68
This place was a refuge from unwanted distractions.							
Restoration	Pasanen, Ojala, Tyrväinen, & Korpela (2018)						
I felt restored and relaxed.							
I forgot everyday worries.							
I calmed down.							
My vitality and energy increased.							
I gained new spirit for my everyday routines.		4.65	1.39	.92	.93	.61	>.73
My thoughts were clarified.							
I gained faith in tomorrow.							
My concentration and alertness increased.							
I became more self-confident.							
Satisfaction	Lehto (2012)						
Overall, I was very satisfied with this culinary experience.		5.97	1.19	.89	.95	.90	>.95
Overall, my expectations related to the culinary experiences of this vacation were met.							
Memorability	Hosany & Witham (2010), Oh, Fiore, & Jeoung (2007)						
I remember many positive things about these culinary experiences.							
I have wonderful memories about this culinary experience.		5.80	1.25	.90	.94	.83	>.89
I won't forget culinary experiences on this vacation.							

Table 22: Operationalisation of PRE, restoration, satisfaction and memorability and key statistics

Table 23 provides an overview of the operationalisation of behavioural outcomes (as covered in part 3 of the questionnaire), key statistics, and their reliability and validity assessment. Following the framework of Godovykh & Tasci (2020), who summarise the results of tourism experiences such as loyalty, purchase decision and evangelism under *product/brand-related outcomes* (besides *consumer-related outcomes* such as emotions, learning and transformation), the three components make up the item *behaviour*.

Constructs and related items	Source(s)	M	SD	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted	Item-to-factor-loadings
Behaviour	Godovykh & Tasci (2020), Fernandes & Cruz (2016), Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Malhotra (2005), Brown, Barry, Dacin, & Gunst (2005), Stone, Migacz, & Wolf (2019)	4.85	1.26	.82	.86	.48	>.54
Loyalty	Fernandes & Cruz (2016), Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Malhotra (2005)						
I consider visiting the destination again to have similar culinary experiences.		5.31	1.45	.73	.88	.79	>.89
I consider this culinary experience at the destination my first choice.							
Advocacy	Fernandes & Cruz, (2016), Brown, Barry, Dacin, & Gunst (2005)						
I told stories about the experience at this destination to family members and close personal friends.							
I spoke positively of the culinary experience at this destination to others.		5.49	1.40	.76	.87	.69	>.77
I recommended the culinary experience at this destination to someone who sought my advice.							
Economic impact	Stone, Migacz, & Wolf (2019)						
I bought food souvenirs after this culinary experience to consume them at home.							
When at home, I bought food and drinks again, which I first encountered while on this trip.		3.74	2.02	.86	.91	.78	>.83
I bought food or beverage products as gifts after this culinary experience.							

Table 23: Operationalisation of loyalty, advocacy and economic impact and key statistics

4.5.2.4 Sample description

Demographics

In total, 1,684 people took part in the survey. Since only travellers who engage in leisure travel at least occasionally are considered as the target group for this survey, 220 cases were screened out as they indicated they do not travel for leisure purposes at all. This results in a total sample of 1,464 completed cases. The average time to complete the questionnaire was approx. 11 minutes. The survey participants are distributed across various age groups. The majority of respondents fall into the 18-25 age bracket, comprising 57.6% of the sample. This is followed by the 46+ age group (accounting for

22.0% of participants) and by the 26-45 age group (20.4%). The mean value of all travellers in the sample amounts to 31.3 years, with a standard deviation of 15.14 (Min=18; Max=88). Among the survey participants, 570 identified as male (38.9%), 883 identified as female (60.3%), and 11 participants identified as non-binary or preferred not to disclose their gender (0.8%). The survey includes participants from a diverse range of nationalities. The majority of respondents are from Austria, comprising 35.5% of the sample. This is followed by Germany, accounting for 11.9% of participants; Spain, accounting for 7.3% of participants; and Hungary, accounting for 6.0% of the sample. Table 24 presents the demographic structure of the survey sample.

Item	Sample (n)	%	Item	Sample (n)	%
Age			Nationality		
18-25	843	57.6%	Austria	595	35.3%
26-45	299	20.4%	Germany	200	11.9%
46+	322	22.0%	Spain	123	7.3%
Gender			Hungary	101	6.0%
Male	570	38.9%	China	56	3.3%
Female	883	60.3%	Ukraine	38	2.3%
Other	11	0.8%	Slovakia	36	2.1%
			Vietnam	35	2.1%
			Romania	33	2.0%
			South Korea	32	1.9%
			France	28	1.7%
			Greece	25	1.5%
			Poland	22	1.3%
			Italy	20	1.2%
			Croatia	19	1.1%
			Bulgaria	17	1.0%
			Netherlands	17	1.0%
			Finland	16	1.0%
			Venezuela	16	1.0%
			Estonia	15	0.9%
			USA	14	0.8%
			Russia	13	0.8%
			Czech Republic	12	0.7%
			Latvia	11	0.7%
			Mexico	11	0.7%
			Serbia	11	0.7%
			Uzbekistan	11	0.7%
			Brazil	10	0.6%
			Other/n.a.	147	8.7%

Table 24: Demographic profile of survey sample

Tripographics and culinary tourism settings

When investigating the types of the most recent trips, city trips emerged as the most frequently selected option, capturing the highest percentage of the most recent trips (36.2%). This is followed by beach/coastal/seaside vacations (31.8%). Family trips rank third (28.3%) (see Table 25). 60.8% of respondents selected urban/city destinations, while 45.8% characterised their most recent vacation destination as rural. It has to be noted here that respondents were allowed to choose both options, as some trips may include visits to both urban and rural areas. The experiences reported in the survey are relatively recent. Nearly half (47.7%) of the respondents mentioned that their

most recent vacation had ended within the last two months. Only 5.6% of respondents reported an experience that occurred more than one year ago.

Item	Sample (n)	%	Item	Sample (n)	%
Types of last trip (multiple responses possible, max. 3)			Destination types visited (multiple responses possible)		
City trip	531	36.2%	Urban/city	896	60.8%
Seaside, beach/coastal tourism	466	31.8%	Rural/countryside	669	45.8%
Family trip	417	28.3%	End of most recent vacation		
Cultural tourism	314	21.4%	Within the last month	384	25.2%
Visiting friends and relatives	280	19.1%	Approx. 1-2 months ago	342	22.5%
Active/sport tourism	154	10.5%	3-4 months ago	359	23.6%
Visiting an event/festival	151	10.3%	5-6 months ago	197	13.0%
Nature-based/rural tourism	149	10.2%	7-12 months ago	151	10.0%
Holidays in the mountains	146	9.9%	More than 1 year ago	85	5.6%
Spa and wellness tourism	138	9.4%			
Culinary tourism/wine tourism	113	7.7%			
Shopping	93	6.3%			
Holidays at the lakeside	86	5.9%			
Camping	72	4.9%			
Cruise	39	2.7%			
Medical and health tourism	25	1.7%			
Other	35	2.4%			

Table 25: Tripographics of the survey sample

Table 26 illustrates the distribution of settings based on the respondents' most recent culinary experiences. Local restaurants and hotel restaurants clearly dominate, with the highest percentage of respondents indicating that their latest culinary experience occurred at local restaurants (57.4%). Street food ranks second (15.8%). This setting is followed by outdoor dining (11.8%) and theme restaurants (10.2%). Company visits/experience worlds, dinner theatres and cooking classes occupy the smallest segments of the chart, indicating that only a few respondents had their most recent food/drink experiences in such settings. Other settings that respondents mentioned are cruise ship restaurants, bars, private houses/apartments, and cafés.

Item	Sample (n)	%	Item	Sample (n)	%
Setting of food/drink experience (multiple responses possible)			Grouped settings		
Local restaurant/hotel restaurant	840	57.3%	Restaurant setting	838	60.1%
Street food	231	15.8%	Mixed	337	24.2%
Outdoor dining	173	11.8%	Experience-oriented/staged setting	114	8.2%
Theme restaurant	149	10.2%	Purchase-oriented setting	106	7.6%
(Highly) Rated restaurant (e.g., Michelin star-rated restaurant)	145	9.9%	Type of food/drink experience (multiple responses possible)		
Markets (e.g., food market, farmers' market)	133	9.1%	Experiential	1238	84.7%
Winery/brewery/distillery	72	4.9%	Observational	199	13.6%
Festival/event	65	4.4%	Participative	109	7.5%
Stores offering various regional and typical products under one roof	62	4.2%	Companions during food/drink experience (multiple responses possible)		
Food/wine/beer route	47	3.2%	Friends/colleagues	547	37.4%
Wine store	46	3.1%	Spouse/partner	546	37.3%
Farm/orchard/u-pick location	46	3.1%	Other family members/relatives (e.g., parents)	452	30.9%
Picnic	39	2.7%	Child/children	146	10.0%
Company visit/visiting an experience world	34	2.3%	Only me	140	9.6%
Dinner theatre	29	2.0%	Other customers/guests	79	5.4%
Cooking class	26	1.8%	Locals	75	5.1%
Other	77	5.3%	Host(s)	42	2.9%
			Others	8	0.5%

Table 26: Setting of the most recent culinary tourism experience

The content analysis revealed that culinary tourism experiences are usually promoted in three main categories on destination websites: 1) restaurant settings, 2) settings that offer specific culinary tourism experiences, such as experience worlds and cooking classes, and 3) settings where local products can be purchased. When categorising the settings covered in the questionnaire into these three clusters, the dominance of culinary experiences in restaurant settings becomes even more evident (see Table 26), accounting for 60.1% of all reported culinary tourism experiences. Restaurant settings include experiences in local restaurants, hotel restaurants, theme restaurants, (highly) rated restaurants, and outdoor dining. Mixed settings rank second (24.2%), encompassing cases where the experience took place in more than one setting, such as visiting a local market (purchase-oriented setting) and having dinner at a restaurant there (restaurant setting). Additionally, 8.2% of all experiences occurred in an experience-oriented/staged setting, which includes dinner theatres, culinary festivals and events, food/wine/beer routes, farms/orchards, picnics, company visits, visiting experience worlds, as well as wineries/breweries/distilleries. Finally, purchase-oriented settings occupy the smallest segment (7.6%), covering markets, wine stores, stores offering various regional and typical products under one roof, and street food.

When investigating the experience type, it becomes evident that experiential experiences rank first (84.7%), which points to a considerable interest among respondents in immersive culinary experiences that go beyond mere observation. Observational experiences (13.6%), where individuals primarily watch and enjoy food or drinks being prepared or served, and participative experiences (7.5%), where individuals actively participate in the preparation or creation of food and drinks, occupy the smallest segments. Finally, Table 26 summarises the distribution of respondents according to the companions they had during their most recent culinary experience. The largest segments are occupied by those who experienced their most recent culinary activity with friends/colleagues (37.4%), as well as their spouse/partner (37.3%) and other family members (30.9%). This suggests that gatherings of friends and family members are common settings for culinary experiences, reflecting the importance of the social environment in culinary tourism contexts.

4.5.3 Findings

When starting data analysis, consistency checks were done first in order to ensure that data were logically consistent and not out of range (Malhotra et al., 2012, p. 597). Participants' verbatim responses were coded. For this, mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive category codes were developed (Malhotra et al., 2012, p. 595). Statistical analyses were performed using SPSS, version 29.0.

4.5.3.1 Dimensions of the culinary tourism experience and their comparative assessment for different culinary tourism settings and contexts

Non-parametric tests were performed for the comparative assessment of different culinary tourism settings and contexts because both Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests showed that all interval-scaled items departed significantly from normality ($p < .001$).

Service quality

Based on a Kruskal Wallis test, significant differences in perceived service quality were found for different destination types (rural/countryside vs. urban/city vs. mixed) ($\chi^2 (2, 1456) = 9.40, p < .01$): Service quality was evaluated better in rural/countryside destinations ($M = 5.84$; $SD = 1.14$) compared to urban/city destinations ($M = 5.68$; $SD = 1.14$). Furthermore, a Kruskal Wallis test revealed significant differences in perceived service quality for various settings ($\chi^2 (3, 1394) = 67.31, p < .001$): Service quality was assessed highest in restaurant settings ($M = 5.93$; $SD = 1.06$) and in experience-oriented/staged settings ($M = 5.73$; $SD = 1.32$) compared to mixed settings ($M = 2.49$; $SD = 1.06$) and purchase-oriented settings ($M = 5.30$; $SD = 1.25$). No significant differences were identified across the contexts of observational, experiential, participatory, and mixed experiences.

Experiential dimensions

Based on a Kruskal Wallis test, significant differences in the escapism dimension were found for different destination types (rural/countryside vs. urban/city vs. mixed) ($\chi^2 (2, 1456) = 6.67, p < .05$): Escapism was evaluated higher in mixed destinations ($M = 4.55$; $SD = 1.30$) compared to rural/countryside ($M = 4.14$; $SD = 1.45$) and urban/city

destinations (M=4.13; SD=1.45). Performing further Kruskal Wallis tests revealed significant differences in the experience dimensions for different settings: Restaurant settings (M=5.69; SD=1.14) obtained significantly better evaluations in the esthetics dimension compared to experience-oriented/staged settings (M=5.62; SD=1.22), mixed settings (M=5.45; SD=1.09) and purchase-oriented settings (M=5.16; SD=1.29) (χ^2 (3, 1394)=29.48, $p<.001$). The entertainment dimension received significantly better evaluations in experience-oriented/staged settings (M=5.51; SD=1.13) and mixed settings (M=5.28; SD=1.09), compared to restaurant settings (M=5.17; SD=1.20) and purchase-oriented (M=5.11; SD=1.29) (χ^2 (3, 1394)=10.09, $p<.05$). Similarly, the education dimension received the highest evaluations in experience-oriented/staged settings (M=4.79; SD=1.59) and mixed settings (M=4.79; SD=1.31), followed by purchase-oriented (M=3.94; SD=1.71) and restaurant settings (M=3.92; SD=1.64) ($p<.05$) (χ^2 (3, 1394)=87.16, $p<.001$). Finally, mixed settings (M=4.64; SD=1.29) and experience-oriented/staged settings (M=4.62; SD=1.44) achieved significantly better evaluations in the escapism dimension compared to restaurant settings (M=3.96; SD=1.42) and purchase-oriented settings (M=3.79; SD=1.50) (χ^2 (3, 1394)=74.76, $p<.001$).

When investigating the context of the culinary tourism experiences, it can be seen that experiential (M=5.62; SD=1.16), participative (M=5.49; SD=1.16), and mixed (M=5.72; SD=1.01) culinary tourism experiences received significantly higher evaluations in the esthetics dimension compared to observational (M=5.30; SD=1.23) experiences (χ^2 (3, 1461)=11.58, $p<.01$). Observational (M=4.50; SD=1.62), participative (M=4.93; SD=1.46), and mixed (M=4.72; SD=1.46) culinary experiences evoked significantly higher educational experiences compared to experiential experiences (M=4.07; SD=1.64) (χ^2 (3, 1461)=32.94, $p<.001$). Observational (M=4.35; SD=1.44), participative (M=4.64; SD=1.46), and mixed experiences (M=4.76; SD=1.31) scored higher in the escapism dimension, while experiential (M=4.07; SD=1.44) experiences ranked lower (χ^2 (3, 1461)=25.79, $p<.001$). The evaluation for entertainment does not vary among different experience types, indicating that all types of culinary experiences are perceived as equally entertaining.

Food-related aspects

Eight statements related to the immediate food experience and its presentation and communication were covered in the questionnaire. Performing an exploratory factor analysis on these questionnaire items based on a principal component analysis (Varimax rotation) reveals two key factors.

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure and Bartlett's test of sphericity are used to investigate the appropriateness of the EFA results: the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy is .809. Bartlett's test of sphericity is also statistically significant (χ^2 (28)=4263.227, $p<.001$), which consequently indicates that it is appropriate to proceed with the factor analysis. In total, 61.49% of the variance can be explained using the two-factor solution with initial eigenvalues greater than one. The factor with the highest eigenvalue (3.6) accounted for 44.99% of the total variance. The second factor, with an eigenvalue of 1.3, accounted for a further 16.49%. The two key factors identified through the EFA are "Food quality and experience" and "Food presentation and communication". Factor 1 (food quality and experience) achieved the highest mean value

(5.60) and also had the highest percentage of the variance explained, followed by factor 2 (food presentation and communication), with a mean value of 4.22 and a lower percentage of variance explained. The results of the factor analysis and the two-factor solution are displayed in Table 27.

Factor Scale item	1	2
Factor 1 “Food quality and experience”		
The food and drinks I consumed there were truly authentic for the region I visited.	.79	.23
The food and drinks I consumed there represent the destination's culture.	.77	.27
The food and drinks I consumed there were of high quality.	.72	.06
The dishes/food and drinks I consumed there were locally produced.	.71	.34
The social environment of the culinary experience was pleasant (e.g., travel companions, locals).	.68	.01
Factor 2 “Food presentation and communication”		
During this culinary experience I was able to get in touch with the producer(s) (e.g., wine maker).	-.01	.84
The food and drinks I consumed tell interesting stories about their producers, the region, etc.	.32	.78
The food and drinks offered during this culinary experience are based on a common overall theme.	.22	.72
Percentage of variance explained	44.99	16.49
Eigenvalue	3.60	1.32
Mean	5.60	4.22

Table 27: Factors determining food experience

n=1,464. Exploratory factor analysis based on a principal component analysis using Varimax rotation. Scale: 1 “strongly disagree” – 7 “strongly agree”

4.5.3.2 Dimensions of the culinary tourism experience and their contribution to direct and indirect outcomes

The contribution of the culinary tourism experience dimensions to restoration, satisfaction and memory as immediate outcomes was assessed by performing multiple linear regression analyses (see Table 28). It can be seen that education, entertainment, esthetics, food quality and experience, as well as service quality, are statistically relevant to memorability, $R^2=.51$, $F(7, 1456)=218.56$, $p<.001$. All statistically relevant constructs except education make a positive contribution. Education, entertainment, esthetics, food quality and experience, food presentation and communication, as well as service quality, are statistically relevant to satisfaction, $R^2=.51$, $F(7, 1456)=216.76$, $p<.001$. All statistically relevant constructs except education, food presentation, and communication make a positive contribution. Finally, education, entertainment, esthetics, escapism, food quality and experience, as well as food presentation and communication, are statistically relevant to restoration, $R^2=.45$, $F(7, 1456)=171.17$, $p<.001$. Here, all statistically relevant constructs make a positive contribution to restoration. In terms of relative importance, the entertainment and esthetics dimensions make the largest contributions to memorability (based on the highest B coefficients). Esthetics, food quality, and experience make the largest contributions to satisfaction. Finally, escapism makes by far the largest contribution to restoration.

	Memorability			Satisfaction			Restoration		
	B	t	p	B	t	p	B	t	p
Education	-.07	-2.80	<.01	-.09	-3.73	<.001	.11	3.93	<.001
Entertainment	.32	9.68	<.001	.19	6.21	<.001	.12	3.01	<.01
Esthetics	.34	10.68	<.001	.37	12.37	<.001	.17	4.47	<.001
Escapism	.02	.86	>.05	-.02	-.68	>.05	.32	10.86	<.001
Food quality and experience	.23	9.07	<.001	.24	9.56	<.001	.08	2.52	<.05
Food presentation and communication	-.01	-.58	>.05	-.04	-2.06	<.05	.06	2.42	<.05
Service quality	.07	2.70	<.01	.17	6.91	<.001	.01	.27	>.05
R ²	.51			.51			.45		
F statistic	218.56			216.76			171.17		
p	<.001			<.001			<.001		

Table 28: Culinary tourism determinants and their effects on memory, satisfaction and restoration in culinary tourism

n=1,464. Linear regression, method: enter, significant ($p < .05$) results in bold. The table reports unstandardised coefficients (B).

Additionally, the contribution of the culinary tourism experience dimensions on loyalty, advocacy and economic impact as behavioural outcomes was assessed (see Table 29). It can be seen that entertainment, esthetics, escapism, food quality and experience, food presentation and communication, as well as service quality, are statistically relevant to loyalty, $R^2 = .39$, $F(7, 1456) = 131.85$, $p < .001$. All statistically relevant constructs make a positive contribution to loyalty. Education, entertainment, esthetics, food quality and experience, food presentation and communication, as well as service quality, are statistically relevant to advocacy, $R^2 = .40$, $F(7, 1456) = 141.63$, $p < .001$. Here, all statistically relevant constructs make a positive contribution to advocacy. Finally, education, escapism, food presentation and communication are statistically relevant to economic impact, $R^2 = .33$, $F(7, 1456) = 105.65$, $p < .001$. Again, all statistically relevant constructs make a positive contribution to the economic impact. In terms of relative importance, the esthetics dimension is by far the greatest driver of loyalty, while esthetics and food quality and experience are the greatest drivers of advocacy. The economic impact is mostly affected by food presentation and communication, but escapism and education also play a major role in driving the economic impact.

	Loyalty			Advocacy			Economic impact		
	B	t	p	B	t	p	B	t	p
Education	-.04	-1.40	>.05	.07	2.28	<.05	.25	5.41	<.001
Entertainment	.16	3.82	<.001	.19	4.61	<.001	-.04	-.61	>.05
Esthetics	.36	8.87	<.001	.24	6.11	<.001	-.08	-1.34	>.05
Escapism	.12	3.62	<.001	.04	1.14	>.05	.31	6.55	<.001
Food quality and experience	.20	6.03	<.001	.24	7.55	<.001	.02	.40	>.05
Food presentation and communication	.07	2.55	<.05	.08	3.14	<.01	.34	9.16	<.001
Service quality	.08	2.24	<.05	.08	2.50	<.01	-.03	-.56	>.05
R ²	.39			.40			.33		
F statistic	131.85			141.63			105.65		
p	<.001			<.001			<.001		

Table 29: Culinary tourism determinants and their effects on loyalty, advocacy and economic impact in culinary tourism

n=1,464. Linear regression, method: enter, significant ($p < .05$) results in bold. The table reports unstandardised coefficients (B).

4.5.3.3 The role of perceived restorative environments and their contribution to direct and indirect outcomes

In order to assess the role of the perceived restorative environments and their dimensions (extent, compatibility, being away, fascination) in driving memorability, satisfaction and recalled restoration, further linear regression analyses were carried out (see Table 30). The results show that all dimensions of PRE are statistically relevant and positively affect memorability, $R^2 = .46$, $F(4, 1459) = 306.22$, $p < .001$. Compatibility shows the highest regression coefficient, leading to the assumption that this is the greatest driver of memorability. Furthermore, all dimensions of PRE are statistically relevant to satisfaction, $R^2 = .40$, $F(4, 1459) = 247.66$, $p < .001$. Again, compatibility is the greatest driver. However, fascination shows a negative regression coefficient. Finally, all dimensions of PRE are statistically relevant and positively affecting recalled restoration, $R^2 = .46$, $F(4, 1459) = 305.97$, $p < .001$. Here, the dimension of being away is the greatest driver of recalled restoration, followed by extent and fascination.

	Memorability			Satisfaction			Recalled restoration		
	B	t	p	B	t	p	B	t	p
Extent	.08	2.62	<.01	.10	3.14	<.01	.24	6.77	<.001
Being Away	.21	7.40	<.001	.20	6.80	<.001	.34	10.46	<.001
Compatibility	.34	10.05	<.001	.49	14.84	<.001	.11	2.93	<.01
Fascination	.17	6.52	<.001	-.06	-2.07	<.05	.19	6.44	<.001
R ²	.46			.40			.46		
F statistic	306.22			247.66			305.97		
p	<.001			<.001			<.001		

Table 30: PRE dimensions and their effects on memory, satisfaction and recalled restoration in culinary tourism

n=1,464. Linear regression, method: enter, significant ($p < .05$) results in bold. The table reports unstandardised coefficients (B).

Furthermore, the contribution of PRE dimensions on loyalty, advocacy and economic impact as behavioural outcomes was assessed (see Table 31). The results show that all dimensions of PRE are statistically relevant and positively affecting loyalty, $R^2 = .36$, $F(4, 1459) = 209.57$, $p < .001$. Compatibility shows the highest regression coefficient in predicting loyalty. Furthermore, all dimensions of PRE are statistically relevant and positively affect advocacy, $R^2 = .33$, $F(4, 1459) = 180.95$, $p < .001$. Interestingly, all four dimensions enhance advocacy to a rather similar extent. Finally, the dimensions extent, compatibility and fascination are statistically relevant to the economic impact, $R^2 = .15$, $F(4, 1459) = 63.07$, $p < .001$. Fascination and extent can be seen as the main drivers of economic impact based on the highest regression coefficient in this analysis. Interestingly, compatibility shows a negative regression coefficient here.

	Loyalty			Advocacy			Economic impact		
	B	t	p	B	t	p	B	t	p
Extent	.17	4.17	<.001	.20	4.89	<.001	.36	5.48	<.001
Being Away	.17	4.65	<.001	.20	5.47	<.001	.03	.50	>.05
Compatibility	.43	10.30	<.001	.19	4.60	<.001	-.14	-2.07	<.05
Fascination	.09	2.63	<.01	.18	5.52	<.001	.37	6.78	<.001

Table 31 Continued			
R ²	.36	.33	.15
F statistic	209.57	180.95	63.07
p	<.001	<.001	<.001

Table 31: PRE dimensions and their effects on loyalty, advocacy and economic impact in culinary tourism

n=1,464. Linear regression, method: enter, significant (p<.05) results in bold. The table reports unstandardised coefficients (B).

4.5.3.4 Model and hypotheses testing

In order to assess the proposed model (see chapter 4.5.1), the PROCESS macro for SPSS was used again at this stage of the study. Model 7 was used here (see Hayes, Montoya, & Rockwood, 2017). In this model, the culinary experience is seen as the independent variable (X); restoration, satisfaction and memorability are treated as parallel mediators (M), and behaviour is seen as the dependent variable Y. The perceived restorative environment is the moderator (W) in this model. The variables in the moderated mediation analysis showed an approximately linear relationship, as determined by visual inspection of the scatterplots after LOESS smoothing. All continuous variables were mean-centred (Hayes, 2013). To visually investigate the relationships between the independent variable and the three mediators, as well as their interactions with the moderator, Johnson-Neyman plots were visualised using Hemmerich's (2020) calculator.

When testing this model, it can be seen that culinary tourism experiences have statistically significant direct and indirect effects on behaviour (see Table 32).

Predictors	B	SE	t	p
Outcome: Memorability (R²=.52, p<.001)				
Culinary tourism experiences	.39	.04	9.28	<.001
PRE	.50	.04	12.78	<.001
Cul. tourism experiences x PRE	-.17	.02	-7.17	<.001
Outcome: Satisfaction (R²=.44, p<.001)				
Culinary tourism experiences	.41	.04	9.39	<.001
PRE	.38	.04	9.23	<.001
Cul. tourism experiences x PRE	-.14	.03	-4.78	<.001
Outcome: Restoration (R²=.47, p<.001)				
Culinary tourism experiences	.34	.05	7.06	<.001
PRE	.70	.04	16.14	<.001
Cul. tourism experiences x PRE	.10	.02	4.54	<.001
Outcome: Behaviour (R²=.56, p<.001)				
Culinary tourism experiences	.45	.04	11.11	<.001
Restoration	.30	.02	13.87	<.001
Memorability	.16	.03	4.73	<.001
Satisfaction	.08	.03	2.72	<.001
Direct effect of Culinary tourism experiences on Behaviour				
<i>B=.45, SE=.04, 95% CI [.37; .52]</i>				
Conditional Indirect Effects of Culinary tourism experiences on Behaviour through Memory				
PRE	Effect	Boot LLC	Boot ULC	
-1.04	.09	.05	.13	
.00	.06	.04	.09	
1.04	.03	.02	.06	

Table 32 Continued

Conditional Indirect Effects of Culinary tourism experiences on Behaviour through Satisfaction			
PRE	Effect	Boot LLC	Boot ULC
-1.04	.05	.01	.09
.00	.04	.01	.06
1.04	.02	.01	.04
Conditional Indirect Effects of Culinary tourism experiences on Behaviour through Restoration			
PRE	Effect	Boot LLC	Boot ULC
-1.04	.07	.04	.11
.00	.10	.07	.14
1.04	.14	.10	.17

Table 32: Testing for moderated parallel mediation (study 5)

Note: $n=1,464$. CI=confidence interval. HAYES PROCESS Model 7 (Hayes, 2013). Bootstrap sample=5,000. The table reports unstandardised coefficients (B). Significant ($p<.001$, $p<.01$, $p<.05$) coefficients in bold.

According to the results of the moderated mediation analysis using Hayes PROCESS model 7, it can be seen that the direct positive effect of culinary experiences on behaviour is statistically significant ($B=.45$, $t(4, 1459)=11.11$, $p<.001$), which supports H1. When entering restoration, satisfaction and memorability as mediators into the model, culinary tourism experiences predict all mediators in the model significantly. Firstly, culinary tourism experiences significantly and positively predict satisfaction as a mediator ($B=.41$, $t(3, 1460)=9.39$, $p<.001$). Satisfaction, in turn, significantly predicts behaviour ($B=.08$, $t(4, 1459)=2.72$, $p<.01$), thereby supporting H2_a and H2_b. Additionally, culinary tourism experiences predict memorability as a mediator significantly and positively ($B=.39$, $t(3, 1460)=9.28$, $p<.001$), which in turn predicts behaviour significantly ($B=.16$, $t(4, 1459)=4.73$, $p<.001$). These results support H3_a and H3_b. Finally, culinary tourism experiences predict restoration as a mediator significantly and positively ($B=.34$, $t(3, 1460)=7.06$, $p<.001$), which in turn predicts behaviour significantly ($B=.30$, $t(4, 1459)=13.87$, $p<.001$), providing evidence for supporting H4_a and H4_b. Hence, partial mediation is observed, as both the direct effect of culinary tourism experiences on behaviour and the indirect effects through memorability, satisfaction, and restoration are significant.

To summarise, path c' representing the direct effect of culinary tourism experiences on behaviour with a coefficient of $B=.45$ shows that culinary tourism experiences still influence behaviour directly to a great extent, even when the mediators are included. This suggests that culinary tourism experiences have a robust direct effect on behaviour beyond what is explained by the mediating variables. However, a substantial portion of the effect of culinary tourism experiences on behaviour remains unexplained by the mediators. Explanations and areas for further research to clarify these relationships are discussed in the next chapter.

Furthermore, a moderation analysis was run to determine whether the interaction between culinary experiences and the perceived restorative environment (PRE) predicts restoration, satisfaction and memorability. The overall model for the outcome variable memorability was significant, $F(3, 1460)=408.36$, $p<.001$, predicting 52.28% of the variance. Additionally, the overall model for the outcome variable satisfaction was significant, $F(3, 1460)=270.86$, $p<.001$, predicting 43.79% of the variance. Finally, the overall

model for the outcome variable restoration was significant, $F(3, 1460)=524.01$, $p<.001$, predicting 47.23% of the variance. In total, this indicates a high explained variance for all three models.

Results furthermore show that PRE moderates the effect of culinary experiences on memorability significantly, $\Delta R^2=.03$, $F(1, 1460)=51.40$, $p<.001$, 95% CI[-.22;-.12]. Additionally, PRE moderates the effect of culinary experiences on satisfaction significantly, $\Delta R^2=.02$, $F(1, 1460)=22.80$, $p<.001$, 95% CI[-.20;-.09]. Finally, PRE moderates the effect of culinary experiences on restoration significantly, $\Delta R^2=.01$, $F(1, 1460)=20.66$, $p<.001$, 95% CI[.06;.14]. Based on the moderation analysis, it can be seen that the conditional effect of culinary tourism experiences on satisfaction through PRE is highest at low levels of PRE (mean -1SD: $B_{\text{indirect}}=.56$, $SE=.06$, 95% CI [.45;.68]), is lower at intermediate levels (at mean: $B_{\text{indirect}}=.41$, $SE=.04$, 95% CI [.33;.50]), and is lowest at high levels of PRE (mean +1SD: $B_{\text{indirect}}=.26$, $SE=.05$, 95% CI [.16;.36]). Figure 32 shows this conditional effect of culinary tourism experience on satisfaction through PRE in a Johnson-Neyman diagram.

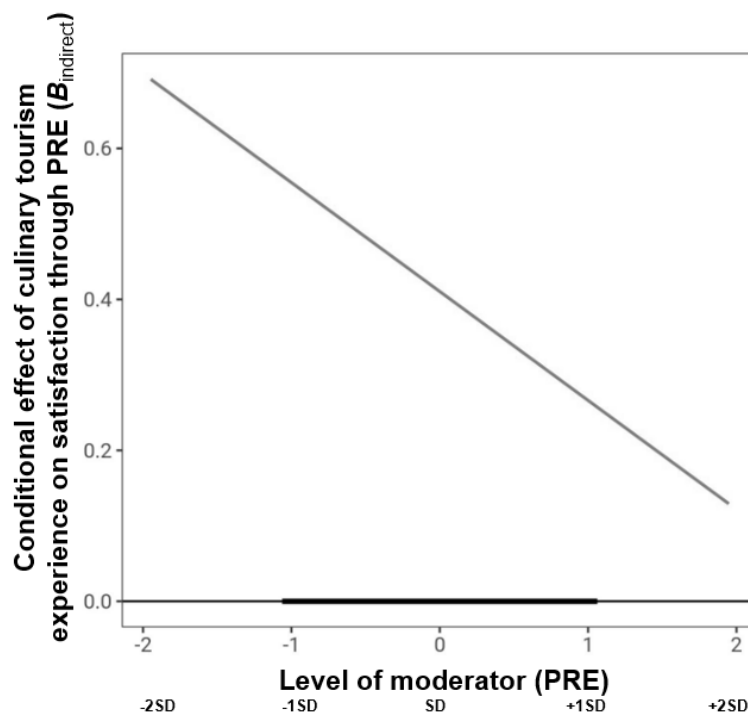


Figure 32: Johnson-Neyman diagram for the conditional effect of culinary tourism experience on satisfaction through PRE

Furthermore, the moderation analysis shows that the conditional effect of culinary tourism experiences on memorability through PRE is highest at low levels of PRE (mean -1SD: $B_{\text{indirect}}=.57$, $SE=.05$, 95% CI [.47;.67]), is lower at intermediate levels (at mean: $B_{\text{indirect}}=.39$, $SE=.04$, 95% CI [.31;.48]), and lowest at high levels of PRE (mean +1SD: $B_{\text{indirect}}=.22$, $SE=.05$, 95% CI [.13;.31]). Figure 33 shows this conditional effect of culinary tourism experience on memorability through PRE in a Johnson-Neyman diagram.

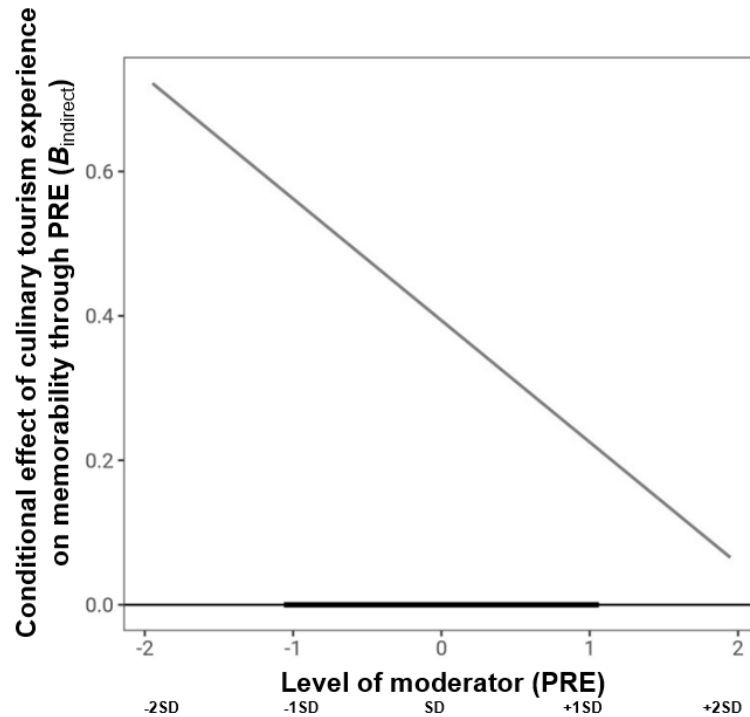


Figure 33: Johnson-Neyman diagram for the conditional effect of culinary tourism experience on memorability through PRE

Finally, the moderation analysis shows that the conditional effect of culinary tourism experiences on restoration through PRE is lowest at low levels of PRE (mean -SD: $B_{\text{indirect}}=.24$, $SE=.05$, 95% CI [.13;.34]), is stronger at intermediate levels (at mean: $B_{\text{indirect}}=.34$, $SE=.05$, 95% CI [.25;.44]), and is strongest at high levels of PRE (mean +1SD: $B_{\text{indirect}}=.44$, $SE=.05$, 95% CI [.34;.55]). Figure 34 shows this conditional effect of culinary tourism experience on restoration through PRE in a Johnson-Neyman diagram.

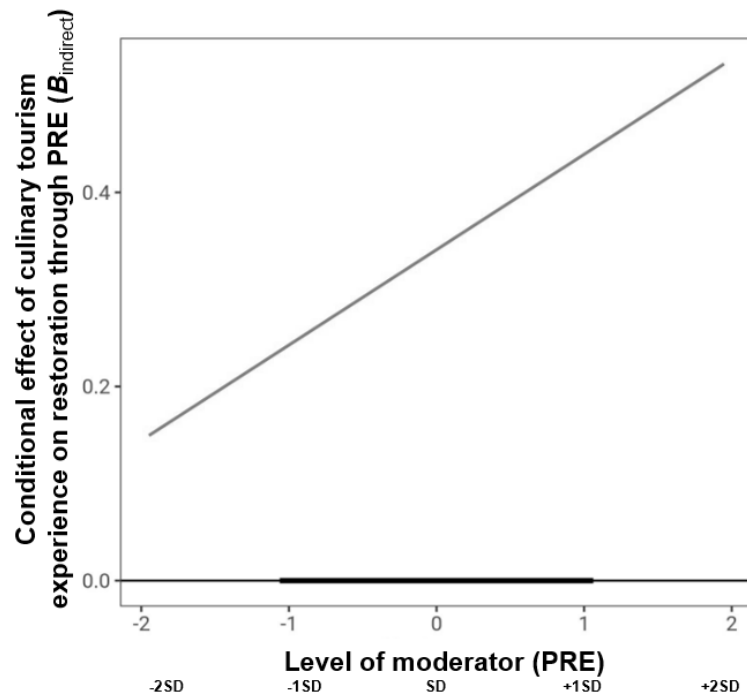


Figure 34: Johnson-Neyman diagram for the conditional effect of culinary tourism experience on restoration through PRE

The moderation analysis therefore confirms that PRE significantly moderates the relationships between 1) culinary experiences and restoration, 2) culinary experiences and satisfaction, and 3) culinary experiences and memorability. While the positive effect of culinary tourism experiences on restoration strengthens as PRE increases, the positive effect on memorability and satisfaction decreases as PRE increases, leading to the decision to accept H5_a, but to reject H5_b and H5_c.

The results suggest that culinary tourism experiences are most effective at providing restoration in highly restorative settings. Nevertheless, their impact on memorability and satisfaction is slightly weaker in highly restorative environments, as the interaction effect of culinary experiences and PRE is less impactful here. Vice versa, in less restorative settings, culinary experiences seem to stand out more, thus making them more memorable and satisfying.

In order to test a potential moderation effect of PRE on the direct relationship between culinary experiences and behavioural outcomes, Hayes PROCESS Model 8 was used. The result shows that there is no significant moderation effect of PRE on the direct relationship between culinary experiences and behavioural outcomes ($B=.05$, $t(6, 1457)=1.21$, $p>.05$). Therefore, it can be concluded that a significant moderating role of PRE does only exist for the relationship between culinary experiences and the three mediators restoration, satisfaction and memorability.

When including age as a continuous covariate in the model described above (Hayes PROCESS Model 7), it can be seen that while four paths are not affected by age as a covariate (culinary tourism experience → satisfaction; culinary tourism experience →

memorability; culinary tourism experience → behaviour), the path culinary tourism experience on restoration is affected by age ($B=-.01$, $t(4, 1459)=-4.37$, $p<.001$).

Further analyses based on categorical comparisons using three age groups (<26 yrs. “Y” vs. 26-45 yrs. “M” vs. >45 yrs. “O”) show differences in B values based on age groups ($B_Y=.34$, $t(3, 839)=5.47$, $p<.001$; $B_M=.43$, $t(3, 295)=3.66$, $p<.001$; $B_O=.24$, $t(3, 318)=2.58$, $p<.05$), leading to the assumption that culinary tourism experiences greatly contribute to restoration effects in medium followed by younger age groups compared to older age groups. At the same time, the effect of PRE, as well as the interaction effect of culinary tourism experiences and PRE, is more pronounced in the medium and older age groups (<26 yrs.: $B_Y=.70$, $t(3, 839)=12.66$, $p<.001$; $B_{INT\_Y}=.07$, $t(3, 839)=1.98$, $p<.05$; 26-45 yrs.: $B_M=.61$, $t(3, 295)=5.71$, $p<.001$; $B_{INT\_M}=.15$, $t(3, 295)=3.80$, $p<.001$; >45 yrs.: $B_O=.84$, $t(3, 318)=8.80$, $p<.001$; $B_{INT\_O}=.12$, $t(3, 318)=2.36$, $p<.05$).

When gender was included as a covariate, no statistically significant effects related to gender (male, female, or non-disclosed) were found for any of the paths.

The role of contextual variables as multicategorical antecedents

To investigate the role of different experience contexts and tourism settings, a moderated mediation analysis using model 9 (see Hayes, Montoya, & Rockwood, 2017) was used. Hereby, experience type, destination type and tourism setting were treated as a second moderator (Z) in each analysis. Therefore, a multicategorical moderation scenario was used. Performing these PROCESS analyses with multicategorical antecedents reveals statistically significant effects for the type of experience (observational vs. experiential vs. participative vs. mixed), destination type of the culinary tourism experience (rural/countryside vs. urban/city vs. mixed) as well as the setting (restaurant setting, purchase-oriented setting, experience-oriented/staged setting, mixed) as additional moderators (Z) using indicator coding, as described below:

Experience type

Table 34 summarises the different effects when investigating the experience type (observational vs. experiential vs. participative vs. mixed) as a multicategorical antecedent (Z) using indicator coding as shown in Table 33:

Experience type	Z1	Z2	Z3
Observational	0	0	0
Experiential	1	0	0
Participative	0	1	0
Mixed	0	0	1

Table 33: Indicator coding using experience type as a multicategorical antecedent (Z)

As shown in Table 34 (and Appendixes 9 and 12), results indicate that the experience type plays a limited role in this context: experiential experiences (compared to observational experiences) enhance memorability (Z1: $B=.21$, $t(9, 1451)=2.48$, $p<.05$), as well as and satisfaction levels to a greater extent (Z1: $B=.26$, $t(9, 1451)=3.04$, $p<.01$). Conversely, experiential experiences are associated with significantly lower restoration

effects compared to observational experiences (Z1: $B=-.24$, $t(9, 1451)=-2.82$, $p<.01$). However, no further statistically significant direct effects or interaction effects with culinary experience were observed.

To conclude, the analysis shows that experiential experiences greatly enhance memorability and satisfaction levels but result in lower restoration outcomes compared to observational experiences. Participative and mixed experiences do not significantly differ from observational experiences in their impact on the measured outcomes.

Predictors	B	SE	t	p
Outcome: Memorability (R ² =.53, p<.001)				
Culinary tourism experiences	.53	.12	4.34	<.001
PRE	.49	.04	12.62	<.001
Cul. tourism experiences x PRE	-.17	.02	-7.22	<.001
Z1	.21	.08	2.48	<.05
Z2	.25	.14	1.72	>.05
Z3	-.01	.15	-.06	>.05
Cul. tourism experience x Z1	-.14	.12	-1.18	>.05
Cul. tourism experience x Z2	-.30	.19	-1.62	>.05
Cul. tourism experience x Z3	.00	.17	.03	>.05
Outcome: Satisfaction (R ² =.45, p<.001)				
Culinary tourism experiences	.45	.12	3.60	<.001
PRE	.37	.04	9.13	<.001
Cul. tourism experiences x PRE	-.15	.03	-4.80	<.001
Z1	.26	.09	3.04	<.01
Z2	.15	.14	1.07	>.05
Z3	.15	.15	1.00	>.05
Cul. tourism experience x Z1	-.04	.12	-.36	>.05
Cul. tourism experience x Z2	-.07	.16	-.45	>.05
Cul. tourism experience x Z3	.13	.18	.75	>.05
Outcome: Restoration (R ² =.48, p<.001)				
Culinary tourism experiences	.24	.09	2.67	<.01
PRE	.70	.04	16.16	<.001
Cul. tourism experiences x PRE	.10	.02	4.66	<.001
Z1	-.24	.09	-2.82	<.01
Z2	-.00	.15	-.01	>.05
Z3	-.02	.14	-.16	>.05
Cul. tourism experience x Z1	.13	.09	1.45	>.05
Cul. tourism experience x Z2	-.02	.17	-.14	>.05
Cul. tourism experience x Z3	-.07	.15	-.49	>.05
Outcome: Behaviour (R ² =.56, p<.001)				
Culinary tourism experiences	.45	.04	11.16	<.001
Restoration	.30	.02	13.83	<.001
Memorability	.16	.03	4.77	<.001
Satisfaction	.08	.03	2.63	<.01
Direct effect of Culinary tourism experiences on Behaviour				
B=.45, SE=.04, 95% CI [.37;.53]				
Conditional Indirect Effects of Culinary tourism experiences on Behaviour through Memory				
PRE	Effect	Boot LLC	Boot ULC	
Observational				
-1.04	.11	.06	.17	
.00	.08	.04	.13	
1.04	.05	.02	.10	

Table 34 Continued				
		<i>Experiential</i>		
-1.04	.09		.05	.13
.00	.06		.03	.09
1.04	.03		.01	.05
		<i>Participative</i>		
-1.04	.06		.02	.12
.00	.04		-.00	.08
1.04	.01		-.03	.05
		<i>Mixed</i>		
-1.04	.11		.06	.18
.00	.08		.04	.14
1.04	.06		.02	.11
Conditional Indirect Effects of Culinary tourism experiences on Behaviour through Satisfaction				
PRE	Effect		Boot LLC	Boot ULC
		<i>Observational</i>		
-1.04	.05		.01	.09
.00	.04		.01	.07
1.04	.02		.00	.05
		<i>Experiential</i>		
-1.04	.05		.01	.08
.00	.03		.01	.06
1.04	.02		.01	.04
		<i>Participative</i>		
-1.04	.04		.01	.08
.00	.03		.01	.06
1.04	.02		.00	.05
		<i>Mixed</i>		
-1.04	.06		.02	.12
.00	.05		.01	.10
1.04	.04		.01	.07
Conditional Indirect Effects of Culinary tourism experiences on Behaviour through Restoration				
PRE	Effect		Boot LLC	Boot ULC
		<i>Observational</i>		
-1.04	.04		-.01	.10
.00	.07		.02	.13
1.04	.11		.05	.16
		<i>Experiential</i>		
-1.04	.08		.05	.12
.00	.11		.08	.15
1.04	.15		.11	.19
		<i>Participative</i>		
-1.04	.03		-.05	.12
.00	.07		-.01	.15
1.04	.10		.02	.18
		<i>Mixed</i>		
-1.04	.02		-.06	.10
.00	.05		-.02	.15
1.04	.08		.01	.17

Table 34: Testing for moderated parallel mediation between culinary tourism experiences and behaviour using the experience type as a multicategorical moderator (Z)

n=1,461. CI=confidence interval. HAYES PROCESS Model 9 (Hayes, 2013). Bootstrap sample=5,000. The table reports unstandardised coefficients (B). Significant (p<.001, p.01, p<.05) coefficients in bold.

Destination type

Table 36 summarises the different effects when investigating the destination type (rural/countryside vs. urban/city vs. mixed) as a multicategorical antecedent (Z) using indicator coding as shown in Table 35:

Destination type	Z1	Z2
Rural/countryside	0	0
Urban/city	1	0
Mixed	0	1

Table 35: Indicator coding using destination type as a multicategorical antecedent (Z)

As shown in Table 36 (and Appendixes 10 and 13), results indicate that the destination type plays a certain role in this context: The results show that the direct effect of destination type on memorability is significantly higher for urban/city destinations compared to rural/countryside destinations (Z1: $B=.19$, $t(7, 1448)=4.01$, $p<.001$), suggesting that urban/city destinations are associated with higher memorability than rural/countryside destinations. However, no statistically significant differences are observed when comparing mixed destinations to rural ones (Z2: $B=-.07$, $t(7, 1448)=-.67$, $p>.05$). Taking the interaction effect between culinary tourism experiences and destination type into consideration, a significant negative interaction is found ($B=-0.22$, $t(7, 1448)=-4.02$, $p<.001$), suggesting that the positive effect of culinary tourism experiences on memorability is weaker in urban/city destinations compared to rural/countryside destinations. This means that while both settings induce effects on memorability, the enhancement is less pronounced for culinary tourism experiences in urban/city settings. For the outcome variable satisfaction, the direct effect of destination type on satisfaction is not significantly different for any destination type. Nevertheless, considering the interaction effect between culinary tourism experiences and destination type, a significant negative interaction is observed for urban/city destinations again ($B=-.19$, $t(7, 1448)=-3.03$, $p<.01$). This suggests that the positive effect of culinary tourism experiences on satisfaction is also less pronounced in urban/city destinations compared to rural/countryside destinations. In other words, the effect of culinary experiences on tourist satisfaction and memorability is smaller for urban/city settings when compared to rural areas. Finally, no significant direct or interaction effects were found for the outcome variable restoration.

To summarise, the analysis indicates that culinary tourism experiences have a greater positive effect on memorability in rural/countryside destinations compared to urban/city destinations. This is evidenced by the significant negative interaction between culinary tourism experiences and urban/city destination type ($B=-.22$, $t(7, 1448)=-4.02$, $p<.001$). For satisfaction, a similar pattern is observed: the positive effect of culinary experiences on satisfaction is weaker in urban/city destinations, as indicated by the significant negative interaction term ($B=-.19$, $t(7, 1448)=-3.03$, $p<.01$). Conversely, the effect of culinary tourism experiences on restoration appears universal across all settings, with no significant interaction effects found between culinary experiences and destination type for restoration. Therefore, culinary tourism experiences significantly enhance memorability and satisfaction to a greater extent in rural/countryside destinations than in urban/city destinations, while their effect on restoration remains consistent regardless of destination type.

Predictors	B	SE	t	p
Outcome: Memorability (R ² =.54, p<.001)				
Culinary tourism experiences	.52	.05	10.29	<.001
PRE	.50	.04	12.89	<.001
Cul. tourism experiences x PRE	-.17	.02	-7.78	<.001
Z1	.19	.05	4.01	<.001
Z2	-.07	.10	-.67	>.05
Cul. tourism experience x Z1	-.22	.06	-4.02	<.001
Cul. tourism experience x Z2	-.08	.11	-.75	>.05
Outcome: Satisfaction (R ² =.45, p<.001)				
Culinary tourism experiences	.53	.06	9.49	<.001
PRE	.38	.04	9.10	<.001
Cul. tourism experiences x PRE	-.15	.03	-5.08	<.001
Z1	.08	.05	1.69	>.05
Z2	-.23	.13	-1.75	>.05
Cul. tourism experience x Z1	-.19	.06	-3.03	<.01
Cul. tourism experience x Z2	.01	.15	.08	>.05
Outcome: Restoration (R ² =.47, p<.001)				
Culinary tourism experiences	.35	.06	6.07	<.001
PRE	.70	.04	16.17	<.001
Cul. tourism experiences x PRE	.10	.02	4.55	<.001
Z1	.08	.06	1.40	>.05
Z2	.12	.11	1.07	>.05
Cul. tourism experience x Z1	-.02	.06	-.26	>.05
Cul. tourism experience x Z2	-.11	.10	-1.10	>.05
Outcome: Behaviour (R ² =.56, p<.001)				
Culinary tourism experiences	.45	.04	11.07	<.001
Restoration	.31	.02	13.88	<.001
Memorability	.16	.03	4.76	<.001
Satisfaction	.08	.03	2.64	<.01
Direct effect of Culinary tourism experiences on Behaviour				
B=.45, SE=.04, 95% CI [.37;.52]				
Conditional Indirect Effects of Culinary tourism experiences on Behaviour through Memory				
PRE	Effect	Boot LLC	Boot ULC	
Rural/countryside				
-1.04	.11	.07	.16	
.00	.08	.05	.12	
1.04	.05	.03	.08	
Urban/city				
-1.04	.08	.04	.11	
.00	.05	.03	.07	
1.04	.02	.00	.04	
Mixed				
-1.04	.10	.05	.15	
.00	.07	.03	.12	
1.04	.04	.01	.08	
Conditional Indirect Effects of Culinary tourism experiences on Behaviour through Satisfaction				
PRE	Effect	Boot LLC	Boot ULC	
Rural/countryside				
-1.04	.06	.02	.10	
.00	.04	.01	.08	
1.04	.03	.01	.06	
Urban/city				
-1.04	.04	.01	.07	
.00	.03	.01	.05	
1.04	.01	.00	.03	

Table 36 Continued				
		<i>Mixed</i>		
-1.04	.06		.02	.10
.00	.04		.01	.09
1.04	.03		.01	.07
Conditional Indirect Effects of Culinary tourism experiences on Behaviour through Restoration				
PRE	Effect		Boot LLC	Boot ULC
		<i>Rural/countryside</i>		
-1.04	.08		.04	.11
.00	.11		.07	.15
1.04	.14		.10	.18
		<i>Urban/city</i>		
-1.04	.07		.04	.11
.00	.10		.07	.14
1.04	.14		.10	.18
		<i>Mixed</i>		
-1.04	.04		-.01	.10
.00	.08		.02	.13
1.04	.11		.05	.17

Table 36: Testing for moderated parallel mediation between culinary tourism experiences and behaviour using the destination type as a multicategorical moderator (Z)
n=1,461. CI=confidence interval. HAYES PROCESS Model 9 (Hayes, 2013). Bootstrap sample=5,000. The table reports unstandardised coefficients (B). Significant ($p<.001$, $p<.01$, $p<.05$) coefficients in bold.

Tourism setting

Table 38 summarises the different effects when investigating the tourism setting (restaurant setting, purchase-oriented setting, experience-oriented/staged setting, mixed) as a multicategorical antecedent (Z) using indicator coding as shown in Table 37:

Tourism setting	Z1	Z2	Z3
Restaurant setting	0	0	0
Purchase-oriented setting	1	0	0
Experience-oriented/staged setting	0	1	0
Mixed	0	0	1

Table 37: Indicator coding using tourism setting type as a multicategorical antecedent (Z)

Finally, as shown in Table 38 (and Appendixes 11 and 14), the tourism setting also plays a role in this context: The results imply that the tourism setting has a significant negative effect on memorability for experience-oriented/staged settings compared to restaurant settings (Z2: $B=-.19$, $t(9, 1384)=-2.07$, $p<.05$) and for mixed settings compared to restaurant settings (Z3: $B=-.19$, $t(9, 1384)=-3.33$, $p<.001$). However, no statistically significant difference is observed when comparing purchase-oriented settings to restaurant settings (Z1: $B=-.02$, $t(9, 1384)=-.21$, $p>.05$). Furthermore, no statistically significant interaction effects are observed here, suggesting that the tourism setting does not influence the relationship between culinary tourism experiences and memorability. For satisfaction, similar patterns emerge: The tourism setting has a significant negative effect on satisfaction for experience-oriented/staged settings compared to restaurant settings (Z2: $B=-.25$, $t(9, 1384)=-2.34$, $p<.05$) and for mixed settings compared to restaurant settings (Z3: $B=-.34$, $t(9, 1384)=-6.15$, $p<.001$). However, no statistically significant difference is observed here when comparing purchase-oriented

settings to restaurant settings (Z1: $B=-.07$, $t(9, 1384)=-.71$, $p>.05$). Finally, when considering the interaction effect between culinary tourism experiences and tourism setting, a significant result is observed for mixed settings ($B=.17$, $t(9, 1384)=2.30$, $p<.05$), suggesting that the positive effect of culinary tourism experiences on satisfaction is enhanced in mixed settings compared to restaurant settings, indicating moderation by the tourism setting. Finally, an investigation of the outcome variable restoration for different tourism settings shows that the tourism setting has a significantly higher positive effect for mixed settings compared to restaurant settings (Z3: $B=.36$, $t(9, 1384)=6.06$, $p<.001$). However, no statistically significant interaction effects are observed here, suggesting similar effects for the relationship between culinary and restoration regardless of the setting. This implies that the tourism setting does not moderate the relationship between culinary experiences and restoration.

Predictors	B	SE	t	p
Outcome: Memorability (R ² = .53, p<.001)				
Culinary tourism experiences	.37	.05	7.66	<.001
PRE	.52	.04	13.10	<.001
Cul. tourism experiences x PRE	-.19	.03	-7.57	<.001
Z1	-.02	.10	-.21	>.05
Z2	-.19	.09	-2.07	<.05
Z3	-.19	.56	-3.32	<.001
Cul. tourism experience x Z1	-.05	.10	-.48	>.05
Cul. tourism experience x Z2	.00	.11	.01	>.05
Cul. tourism experience x Z3	.04	.08	.55	>.05
Outcome: Satisfaction (R ² = .47, p<.001)				
Culinary tourism experiences	.37	.06	6.49	<.001
PRE	.39	.04	9.54	<.001
Cul. tourism experiences x PRE	-.18	.03	-6.20	<.001
Z1	-.07	.09	-.71	>.05
Z2	-.25	.11	-2.34	<.05
Z3	-.34	.06	-6.15	<.001
Cul. tourism experience x Z1	-.13	.12	-1.09	>.05
Cul. tourism experience x Z2	.12	.11	1.13	>.05
Cul. tourism experience x Z3	.17	.08	2.30	<.05
Outcome: Restoration (R ² = .49, p<.001)				
Culinary tourism experiences	.31	.06	5.51	<.001
PRE	.72	.04	16.24	<.001
Cul. tourism experiences x PRE	.10	.02	4.53	<.001
Z1	.16	.12	1.29	>.05
Z2	-.09	.11	-.80	>.05
Z3	.36	.06	6.06	<.001
Cul. tourism experience x Z1	.14	.12	1.11	>.05
Cul. tourism experience x Z2	.01	.11	.10	>.05
Cul. tourism experience x Z3	-.03	.06	-.39	>.05
Outcome: Behaviour (R ² = .56, p<.001)				
Culinary tourism experiences	.44	.04	10.49	<.001
Restoration	.30	.02	13.44	<.001
Memorability	.16	.03	4.85	<.001
Satisfaction	.07	.03	2.61	<.05
Direct effect of Culinary tourism experiences on Behaviour				
B=.44, SE=.04, 95% CI [.36;.53]				
Conditional Indirect Effects of Culinary tourism experiences on Behaviour through Memory				
PRE	Effect	Boot LLC	Boot ULC	
Restaurant setting				
-1.04	.09	.05	.13	
.00	.06	.03	.09	
1.04	.03	.01	.05	

Table 38 Continued			
	<i>Purchase-oriented setting</i>		
-1.04	.08	.04	.13
.00	.05	.02	.09
1.04	.02	-.01	.06
	<i>Experience-oriented/staged setting</i>		
-1.04	.09	.05	.14
.00	.06	.03	.10
1.04	.03	.00	.06
	<i>Mixed</i>		
-1.04	.10	.06	.15
.00	.07	.04	.10
1.04	.04	.01	.07
Conditional Indirect Effects of Culinary tourism experiences on Behaviour through Satisfaction			
PRE	Effect	Boot LLC	Boot ULC
	<i>Restaurant setting</i>		
-1.04	.04	.01	.08
.00	.03	.00	.05
1.04	.01	.00	.03
	<i>Purchase-oriented setting</i>		
-1.04	.03	.00	.07
.00	.02	.00	.04
1.04	.00	-.01	.02
	<i>Experience-oriented/staged setting</i>		
-1.04	.05	.01	.09
.00	.04	.00	.07
1.04	.02	.00	.05
	<i>Mixed</i>		
-1.04	.05	.01	.10
.00	.04	.01	.07
1.04	.03	.00	.05
Conditional Indirect Effects of Culinary tourism experiences on Behaviour through Restoration			
PRE	Effect	Boot LLC	Boot ULC
	<i>Restaurant setting</i>		
-1.04	.07	.03	.10
.00	.10	.06	.13
1.04	.12	.08	.16
	<i>Purchase-oriented setting</i>		
-1.04	.11	.04	.17
.00	.14	.07	.20
1.04	.17	.07	.20
	<i>Experience-oriented/staged setting</i>		
-1.04	.07	.01	.14
.00	.10	.04	.16
1.04	.13	.07	.19
	<i>Mixed</i>		
-1.04	.06	.02	.10
.00	.09	.05	.13
1.04	.12	.08	.16

Table 38: Testing for moderated parallel mediation between culinary tourism experiences and behaviour using the tourism setting as a multicategorical moderator (Z)
n=1,461. CI=confidence interval. HAYES PROCESS Model 9 (Hayes, 2013). Bootstrap sample=5,000. The table reports unstandardised coefficients (B). Significant (p<.001, p.01, p<.05) coefficients in bold.

Therefore, only a few moderation effects based on experience type, destination type and the tourism setting were detected: The experience type does not moderate any

relationships between culinary experiences and the investigated outcome variables. Regarding destination type, culinary tourism experiences have a greater positive effect on memorability and satisfaction in rural/countryside destinations compared to urban/city destinations, while their effect on restoration remains consistent across all settings. Finally, for different tourism settings, the only notable effect is the enhanced positive impact of culinary tourism experiences on satisfaction in mixed settings, with no further moderation observed for other relationships.

Immediate outcomes of culinary tourism experiences and their correlations

For testing hypotheses H6, H7 and H8, Pearson's correlation coefficients were computed to assess the strength of the relationships between satisfaction and memorability (H6), restoration and satisfaction (H7) and restoration and memorability (H8). The following table (Table 39) summarises all correlation analyses and shows that all hypotheses are to be accepted.

	Recalled restoration	Satisfaction	Memory
Recalled restoration	1	.40**	.47**
Satisfaction	.40**	1	.70**
Memory	.47**	.70**	1

Table 39: Testing correlation between restoration, satisfaction and memory
n=1,464. ** correlation is significant at the <.01 level (1-tailed)

According to these analyses, there is a moderate positive correlation between recalled restoration and satisfaction, which implies that restorative culinary experiences can enhance tourists' satisfaction, and vice versa, satisfying experiences are perceived as restorative. Furthermore, a moderate to strong positive correlation between recalled restoration and memory was found, suggesting that when individuals feel restored, they are more likely to remember the culinary experience better. Finally, there is a strong positive correlation between satisfaction and memory, providing evidence that satisfying culinary experiences are much more likely to be remembered well and that the level of satisfaction plays a crucial role in how well a culinary experience is recalled.

Effects of culinary tourism experiences on individual behavioural outcomes

For testing H1_a, H1_b and H1_c, regression analyses were performed to investigate whether culinary tourism experiences positively impact the product-related economic impact beyond the journey, loyalty and advocacy. For this, a simple linear regression analysis was conducted to evaluate the extent to which culinary tourism experiences could predict product-related economic impact beyond the journey as one specific behavioural outcome. A significant regression was found ($B=.89$, $F(1, 1462)=298.40$, $p<.001$). The adjusted R^2 is .17, indicating that the culinary tourism experience explained approximately 17% of the variance in economic impact. A further simple linear regression analysis investigating the extent to which culinary tourism experiences could predict loyalty also shows a significant result ($B=.91$, $F(1, 1462)=753.40$, $p<.001$). The adjusted R^2 is .34, indicating that culinary tourism experience explained approximately 34% of the variance in loyalty. Finally, a simple linear regression analysis investigating the extent to which culinary tourism experiences could predict advocacy as one specific behavioural outcome also shows a significant result

($B=.92$, $F(1, 1462)=881.61$, $p<.001$). The adjusted R^2 is .38, indicating that culinary tourism experience explained approximately 38% of the variance in advocacy. Therefore, H1_a, H1_b and H1_c can be accepted. Figure 35 summarises the results related to testing for moderated mediation and the hypotheses tests for study 5.

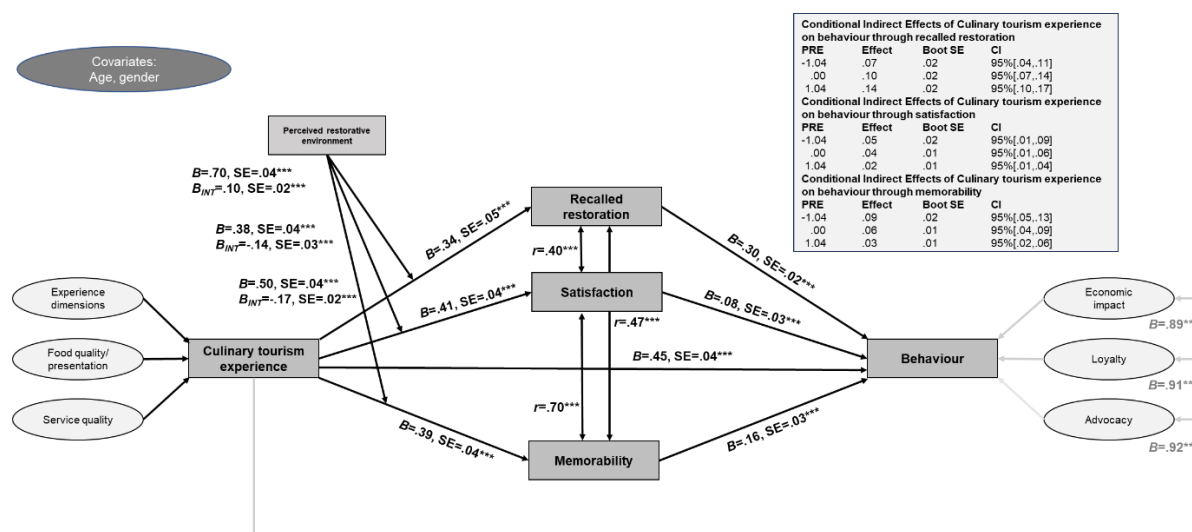


Figure 35: Testing for moderated parallel mediation (study 5)

$n=1,461$. CI=confidence interval. HAYES PROCESS Model 7 (Hayes, 2013). Bootstrap sample=5,000. Linear regression (method: enter). The figure reports unstandardised coefficients (B). Significant (** $p<.001$, ** $p.01$, * $p<.05$) coefficients in bold.

Table 40 summarises all outcomes related to the model and hypotheses tests presented above.

Serial no.	Hypotheses	Analysis	Test statistic	p value	Results
H1	CUL_EXP→ BEHAVIOUR	Direct effect test, PROCESS macro, Model 7	$B=.45$	<.001	Supported
H1 _a	CUL_EXP→ ECONOMIC IMPACT	Simple linear re- gression analysis	$B=.89$	<.001	Supported
H1 _b	CUL_EXP→LOYALTY	Simple linear re- gression analysis	$B=.91$	<.001	Supported
H1 _c	CUL_EXP→ADVO- CACY	Simple linear re- gression analysis	$B=.92$	<.001	Supported
H2 _a	CUL_EXP→SAT	Mediation test, PROCESS macro, Model 7	$B=.41$	<.001	Supported
H2 _b	SAT→BEHAVIOUR	Mediation test, PROCESS macro, Model 7	$B=.08$	<.001	Supported
H3 _a	CUL_EXP→MEM	Mediation test, PROCESS macro, Model 7	$B=.39$	<.001	Supported
H3 _b	MEM→ BEHAVIOUR	Mediation test, PROCESS macro, Model 7	$B=.16$	<.001	Supported
H4 _a	CUL_EXP→REST	Mediation test, PROCESS macro, Model 7	$B=.34$	<.001	Supported
H4 _b	REST→ BEHAVIOUR	Mediation test, PROCESS macro, Model 7	$B=.30$	<.001	Supported
H5 _a	CUL_EXPxPRE→REST	Moderation test, PROCESS macro, Model 7	$B_{INT}=.10$	<.001	Supported
H5 _b	CUL_EXPxPRE→SAT	Moderation test, PROCESS macro, Model 7	$B_{INT}=-.14$	<.001	Rejected
H5 _c	CUL_EXPxPRE→MEM	Moderation test, PROCESS macro, Model 7	$B_{INT}=-.17$	<.001	Rejected
H6	SAT↔MEM	Pearson's correla- tion test	$r=.70$	<.001	Supported
H7	REST↔SAT	Pearson's correla- tion test	$r=.40$	<.001	Supported
H8	REST↔MEM	Pearson's correla- tion test	$r=.47$	<.001	Supported

Table 40: Results of survey hypotheses tests

4.5.4 Discussion

Service quality

Overall, the respondents assessed service quality for their most memorable culinary tourism experience as very high, with the highest evaluations for the aspect of staff friendliness. When investigating the results for different destination types, it can be seen that rural/countryside destinations are perceived to offer higher service quality

overall and a higher rating in the level of customisation specifically. It seems that these settings offer more opportunities to provide a tailored experience compared to urban environments, supporting the findings of Lo, Mohamad, Songan, & Yeo (2012), who emphasised the significant impact of service quality on tourist satisfaction in rural tourism.

When investigating different tourism settings, it can be seen that the highest overall service quality ratings were achieved in restaurant and experience-oriented/staged settings. In this study, it was furthermore shown that restaurant and experience-oriented/stages settings perform better in all three measured service quality dimensions compared to mixed and purchase-oriented settings. This emphasises the importance of reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy, in addition to the tangibles of a restaurant setting, as suggested by Stevens, Knutson, & Patton's (1995) DINESERV scale for measuring service quality in restaurants. Furthermore, Madanoglu (2004) already emphasised staff behaviour and attitude as the most important factors in determining service quality in restaurant settings besides physical quality.

Experience dimensions

When investigating the results related to the assessment of the four experience dimensions, it becomes evident that esthetics are the highest-rated dimension in culinary tourism experiences. Entertainment, education, and escapism are also important but rank lower. This hierarchy underscores the importance of a visually appealing environment to enhance the overall culinary tourism experience.

When comparing this result to the studies of Kastenholz, Carneiro, Marques, and Loureiro (2018) on rural tourism as well as to Oh, Fiore, and Jeoung (2007) on bed-and-breakfast tourism, the four dimensions rank as follows in these studies (according to their mean values): esthetics, education, entertainment, and escapism. This study on culinary tourism experiences found similarities in the esthetics and escapism dimensions but ranked entertainment higher than education, which aligns with the findings of Hosany & Witham (2010) on cruise ship experiences. The higher ranking of the entertainment dimension in the context of culinary tourism may be attributed to the engaging and entertaining nature of such experiences, which resemble those of cruising. Culinary tourism experiences very often involve enjoyable activities such as tastings, live cooking demonstrations, interactive food preparation, and themed events. This focus on entertainment might be due to the fact that culinary tourism experiences are naturally more about enjoyment than education. While a few culinary travellers may seek to learn about new cuisines and cooking techniques, the educational dimension appears to be less emphasised in culinary tourism.

When comparing culinary tourism in general to wine tourism specifically, it also seems that the educational aspect is less pronounced in the broader context of culinary tourism. The educational aspect of wine tourism has been well documented in many earlier studies (e.g., Quadri-Felitti & Fiore, 2013; Ali-Knight & Charters, 2003), leading to the assumption that wine tourists often travel because they want to gain specific knowledge. In contrast, average culinary tourists seem to prioritise other experiences, such as sensory enjoyment, over learning, emphasising the results related to the entertainment dimension again.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the primary focus is more on enjoyment and the immediate sensory experience rather than learning. However, the context and setting also have to be considered, which reinforces the findings of the focus group discussions. The results therefore confirm Oh, Fiore, & Jeoung's (2007) viewpoint that travellers might seek and expect different experiential attributes in various tourism contexts, influenced by the primary or secondary emphasis of destinations' marketing efforts and travellers' motivations. Similarly, Rasoolimanesh, Seyfi, Rather, and Hall (2022) emphasise that tourism experiences are highly context-based and also specific to each destination.

It was also shown that restaurant settings are significantly better rated in the esthetics dimension. The tourism literature also addresses the importance of esthetics of dining experiences: Horng & Hsu (2021) have demonstrated that esthetic stimulation in dining experiences influences behavioural intentions, recommending that great emphasis should be placed on a restaurant's atmosphere and visual appeal.

The entertainment and education dimensions are evaluated better in experience-oriented/staged settings, suggesting that these settings are more effective at engaging travellers and providing informative experiences. This indicates that such settings are more likely designed to educate guests through interactive and immersive activities, providing a conducive, pleasant overall visitor experience. The results therefore suggest that these settings function similarly to visitor (information) centres as classified by Pearce (2004): they do not only inform about and promote local offers but also provide orientation and enhancement services and interpret and stage the experience. In the same vein, Ballantyne, Hughes, & Ritchie (2009) highlight that travellers to visitor centres expect to receive information about local offerings and attractions and recommend that all visitor centres fulfill the basic functions of promotion and information. The same can be recommended for experience-oriented/staged culinary tourism settings based on the results of this study: Since visitors expect to be entertained and informed, these settings need to be designed to facilitate educational and entertaining experiences.

Finally, the type of culinary tourism experience affects different experience realms besides the setting: Based on the assessment of different experience types, participants find experiential, participative, and mixed experiences more esthetically pleasing than purely observational ones, suggesting that the afore-mentioned experiences need to place a strong emphasis on creating visually appealing environments and presentations.

It was shown that observational, participative, and mixed experiences evoke significantly higher educational experiences than experiential experiences. This leads to the assumption that such experiences often include learning opportunities. In contrast, experiential experiences might be more immersive and focus more on sensory and emotional aspects rather than educational content.

A greater sense of escapism can be triggered in observational, participative, and mixed settings compared to purely experiential settings. This could be due to the fact that the immersive nature of participative activities such as cooking classes provides a greater sense of escape, novelty and sensorial engagement (see e.g., Kokkranikal & Carabelli,

2024). Finally, the evaluation for entertainment is consistent across all types of culinary experiences, indicating that they are all perceived as equally entertaining.

Food experience and its presentation

When investigating on-site food experiences, two key factors emerge: food quality and the immediate experience, as well as food presentation and communication. The immediate experience evoked very high assessments among the participants, with the social environment and the food quality receiving particularly high evaluations. Conversely, food presentation and communication are assessed lower. Specifically, the aspects of storytelling and the opportunity to interact with the producer(s) are rated significantly worse. This indicates potential areas for further improvement and a notable gap in the presentation and communication of the food experience. Culinary tourism providers should therefore neither rely nor focus only on delivering high-quality food and creating an environment where pleasant social interactions can happen but should also enrich the experience with narratives and opportunities for guests to engage with those behind the high-quality food. This issue was also emphasised by Stockebrand, Sidali, & Spiller (2011), who noted that in Germany, farm tourism operators provide high-quality food but have limited entrepreneurial capabilities and often fail to communicate the quality of their food adequately. However, a target-group-oriented presentation and communication is highly recommended, as it can lead to a more holistic and engaging food experience. Cao, Li, DiPietro, & So (2019) identified the intellectual dimension as a significant contributor to the overall culinary experience. According to these authors, consumers can easily gain intellectual benefits from their culinary experiences through simple measures, such as using the menu as a marketing and educational tool or having employees introduce customers to different types of wines (Cao, Li, DiPietro, & So, 2019). At the same time, focus group discussions have clearly shown that such marketing and storytelling tools and opportunities to interact with producers are highly valued. Nevertheless, storytelling approaches need to be planned carefully as they might lead to over-commercialisation (Yolal, 2016). Therefore, providers need to make sure that their storytelling accurately reflects traditional and authentic culinary practices (Yolal, 2016).

Storytelling and providing culinary experiences that allow interaction with the producer(s) seem to be more effective in mixed and rural/countryside destinations. This underlines Montanari & Staniscia's (2012) considerations regarding rural destinations, suggesting that viewing local food "[...] not merely as a source of nourishment [...]" but as an element of regional development and as a tourism resource which can reinforce the strong connection to the region where the food is produced, thereby fostering sustainable regional development of rural destinations. Similarly, Slocum & Curtis (2018, p. 164) emphasise that destinations must communicate food options and experiences in a way that aligns with their brand, which involves sharing the "story" behind the food to cultivate an authentic identity.

The aspects of food and drink quality, along with the social environment, were rated highest in restaurant settings and experience-oriented/staged settings. Food quality has also been identified as a key determinant of customer experiences and satisfaction in restaurants in many earlier studies (e.g., Harrington, Ottenbacher, Staggs, & Powell, 2012; Rozekhi, Hussin, Siddiqe, Rashid, & Salmi, 2016). Additionally, this result highlights the significance of the social service scape in restaurant settings, as explored by

Hanks & Line (2018), who assert that the social service scape influences perceptions of the restaurant experience as well as resulting behavioural intentions.

The storytelling approach, as well as a clear thematic focus, are most effective in experience-oriented/staged and mixed settings. Additionally, experience-oriented/staged settings offer the best opportunities for guests to get in touch with the producer(s). These settings therefore provide, on the one hand, unique opportunities for guests to connect with producers, adding an extra layer of engagement and authenticity to the experience for culinary tourists (Sims, 2009) and on the other hand, opening new markets and diversifying the income of local producers such as farmers (Green & Dougherty, 2009).

To sum up, the findings suggest that restaurant and experience-oriented/staged settings excel in delivering high-quality food and beverages and creating a pleasant and social atmosphere that fosters interactions. Experience-oriented/staged settings, in particular, stand out for their effective use of storytelling and thematic coherence.

Perceived restorative environment and recalled restoration

Investigating the different dimensions of the perceived restorative environment reveals that the compatibility dimension received the highest assessment. This suggests that respondents found the environment highly capable of meeting their preferences and needs. This is followed by the dimension of being away, indicating that culinary tourism settings offer an opportunity for visitors to feel both mentally and physically removed from their daily routines. These two dimensions are followed by extent and, finally, fascination. The results emphasise that the compatibility dimension plays a crucial role in how restorative a culinary tourism setting is perceived, implying that when an environment aligns well with individuals' preferences and needs, it is considered highly restorative. Specifically, meeting travellers' expectations seems essential. Therefore, the recommendations based on the content analysis are to be reinforced here: culinary tourism experiences and settings need to be communicated clearly and comprehensively, as this plays a main role in shaping travellers' expectations and in ensuring the experience's compatibility. Drawing on the results of Ottenbacher, Harrington, Fauser, & Loewenhagen's (2016) expectancy-fulfillment grid approach, natural beauty, culinary aspects and quality service are primary tourism drivers in South Tyrol. In their study (*ibid.*), these attributes even exceeded high prior expectations, which resulted in positive disconfirmation. This underscores the importance of focusing on these elements in all marketing efforts, and emphasises the results of the content analysis, which revealed that official destination websites do not fully exploit marketing opportunities in this context. Therefore, it is crucial to focus on the communication of these key attributes to not only enhance the effectiveness of marketing strategies but also to address this compatibility dimension.

Drawing on the results of the focus group discussions, it seems that the sense of being away can be easily achieved in various culinary settings. Hartig, Korpela, Evans, & Garling (1997) argue that physical distance from everyday environments is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition to achieve the feeling of being away. However, geographical distance can create psychological distance from daily distractions and con-

cerns, contributing to that feeling (Hartig, Korpela, Evans, & Garling, 1997). While vacations therefore seem to offer ideal conditions for restoration, even average dining experiences at local restaurants could help to fulfill this need for being away.

When comparing different destination types, it was shown that the compatibility dimension was rated highest in rural/countryside destinations. It seems that the freedom to move around with few boundaries is especially valued in rural/countryside destinations and leads to a great perceived restorativeness of an environment. All other dimensions do not differ significantly for different destination types, which stands in contrast to the results of Laumann, Gärling, & Stormark (2001), who demonstrated that environments with nature elements score higher than city environments on all four measures (escape, extent, fascination, compatibility).

Investigating different tourism settings shows that the extent dimension was rated significantly better in experience-oriented/staged settings, while the feeling of being away was evoked most strongly in mixed, restaurant and experience-oriented/staged settings. Restaurant settings, experience-oriented/staged settings and mixed settings were assessed as the most compatible ones, while the assessment of the fascination dimension did not differ significantly among the tested settings, suggesting that all culinary tourism environments offer similar levels of fascination. To summarise, experience-oriented/staged settings are particularly effective in providing a sense of vastness or immersion due to their extent, making them more engaging for visitors. Mixed, restaurant, and experience-oriented/staged settings are particularly successful in offering visitors a break from their routine, which contributes to the feeling of being away. Overall, these findings highlight the importance of creating environments that offer freedom of movement, immersion, and a sense of escapism to enhance travellers' perceptions of the restorativeness of an environment.

The survey results confirm the focus group participants' statements that culinary tourism experiences are perceived as relaxing and restorative activities while on vacation. Culinary activities have great potential for allowing people to forget everyday worries, reinforcing the findings related to generating a sense of being away, as shown above.

Restoration effects were found to be similar for all destination types (rural/countryside vs. urban/city vs. mixed), which contrasts with the findings of Wyles et al. (2019), who suggest that visiting sites with higher environmental quality, such as rural areas, triggers greater restorative effects. The findings show that mixed tourism settings (when comparing them to restaurant, purchase-oriented and experience-oriented/staged settings) seem to provide the greatest potential for restoration, probably due to their variety. At the same time, observational experiences result in higher restoration compared to experiential experiences, likely due to the fact that passive experiences might seem more pleasant without being forced to participate actively. Nevertheless, whether travellers engage in observational, experiential, participative or mixed experiences, and whether they are in rural, urban, or mixed settings and regardless of the tourism setting, significant restoration effects are triggered by culinary tourism experiences, according to the study's results. This highlights the universal appeal and effectiveness of culinary tourism in providing restorative benefits across various contexts and activities.

Zhou, Zhou, & Li (2024) demonstrated that multisensory tourism experiences in historical and cultural districts can indirectly enhance tourists' mental restoration. They also

provided evidence that restorative environments serve as a crucial cognitive mediator between multisensory tourism experiences and mental restoration. Given that culinary tourism is inherently a multisensory experience, their recommendation “[...] to integrate local resource characteristics and create auditory, olfactory, and culinary landscapes to offer tourists a diverse range of rich and varied tourism experiences” (Zhou, Zhou, & Li, 2024, p. 2698) has to be emphasised here. Additionally, they recommend that leveraging sensory resources in culturally and naturally rich tourist destinations creates immersive multisensory experiences to specifically enhance tourists' mental health (Zhou, Zhou, & Li, 2024). Their recommendations therefore seem particularly relevant for enhancing the restorative potential of culinary tourism experiences, while also fostering the overall uniqueness of an experience.

When evaluating the impact of the four experiential dimensions of culinary tourism experiences on restoration, it is evident that education, entertainment, esthetics, escapism, food quality and experience, as well as food presentation and communication, are statistically significant and make a positive contribution to restoration. In terms of relative importance, escapism is the most crucial factor driving restoration, emphasising Smith's (2003) view that travel is primarily about escaping everyday life and environments to achieve a holistic sense of renewal for body, mind and spirit. Nevertheless, all mentioned aspects collectively enhance the restorative impact of the experience, suggesting that a well-rounded culinary experience that engages, educates, and esthetically pleases tourists while also offering an escape and high-quality food presentation plays a vital role in promoting a sense of restoration among travellers. Finally, the findings also correspond to Lin's (2014) study, which shows that the experience of cuisine affects the psychological well-being of hot spring tourists.

Besides the culinary tourism experience itself, the perceived restorative environment also impacts restoration. All four dimensions of PRE (extent, compatibility, being away, fascination) are statistically relevant and positively affect recalled restoration. Among these, the dimension of being away is the greatest driver of recalled restoration, followed by extent and fascination, which suggests that the feeling of escaping from everyday life and routines is the strongest contributor to the sense of restoration. This underlines the findings of von Lindern (2015), showing that a sense of being away greatly affected restorative outcomes while visiting a wilderness park, as well as the results of Laumann, Gärling, & Stormark (2001), proving evidence that being away predicts relaxation outcomes in different environments. This highlights the importance of providing experiences that offer a clear sense of detachment from daily stressors to feel physically and mentally away.

Memorability and satisfaction

Overall, memorability of and satisfaction with culinary tourism experiences seem to be very high among survey participants. At the same time, memorability and satisfaction are highly correlated, confirming Rasoolimanesh, Seyfi, Rather, and Hall's (2022) findings for the heritage tourism context, where higher degrees of tourist satisfaction lead to greater memorability. In the current study, it was shown that all types of experiences result in similar levels of memorability, but experiential experiences lead to greater satisfaction compared to observational experiences. Additionally, while all culinary tourism settings provide comparable levels of memorability, restaurant settings evoke the highest level of satisfaction.

When assessing the impact of the four experiential dimensions of culinary tourism experiences on memorability, it can be seen that education, entertainment, esthetics, food quality and experience, as well as service quality, are statistically relevant to memorability. All statistically relevant constructs except education make a positive contribution. In terms of relative importance, the entertainment and esthetics dimensions make the largest contributions to memorability. Therefore, it can be concluded that elements that are directly tied to enjoyment, sensory pleasure, and visual appeal tend to contribute to memorability in the culinary tourism context. Similarly, Quadri-Felitti & Fiore's (2013) results demonstrate the dominance of the esthetic experience in predicting positive memories for wine tourism experiences. Furthermore, Ali, Hussain, & Ragavan (2014) provided evidence that esthetics are an important driver of memories in the resort hotel industry. Finally, Kastenholz, Carneiro, Marques, & Loureiro's (2018) study showed that escapism determines memorability for the rural tourism experience. However, in contrast to Kastenholz, Carneiro, Marques, & Loureiro's (2018) study, escapism does not seem to greatly determine memorability in the culinary tourism context.

At the same time, education, entertainment, esthetics, food quality and experience, food presentation and communication, and service quality are statistically significant factors in determining satisfaction. Among these, all constructs, except for education and food presentation and communication, positively contribute to satisfaction. In terms of relative importance, esthetics make by far the largest contributions to satisfaction, followed by food quality and experience, which confirms earlier studies, e.g., Quadri-Felitti & Fiore' (2013) study showing that the esthetic dimension is a strong predictor of satisfaction among wine tourists, whereas escapism plays a less significant role. Based on the current study, it can be seen that elements that are more directly tied to enjoyment, visual appeal, and the quality of the food and service play a more substantial role in creating a satisfying experience for tourists, while education and food presentation/communication do not make a significant positive contribution and seem to rather disturb or distract the experience leading to a more negative assessment of overall satisfaction, e.g., interacting with producers who offer excessively long educational experiences might be perceived as annoying, resulting in lower levels of satisfaction.

Therefore, Quadri-Felitti & Fiore's (2013) recommendations related to esthetics are to be reinforced here: Tourism marketers and providers need to highlight the esthetic dimension in promotional messages and in the design of culinary tourism environments to enhance memorability and satisfaction. Nevertheless, while focusing on esthetics, it is crucial not to ignore the other dimensions (education, escapism, and entertainment). Understanding tourists' involvement with the core product offering (e.g., local food) and their motivational factors, such as relaxation, is essential, as these affect the impact of education, escapism, and entertainment in various contexts (Quadri-Felitti & Fiore, 2013).

Besides the culinary tourism experience itself, the perceived restorative environment also impacts memorability and satisfaction. All four dimensions of PRE (extent, compatibility, being away, and fascination) are statistically significant and positively impact memorability and satisfaction. Among these, compatibility emerges as the most influential driver for both memorability and satisfaction. Therefore, compatibility stands out

as the most significant factor. This indicates that a culinary tourism experience that aligns well with tourists' preferences and expectations greatly enhances both their satisfaction and the lasting impression of the experience. This confirms the importance of travellers' motivations and expectations in relation to the actual experience, as this comparison directly impacts the resulting level of traveller's satisfaction (Correia, Kozak, & Ferradeira, 2013). Consequently, tailoring the experience to meet the specific needs and desires of tourists is key to creating memorable and satisfying culinary tourism experiences.

Behavioural outcomes

The average scores for loyalty and advocacy statements suggest a strong level of both among respondents. However, economic impacts are less prevalent compared to loyalty and advocacy outcomes. Statistical analyses show no significant differences in loyalty and advocacy across various experience types, destination types, or culinary tourism settings. However, economic impacts are significantly less likely to occur with experiential experiences compared to observational ones. Additionally, mixed and experience-oriented/staged settings are more effective in generating economic benefits compared to purchase-oriented and restaurant settings.

Although purchase-oriented settings may be designed to trigger purchases and generate economic effects, it is important to recognise that their role extends beyond commerce, as suggested by Thompson (2020): These settings offer tourists the opportunity to experience regional and traditional culture and learn about local food, lifestyle, livelihoods, community, and heritage. At the same time, they provide the community with fresh produce and a space for social networking and cohesion, which can create tension. Additionally, the different purchasing behaviours of these two groups have to be acknowledged (Thompson, 2020).

For instance, Silkes (2012) investigated the motivations behind visiting farmers' markets and the potential of culinary tourism to contribute to the economic sustainability of local markets. She found that fun, relaxation, escapism, and family togetherness are the primary push factors for visiting farmers' markets. Additionally, food quality and a good shopping experience with excellent facilities are crucial for improving customer satisfaction (Silkes, 2012). Therefore, it should be acknowledged that purchase-oriented settings primarily serve as tourist attractions rather than solely being viewed as places for purchasing goods and triggering economic effects.

All in all, it can be concluded that despite high levels of loyalty and advocacy, the economic impacts of culinary tourism are less pronounced. This suggests that while visitors may be loyal and enthusiastic about their experiences, this does not always translate into substantial economic benefits. Additionally, certain types of experiences and settings are obviously more effective in translating visitor engagement into economic gains.

When assessing the impact of the four experiential dimensions of culinary tourism experiences on all studied outcome variables, it becomes clear that these dimensions vary in their relative importance in shaping different behavioural intentions. Entertainment, esthetics, escapism, food quality and experience, food presentation and communication, and service quality are statistically significant for loyalty and contribute

positively, with esthetics being the strongest driver of loyalty. This suggests that the visual and sensory appeal of the culinary experience is paramount in encouraging repeat visits. This is in line with Quadri-Felitti & Fiore (2013), showing that the esthetic experience dominates in predicting destination loyalty in the wine tourism context. For advocacy, education, entertainment, esthetics, food quality and experience, food presentation and communication, and service quality are statistically significant and positively impactful. Among these, esthetics and entertainment are the primary drivers of advocacy, indicating that the visual appeal and enjoyment derived from the experience are key in motivating tourists to advocate for it. Regarding economic impact, education, escapism, and food presentation and communication are statistically significant and positively influential. In relative terms, the economic impact is most affected by food presentation and communication, suggesting that how food is presented and communicated to tourists significantly influences their buying and spending behaviour. Escapism and education also play crucial roles, indicating that providing a sense of escape and educational value can similarly drive economic benefits.

Besides the culinary tourism experience itself, the perceived restorative environment also contributes to loyalty, advocacy and economic impact as behavioural outcomes. All dimensions of PRE are statistically relevant and positively affect loyalty, with compatibility being the greatest driver. This implies that when an environment aligns well with travellers' preferences and expectations, the intention to return to this destination or experience is increased. This aligns with the findings of Backman, Huang, Chen, Lee, & Cheng (2023), who demonstrated that a restorative environment meeting the PRE dimensions is a crucial component of the wellness experience, significantly enhancing individuals' loyalty and intention to revisit. Additionally, all dimensions of PRE positively influence advocacy, with each dimension contributing to a similar extent, indicating that all dimensions need to be met in order to encourage tourists to recommend the experience to others. Earlier research conducted by Rosenbaum, Otalora, & Ramirez (2016) already demonstrated that shoppers were significantly more inclined to recommend shopping malls with restorative qualities to others. Finally, the dimensions of extent, compatibility, and fascination are statistically significant contributors to economic impact. Fascination stands out as the primary driver, suggesting that captivating and engaging experiences lead to increased spending by tourists. However, compatibility shows a negative regression coefficient. While compatibility is obviously needed for driving loyalty and advocacy positively, an experience or environment which is either perfectly aligned with expectations or does not include positive surprises does not necessarily lead to higher culinary tourism spending. At the same time, it appears that highly flexible experiences and environments may not generate significant economic impacts. For example, experiences that allow tourists to move at their own pace or explore autonomously tend to result in lower economic outcome, as purchases might not be effectively triggered.

Overall effects

When reflecting on the research model results, it becomes clear that culinary tourism experiences have both statistically significant direct and indirect effects on behaviour. Firstly, culinary tourism experiences have a significant direct and positive effect on behaviour. When restoration, satisfaction, and memorability are included as mediators in the model, culinary tourism experiences significantly predict all three mediators. These mediators, in turn, significantly predict behaviour. Therefore, partial mediation

is observed, as both the direct effect of culinary tourism experiences on behaviour and the indirect effects through memorability, satisfaction, and restoration are significant.

The moderation analysis furthermore confirms that PRE significantly moderates the relationships between 1) culinary experiences and restoration, 2) culinary experiences and satisfaction, and 3) culinary experiences and memorability. While the positive effect of culinary tourism experiences on restoration strengthens as PRE increases, the positive effect on memorability and satisfaction decreases as PRE increases.

Culinary tourism experiences are therefore most effective at providing restoration in restorative settings. However, in such highly restorative settings, travellers might not rely as much on the culinary experience itself, potentially reducing the effect on satisfaction and memorability. This leads to the assumption that in less restorative environments, the immediate food experience plays a bigger role in enhancing the overall travel experience, while in highly restorative environments, the experience is greatly shaped by the setting, which lowers focus on the actual food experience. This aligns with the focus group discussions, indicating that a highly restorative and unique setting can compensate for average or below-average food quality. However, in less restorative environments (e.g., unclear surroundings, time pressure, overcrowding, unpleasantly loud background music, or overly sterile environments), the food experience becomes more prominent and is evaluated more critically. Nevertheless, as PRE drives restoration, memorability and satisfaction, the results clearly underscore the importance of creating restorative environments in culinary tourism to maximise restoration effects and subsequent behavioural intentions, which the experts also highlighted during the expert interviews.

These results confirm Rasoolimanesh, Seyfi, Rather, & Hall's (2022) model developed for the heritage tourism context, showing that memorable tourism experiences significantly influence tourists' behavioural intention toward a destination directly or indirectly. Furthermore, the outcome of Kim's (2018) study supports the findings related to the current research model, demonstrating that memorable tourism experiences positively influence behavioural intentions, including the intention to revisit and spread positive word-of-mouth. Kim's (2018) research also showed that memorable experiences enhance overall satisfaction with travel, which in turn positively affects the intention to revisit and recommend the destination to others, again confirming the results of the current study. Kim's (2018) results also propose that the impact of memorable tourism experiences on behavioural intentions is mediated by overall satisfaction, in addition to the destination image. Similar to Kim's (2018) study, which found a relatively small effect of satisfaction on future behaviour compared to memorable tourism experiences and destination image and therefore challenging "[...] the widely accepted belief that ensuring visitor satisfaction will lead to positive future behaviours" (Kim, 2018, p. 865), this study also reveals a modest effect of satisfaction on behaviour ($B=.08$). In comparison, memorability ($B=.16$) and, most notably, recalled restoration ($B=.30$) have more substantial effects. These findings suggest that the sense of restoration experienced during a culinary experience plays a significant role in shaping behavioural intentions and could be an alternative pathway to explain behavioural intentions. In the same vein, Hernandez-Mogollon, Di-Clemente, and Campon-Cerro (2020) explored the link between quality of life and future behavioural intentions, showing that quality of life dimensions might be a new concept to explain loyalty in tourism. Similarly,

Lin (2014) provided evidence that the experience of cuisine and psychological well-being influence the intention of hot springs tourists to revisit.

While introducing gender as a covariate did not result in significant effects in the overall model, differences based on the age of the travellers became obvious: While there is a uniform impact of culinary tourism experiences on satisfaction, memorability and behaviour in all age groups, the restorative effect of culinary tourism experiences is more pronounced in medium and younger age groups compared to older age. Younger and middle-aged tourists seem to derive more restoration from culinary activities. This might be due to their more stressful lifestyles, making them place more emphasis on restoration while on vacation, particularly those in the medium age group with working and family commitments. This finding is supported by focus group discussions with family travellers who perceive relaxing culinary experiences as more noticeable and valuable. At the same time, the perceived restorative environment (PRE) and the interaction between culinary tourism experiences and PRE drive restoration to a greater extent in older age groups compared to medium and younger age groups. This suggests that older tourists might seek restoration more from the immediate environment rather than from the culinary tourism experience itself. This can be underlined by the findings of the focus group discussions, which show that travellers 40+ clearly stressed specific aspects of the culinary tourism environment as being of great importance (e.g., cleanliness of the setting and having enough space). Similarly, Sthapit & Coudounaris (2018) found that memorable tourism experiences in a single destination affect tourists' subjective well-being are moderated by age, suggesting that the moderating effect has a greater impact on older compared to younger tourists.

Furthermore, significant results were found when investigating the role of contextual variables: When introducing the experience type as a multicategorical antecedent, it can be seen that experiential experiences improve memorability and satisfaction. This supports the assertion by Sthapit, Coudounaris, and Björk (2019) that tourists who actively participate and engage in the experience tend to have more memorable local food experiences. Nevertheless, experiential experiences decrease restoration effects compared to observational experiences. Participative and mixed experiences show no significant difference from observational experiences in their impact on these outcomes. Related to interaction effects, it was found that no significant interactions between culinary experiences and the experience type can be seen in these outcomes.

Using the destination type as a multicategorical antecedent shows that culinary tourism experiences have a stronger positive impact on memorability in rural/countryside destinations compared to urban/city destinations. This is supported by a significant direct effect of destination type on memorability and a significant negative interaction between culinary experiences and urban destinations. A similar pattern is seen for satisfaction, with culinary experiences having a weaker positive effect in urban settings. However, the impact of culinary tourism experiences on restoration is consistent across both rural and urban destinations, with no significant interaction effects. Thus, culinary tourism enhances memorability and satisfaction more in rural areas, while restoration remains unaffected by destination type. Tourists in rural/countryside settings might perceive culinary tourism experiences as particularly memorable and satisfying, likely due to the unique nature and tranquillity of these locations. On the other hand, culinary tourism activities, such as simply dining, might

be an excellent option for travellers to restore and relax in rural and urban environments.

Finally, the results suggest that the tourism setting plays a role in the relationship between culinary tourism experiences and tourist outcomes: Experience-oriented and mixed settings are associated with lower memorability and satisfaction levels compared to restaurant settings. Additionally, the positive effect of culinary tourism experiences on satisfaction is stronger in mixed settings, indicating moderation by the tourism setting. Regarding restoration, mixed settings exhibit a significantly higher positive effect compared to restaurant settings, but no significant interaction effects are observed. This suggests a consistent effect of culinary tourism experiences on restoration, regardless of their setting. This rather limited number of moderation effects based on experience and destination types as well as tourism settings suggests that the nature of the culinary experience itself is, to a great extent, universally impactful.

As shown above, the mediation analysis conducted to test the conceptual model revealed a partial mediation, meaning that while memorability, satisfaction and restoration explain parts of the relationship between culinary tourism experiences and behaviour, culinary tourism experiences continue to have a direct effect on behaviour that the mediators above do not fully mediate. Therefore, culinary tourism experiences obviously have a certain inherent ability to shape behaviour directly, possibly through other mechanisms not captured by the mediators in the model. This fact highlights that culinary experiences likely confer additional benefits and suggests that other factors or mechanisms not included in the model might also be at play. Culinary tourism experiences might therefore have a multifaceted impact on behaviour that extends beyond satisfaction, memorability and restoration.

Possible further aspects such as cultural connections with the destination and appreciation for the destination's culinary and cultural identity, emotional responses (such as pleasure, novelty, excitement), and the social environment might directly affect behaviour. Subsequent studies therefore need to examine further and alternative explanations here. Three further concepts could be incorporated in future studies and might deliver promising explanations in this context:

- *Emotions and emotional engagement:* Emotions as a cause, effect, mediator, and moderator are well studied in the field of marketing (Aeron & Rahman, 2025), with emotions often characterised as mediators when explaining customer-related outcomes (see e.g., Song & Qu, 2017; Wu, Tipgomut, Chung, & Chu, 2020; Xie, Bagozzi, & Gronhaug, 2015). Positive emotional responses during culinary experiences (e.g., pleasure, joy, excitement) could therefore also affect the relationship between the culinary tourism experience and resulting behaviour. Emotional engagement might create a stronger connection between the tourist and the destination, leading to more advocate behaviour and evangelism by sharing personal stories and emotions linked to the culinary experience. The role of emotions in this context was studied, e.g., by Ladhari, Brun, & Morales (2008), who found a positive effect of emotions on creating dining satisfaction and post-dining behavioural intentions. Su & Hsu (2013) provided evidence that both positive and negative consumption emotions impact satisfaction and behavioural intentions within the context of Chinese natural heritage tourism. Loureiro (2014) found that pleasant arousal and

memory are mediators between the rural tourism experience and behavioural intentions. Therefore, and given that the focus group participants emphasised the importance of emotions, particularly evoked by positive surprises, joy, and sensory and esthetic pleasure, it would be valuable to incorporate this dimension into future studies. However, this might need an in-situ measurement approach (see e.g., Liu, Sparks, & Coghlan, 2016).

- *Place attachment and cultural connection:* As shown in the focus group discussions, a tourist who feels attached to a destination due to its unique food culture might be more inclined to return in the future or purchase food souvenirs to relive the experience. Similarly, a traveller who gained cultural insights, e.g., from a farm-to-table experience or when meeting the producers, locals and hosts, might develop a strong connection to the destination, resulting in advocacy and loyalty. Earlier studies investigating place attachment found, e.g., that self-identification with a place has a significant and positive effect on intentions to return or recommend in the rural tourism context (Loureiro, 2014). Tsai (2016) discovered that the experience of enjoying local cuisines allows tourists to form positive and lasting memories, which in turn strengthens their identification with or attachment to local attractions and boosts their behavioural intentions.
- *Social environment:* People with whom a destination and an experience are shared play a significant role in how travellers recall their tourism experiences (Hosany, Sthapit, & Björk, 2022). Similarly, focus group discussions and expert interviews emphasise the role of the social environment in shaping their tourism experiences. Based on these findings, it can be assumed that interactions among travel group members, as well as with other tourists, will influence how travellers perceive and remember a trip and how satisfied they are with their experience. Similarly, Abubakar and Mavondo (2014) demonstrated that a pleasant social environment and interactions with other patrons significantly contribute to satisfaction. Hanks & Line (2018) found that the social service scape influences perceptions of the restaurant experience as well as resulting behavioural intentions. Therefore, the social environment might ultimately also shape behavioural intentions to a great extent, e.g., to repeat the culinary tourism experience with fellow travellers. Nevertheless, as emphasised by the experts, the social environment constitutes a non-controllable and non-manageable factor.

Finally, Table 41 summarises the results related to all focal constructs and related implications.

Focal construct	Main results	Implications
<i>Determinants of culinary tourism experiences</i>	• Food quality and experience received high overall assessments. However, there is room for improvement in food presentation and communication. • Service quality is assessed very high in various culinary tourism contexts, receiving the highest ratings for staff friendliness.	• Food quality and experience are key drivers of memorability, satisfaction, loyalty, and advocacy. However, improvements in the target-group-oriented presentation and communication are needed, as it significantly enhances the economic impact. This can be done, e.g., through storytelling approaches and providing opportunities to interact with producers. • High service quality results in higher levels of satisfaction in the culinary tourism context. Reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy are crucial in this context.

Table 41 Continued

	• Esthetics are the highest-rated experience dimension in culinary tourism, which underscores the importance of the visual appeal of culinary tourism settings. The entertainment dimension is also ranked high, while learning experiences are less important.	• Experiential elements like esthetics and entertainment are crucial for making the experience memorable and to foster satisfaction, loyalty, and positive word-of-mouth. Culinary tourism experiences should prioritise creating enjoyable and visually appealing moments as they directly enhance a visitor's immediate pleasure. Additionally, offering a sense of escapism can help visitors feel restored, and they positively affect the economic success of the tourism offering. However, it is important to recognise that travellers' desires can vary depending on the context and their personal motivations.
The role of restorative environments	• The highest-rated compatibility dimension in culinary tourism is a major driver of memorability, satisfaction, and loyalty. The sense of "extent" and "being away" are key determinants for restoration, while "extent" and "fascination" greatly drive the economic impact. It was shown that the perceived restorative environment also moderates the relationship between culinary experiences and the impact on memorability, satisfaction, and restoration: While the positive effect of culinary tourism experiences on restoration strengthens as PRE increases, the positive effect on memorability and satisfaction decreases as PRE increases.	• PRE enhances restoration, satisfaction and memorability levels. Nevertheless, their impact on memorability and satisfaction is slightly weaker in highly restorative environments, as the interaction effect of culinary experiences and PRE is less impactful here. Highly restorative and unique settings can therefore compensate for average or below-average food quality. However, in less restorative environments, the food experience becomes more prominent and is evaluated more critically. • The findings highlight the importance of creating environments that offer freedom of movement, immersion, and a sense of escapism. Additionally, clearly communicating what visitors can expect from the environment and specific setting is crucial.
Restoration	• Culinary tourism experiences have significant restorative potential, leading to relaxation and calming effects. These benefits are consistent regardless of the type of experience or destination. All perceived restorative environment (PRE) dimensions are statistically relevant and positively impact restoration, with "being away" identified as the most crucial driver.	• Given culinary tourism's universal restorative benefits, managers can market these experiences to a broad audience, regardless of the type of destination or experience offered. • Emphasising all perceived restorative environment (PRE) dimensions - such as immersion, freedom of movement, and a sense of "being away" - can maximise the restorative outcome of a culinary tourism experience.
Memorability	• Culinary tourism experiences are notably memorable and are positively associated with satisfaction. The key drivers of memorability include esthetics, entertainment, and food quality. • Environments that offer a sense of "compatibility" and "being away" and evoke "fascination" significantly enhance the memorability of the experience.	• Culinary tourism managers should highlight the unique aspects of culinary tourism offerings, such as their esthetic appeal and entertainment value to enhance memorability. • Environments should be designed in such a way that they provide a strong sense of "being away" and evoke "fascination." This approach can enhance the overall experience and make it more memorable.
Satisfaction	• Culinary tourism experiences are perceived as highly satisfying and are, at the same time, highly memorable. • Experiential experiences lead to higher satisfaction levels.	• Operators/managers need to ensure that culinary tourism experiences focus on high levels of enjoyment, visual appeal, and exceptional food and service quality. • Experiential activities that go beyond pure observation can significantly boost satisfaction levels and help to set apart from competitors. • Environments should be highly compatible with travellers' expectations, highlighting the need to study travellers' needs and pre-trip expectations. At the same time, they should provide a strong sense of being physically and mentally away to enhance overall satisfaction.

Table 41 Continued

	• Culinary tourism experience aspects directly tied to the enjoyment, visual appeal, and quality of the food and service are paramount in creating a satisfying culinary tourism experience. • A compatible environment providing a sense of “being away” greatly drives satisfaction.	• Elements focusing on education and food presentation/communication need to be handled cautiously, as they might detract from satisfaction, possibly because they shift the focus away from the immediate sensory and emotional pleasures of dining.
Behavioural outcomes and customer value	• The relative importance of various culinary tourism dimensions varies for different behavioural outcomes. Es-thetics, entertainment and food quality/experience are particularly important in driving loyalty and advocacy, whereas food presentation and escapism and communication are most influential for economic impact. • Culinary tourism experiences strongly impact behaviour directly. These effects are also mediated through three key factors: restoration, satisfaction, and memorability. PRE can be seen as a moderator: While the positive effect of culinary tourism experiences on restoration strengthens as PRE increases, the positive effect on memorability and satisfaction decreases as PRE increases. • Satisfaction as a mediator has a relatively modest impact on future behaviour, while memorability and recalled restoration have a more pronounced influence. • Although the effect sizes remain consistent across genders, variations are observed among different age groups, experience types, destination types, and culinary tourism settings. This indicates that perceptions of culinary tourism activities can vary depending on these factors, leading to differences in behavioural intentions.	• Culinary tourism providers might want to prioritise different aspects of the culinary tourism experience to enhance specific desired outcomes. • To effectively influence positive behavioural intentions, it is essential to focus on creating experiences that are perceived as restorative, memorable and satisfactory. • Given the strong direct effect of culinary tourism experiences on behaviour, emphasising high-quality and unique culinary offerings can be a key strategy to enhance behavioural intentions. • To maximise the positive impact on restoration and resulting behavioural intentions, tourism providers should create culinary experiences that do not only deliver high-quality food but also enhance the perceived restorative environment. This can be done by carefully designing the environment according to the PRE dimensions. • As the positive effect of culinary tourism experiences on restoration is universal in different contexts, various providers can address this issue in the promotion of their culinary tourism offerings.

Table 41: Focal constructs and related survey findings and implications

4.5.5 Contribution and evaluation of results

This part of the research aimed to investigate the relationships between culinary experiences and resulting behavioural outcomes (advocacy, loyalty and product-related buying behaviour). Hereby, the specific direct effect as well as the mediating effects of restoration, satisfaction, and memorability were investigated, and the role of the perceived restorativeness of the tourism environment as a moderator was assessed. For

this, a quantitative online survey approach was used to test research hypotheses and the model, which had been developed based on earlier parts of this study.

The study has shown that culinary tourism experiences significantly impact tourist behaviour directly and indirectly through restoration, satisfaction and memorability. It furthermore confirms that PRE significantly moderates the relationships between 1) culinary experiences and restoration, 2) culinary experiences and satisfaction, and 3) culinary experiences and memorability. While the positive effect of culinary tourism experiences on restoration strengthens as PRE increases, the positive effect on memorability and satisfaction decreases as PRE increases. The study also indicates that specific effects might vary depending on the context, while restorative effects are often universal and consistent across different contexts. Furthermore, the main drivers of satisfaction, memorability, restoration and behavioural outcomes in culinary tourism have been identified.

This study enhances the tourism literature by exploring memorable tourism experiences and their connections to behavioural intentions within the context of culinary tourism, addressing researchers' calls for deeper understanding in this area. The results for the culinary tourism sector confirm similar approaches and models from the heritage tourism context (e.g., Rasoolimanesh, Seyfi, Rather, & Hall, 2022) and general tourism contexts (e.g., Kim, 2018).

Kim (2018) found that the effect of satisfaction on future behaviour is relatively small, challenging the commonly held belief that ensuring visitor satisfaction will inevitably lead to positive future behaviour. New approaches, such as the inclusion of quality-of-life dimensions, are seen as innovative concepts explaining loyalty and other post-trip behavioural intentions (see Lin, 2014; Hernandez-Mogollon, Di-Clemente, & Campon-Cerro, 2020). Specifically, Hernandez-Mogollon, Di-Clemente, and Campon-Cerro (2020) have shown that food experiences during holidays positively impact personal quality of life and drive intentions to repurchase similar experiences in future travels, highlighting the need for a new conceptualisation here. With travellers increasingly expecting high food quality, the concept of restoration could serve as an innovative approach to enhance behavioural intentions and, consequently, customer value in the context of culinary tourism. This study observed modest effects of satisfaction on behaviour, whereas memorability and, particularly, the sense of restoration had a substantial impact. This suggests that the restorative experience during a culinary experience offers an alternative pathway for explaining behavioural intentions, also shedding new light on different culinary tourism contexts and settings.

Therefore, this study's empirical findings offer a new perspective on explaining the behavioural outcomes of culinary tourism experiences. They extend the focus beyond a purely satisfaction-oriented approach. Consequently, this study presents a new conceptual model that explores the relationships between culinary experiences and behaviour, emphasising the influence of perceived restorative environments as a moderator on memorability, satisfaction, and restoration as mediators.

5 General discussion

In service industries, and particularly in the tourism sector, the customer experience concept is of great importance. Tourism is often viewed as a leading example of an experience-based industry, as vacations offer a broad range of sensory and emotional attributes. Local cuisine plays a significant role, not only as an attraction but as an essential element of a traveller's overall tourism experience. Specifically, food experiences are capable of creating memorable encounters by engaging all the senses. At the same time, local agricultural and food products are regarded as highly authentic and unique, making them highly sought after by travellers. Therefore, the culinary offerings at a destination can greatly contribute to the overall holiday experience of a traveller, bearing the potential to trigger further outcomes and behavioural intentions.

The literature's definitions of culinary tourism differ in focus; some highlight food as a unique feature of a destination contributing to its appeal, while others concentrate on tourists' motivations and food-related activities. Regardless of their conceptualisation, culinary experiences usually stand out due to their novelty and sensory richness, making them among the most memorable aspects of travel. The culinary tourism literature suggests a broad range of factors influencing the visitor's culinary experience, including the quality of food and drink, the destination's setting, social interactions, the occasion, and service attributes. Additional elements, such as architecture, local/regional cuisine, accommodation, and overall atmosphere, further enrich a traveller's experience. All these components can contribute positively to guest satisfaction and travellers' well-being. Additionally, after returning home, travellers often reflect on their experiences, which can influence their behaviour, such as recommendation and revisiting intentions. This clearly underscores the importance of creating memorable culinary experiences.

Nevertheless, during culinary tourism activities, the experience is shaped not only by the food itself but also significantly by environmental factors, such as ambience and setting, which also affect various outcomes such as enjoyment, relaxation and satisfaction. At the same time, many individuals go on vacation because they expect psychological benefits and mental restoration. Travelling can be seen as a way to escape the daily routine and reduce stress, with the tourism destination serving as the place where these restorative effects are expected to occur. Taken together, this highlights the tourism industry's role in designing experiences and environments that are both restorative and memorable.

The concept of restoration emphasises the human need for mental rest and recovery. Restorative experiences help individuals alleviate mental fatigue and promote resilience in meeting everyday demands. Restoration theory suggests that certain environments support relaxation by either reducing social and physical stressors, such as noise and obligations or by promoting positive environmental attributes. Vacations offer numerous restorative possibilities that align with Attention Restoration Theory (ART). ART provides a framework for understanding how immersion in biophilic, or nature-inspired, environments facilitates the mind's transition to a relaxed state, thereby reducing stress. In the tourism industry, biophilic design has gained prominence, especially in hotel architecture, eco-tourism, rural tourism, and wellness tourism, where natural elements and peaceful surroundings should support restorative and meaningful

experiences. Earlier studies have shown that tourism and leisure environments hold considerable potential for providing restorative experiences, which can contribute to travellers' well-being. As culinary experiences are seen as highly relaxing, culinary tourism providers can therefore benefit from understanding and creating settings that encourage restoration while minimising features that may detract from the culinary experience.

The main objective of this study was 1) to examine the food marketing strategies employed by destination marketing organisations (DMOs) on their official destination websites and 2) to understand the dimensions of travellers' culinary tourism experiences and their effect on behavioural intentions. Hereby, the mediating role of memorability, satisfaction and restoration was analysed. And 3) this study aimed to explore the role of restorative environments, specifically focusing on perceived biodiversity.

This study tried to answer four research questions using five different methodological approaches (content analysis, focus group discussions, expert interviews, experiment, and quantitative survey):

Research question 1:

- How do DMOs promote their culinary offerings to potential visitors through their official destination websites?

Communicating culinary offerings and their settings helps establish a distinctive culinary image, which in turn encourages visitation and ultimately creates memorable culinary tourism experiences. When analysing the culinary tourism marketing and promotion efforts on official destination websites, it becomes evident that most countries and destinations provide at least some general information for culinary tourists. However, the content analysis has shown that despite the significance of culinary tourism settings in creating memorable experiences, many destinations seem to fail to provide extensive details on culinary offerings and their settings.

While information related to drinking, eating, and tasting activities is provided on most websites, growing, producing, and manufacturing activities, as well as preparing and cooking experiences, are not commonly marketed. Focus group discussions have shown that travellers might be interested in a broad variety of culinary activities and appreciate the freedom of choice, which enhances the overall restorative potential of culinary tourism. At the same time, the results of the literature review, focus group discussions, and expert interviews indicate that a broad variety of culinary traveller segments (from casual/average travellers to foodies) exists, necessitating a wide range of offers to meet their differing expectations and motivations.

Additionally, while local food, wine and traditional culinary products are widely promoted, there is a lack of focus on seasonal foods, alternative diets and healthy nutrition. Besides, table manners are rarely discussed. Although general descriptions/illustrations of table arrangements are presented on a few websites, comprehensive introductions to table manners and useful "restaurant" expressions in local language are uncommon and can be found on only a few destination websites. Focus group discussions have shown that clear and understandable information on what to expect helps reduce anxiety and stress while promoting restorative effects. Therefore,

destination managers are advised to prioritise such content. Similarly, food certifications are a further aspect that is not communicated comprehensively, although they could underpin the availability of high-quality products fulfilling specific standards such as food safety. Contents related to certifications vary greatly among the reviewed countries. Information related to restaurant certifications is provided on most French and Austrian websites, while food certifications are mainly given on Italian and Spanish websites. In the same way, the dissemination of information related to traditional and local recipes varies significantly. Austrian, Italian, and French websites most commonly share such culinary insights. Moreover, information related to recommended food souvenirs and purchasing options is mostly not provided, which is especially striking as many travellers are highly interested in purchasing local food souvenirs (see focus group discussions). At the same time, these souvenirs help enhance the economic outcome of a traveller's visit to the destination, as highlighted by the experts.

Additionally, settings beyond restaurants, such as company visits and experiential attractions, are often under-promoted. This is particularly remarkable as all the countries under investigation have a highly developed foodscape. Urban destinations, in particular, tend to offer minimal culinary tourism information, with limited content beyond restaurant guides. Outdoor and natural settings, which are highly capable of triggering restorative and memorable experiences (as discovered in the focus group discussions), are also underrepresented in marketing efforts. Moreover, it was found that local-language websites provide more detailed information than their English counterparts, pointing to a clearly missed opportunity to attract international culinary tourists.

In general, French and Austrian destination websites provide the most extensive information related to culinary tourism. Additionally, French websites often inform about culinary niche offers such as gourmet visits and cooking workshops for children. It was also shown that the culinary offers presented on French destination websites highly correspond to France's overall culinary image, which is greatly associated with wine and fine cuisine, suggesting viewing many French tourism destination websites as best practice examples. Nevertheless, in conclusion, the options for culinary tourism marketing are not fully exploited on the official websites of the culinary tourism destinations in the five countries investigated.

The experts highlighted during the interviews that tourism practitioners often underestimate the importance of planning and communicating culinary tourism experiences that are able to fulfill travellers' expectations. Therefore, to enhance culinary tourism marketing, studying the expectations of potential visitors seems crucial, in addition to showcasing regional specialities and the diversity of food offerings and experience settings. By improving the quality and scope of their online content, destinations could significantly boost their appeal to potential tourists and shape realistic pre-travel expectations. Not meeting these expectations can greatly diminish the overall culinary experience, as underlined by focus group participants. This highlights the importance of effectively communicating the offerings both online and offline. At the same time, the quantitative survey confirmed the importance of food presentation and communication (with aspects such as storytelling and following a main theme) in driving economic impacts.

Countries and destinations with a less prominent international culinary image are especially recommended to implement food marketing strategies to foster their competitive positioning as culinary and wine tourism destinations and communicate what offers and experience environments to expect at the destination. These strategies could include, for example, digital channels, apps and videos, and culinary events. Furthermore it seems crucial to provide updated and current information and to promote and showcase culinary attractions, e.g., experience centres, agri-tourism farms.

Research question 2:

- What factors contribute to memorable culinary tourism experiences, and what elements make these experiences restorative?

The focus group discussions and expert interviews have shown that local food products stand out as a central element in shaping memorable culinary tourism experiences, supporting earlier research in this field. In particular, local products that are fresh, of high quality, and regionally sourced are to be seen as a main determinant of memorable culinary tourism experiences. Besides the food itself, a targeted approach to food presentation and communication that aligns with travellers' expectations – such as storytelling, sensory engagement, and evoking positive emotions – emerged as a crucial factor in enhancing the memorability of culinary tourism experiences. Food experiences designed accordingly are seen as highly authentic and unique due to their regional focus. Consuming them in fitting tourism environments allows travellers to connect with a new culture while fulfilling their need for relaxation, which is often their primary travel motivation. Related to activities performed during specific culinary experiences, it seems that experiences centred around tasting, indulging, and active participation are more memorable than those focusing on pure observation. Nevertheless, travellers greatly value having a choice of what experiences to engage in. However, as shown above, the content analysis revealed gaps in how these aspects are communicated on official tourism destination websites, with urban destinations, in particular, offering less information on culinary tourism experiences.

Beyond the tangible element of food and the actual food offer, service and experiential dimensions strongly shape culinary tourism encounters, as shown during the focus group discussions, expert interviews and the quantitative survey. Notably, esthetics emerged as the highest-rated experience dimension, which underlines the role of the visual appeal in culinary settings. Furthermore, staff behaviour and attitude significantly influence service quality, especially in restaurant contexts, alongside physical quality. DMOs and culinary tourism managers should therefore consider gastronomic experiences as a holistic product that encompasses more than just the food, as emphasised by Pezenka & Weismayer (2020). Specifically, the quantitative study confirmed that the esthetic experience plays a major role in driving memorability, satisfaction, loyalty and advocacy, already providing an initial indication of the importance of the physical environment and its appeal.

The physical setting where culinary experiences are consumed bears great potential in making an experience highly memorable, especially when following an overall theme and providing consistent cues and solid connections and bonds with the region and its features. Exceptional settings were even found to outweigh non-superior food offers and quality, characterising them as a delighter or enhancers of the food experience

while the culinary offer remains the basic expectation. Focus group discussions furthermore revealed that memories of culinary experiences are often tied to enjoying local dishes in extraordinary and pleasant environments. Travellers usually prefer these outstanding environments, and at the same time, they are perceived as restorative. Such settings are characterised by natural design elements (e.g., green and blue spaces, outdoor areas, open spaces), cleanliness, personal and children's safety, authentic regional esthetics and local architecture, spaciousness, clear information and signage, pleasant sensory stimuli (e.g., natural lighting), absence of time constraints, and the possibility of combining culinary with non-culinary experiences, such as social interactions. Environments with such characteristics provide strong opportunities for relaxation and restoration effects to occur, and experts agree that aspects promoting these characteristics can be readily incorporated into culinary tourism settings. Culinary tourism settings fulfilling these criteria are well-suited to address all aspects of restorative environments, including being away, fascination, extent, and compatibility, which tourists often seek. All in all, culinary experiences possess a high potential of triggering restoration and relaxation effects, especially when providing a sense of escapism, as revealed by the quantitative survey results.

At the same time, it was found that food-related activities like grocery shopping and cooking take on a different perspective while on vacation, mainly because they take place in different environments. These routine obligations are then viewed as joyful opportunities that provide a chance to experience relaxation and connect with the destination visited, reinforcing the above-mentioned escapism dimension. Vacationers often find joy in e.g., exploring local markets and farms, discovering new ingredients and agricultural food products, and trying out local recipes. This shift in perspective based on a distinct environment with specific qualities allows these activities to become opportunities for relaxation and immersion, characterising them as peak tourism experiences.

Nevertheless, the findings also underline that the culinary offer at a destination is typically not the primary motivation considered in tourists' decision-making processes and destination choices. While eating and drinking during a holiday might be a necessity for some travellers, only a few might be classified as "foodies". In any case, the actual overall on-site experience and resulting outcomes seem to be heavily influenced by the quality of culinary tourism experiences. Given the existence of these various types of culinary travellers, it is recommended to offer a diverse range of options for exploring a destination's culinary offerings. Providing this flexibility allows travellers to engage in different experiences, which can significantly enhance the extent dimension of their culinary tourism experiences. This, in turn, leads to stronger restorative effects and greater economic impacts.

Research question 3:

- What are outcomes of memorable culinary tourism experiences and how are they affected by memorability, satisfaction and restoration?

The focus group discussions revealed that culinary experiences can be seen as a major driver of tourism satisfaction, even among travellers who are not primarily motivated by food-related reasons. However, to achieve high satisfaction, travellers' pre-travel

expectations must be met or exceeded. Participants also agreed that culinary tourism experiences significantly contribute to relaxation and restoration by fulfilling motives such as enjoyment, indulgence, rest, and escape from routine. Furthermore, culinary experiences are highly memorable. This is often because they are perceived as authentic and unique because of their anchoring in regional traditions. Although culinary offerings may not be the primary factor in tourists' travel decisions, the actual on-site experiences have a profound impact on their overall satisfaction and also behavioural intentions.

The focus group insights suggested that culinary experiences can particularly foster behavioural intentions related to long-term loyalty, advocacy, and positive word-of-mouth, often well after travellers return home. Besides, increased immediate spending and food souvenir purchases can be triggered. However, this economic impact tends to be shorter-lived. While most tourists purchase food souvenirs at the destination and maintain a general interest in local culinary products for some time after their trip, repeat purchases of these items (e.g., through online stores) remain a niche. Experts emphasised the importance of offering food souvenirs to maximise economic impact, building local networks, and integrating regional foods throughout the customer journey to support local, small-scale producers.

The quantitative survey underscores that the key drivers of memorability include esthetics, entertainment, and food quality and experience. At the same time, esthetics and food quality and experience are main drivers of satisfaction. Similarly, esthetics and food quality and experience greatly influence loyalty and advocacy. Restoration is mainly affected by the escapism dimension of a culinary experience. These outcomes underscore the importance of creating visually appealing, entertaining, and high-quality culinary experiences that allow travellers to escape and restore while fostering product/brand-related outcomes such as loyalty and advocacy. The economic impact can be maximised by emphasising the educational dimension, food quality and experience as well as food presentation and communication.

Overall, the quantitative survey has shown that culinary tourism experiences strongly impact behaviour, meaning that the quality and nature of these experiences directly influence tourists' intentions to revisit or recommend the destination. This impact operates both directly and through three key mediating factors: restoration, satisfaction, and memorability. While satisfaction as a mediator has a modest effect on future behaviour, memorability and recalled restoration show a more substantial influence. Additionally, PRE moderates the relationships between culinary tourism experience and 1) restoration, 2) satisfaction, and 3) memorability. A major effect of culinary tourism experiences on restoration outcome can be specifically expected in highly restorative environments.

Related to the context, a moderation analysis found that the effect of culinary tourism experiences on restoration is universal across all settings, while culinary tourism experiences have a greater positive effect on memorability and satisfaction in rural/countryside destinations compared to urban/city destinations. This suggests that culinary tourism experiences have a broad and consistent appeal in providing restorative benefits, regardless of the destination type. For different tourism settings, the only notable interaction effect is the enhanced positive impact of culinary tourism experiences on

satisfaction in mixed settings. At the same time, experiential experiences greatly enhance memorability and satisfaction levels but result in lower restoration outcomes compared to observational experiences. This might be due to the fact that passive experiences seem more pleasant without being forced to participate actively. Nevertheless, whether culinary travellers engage in observational, experiential, participative or mixed experiences, and whether they are in rural, urban, or mixed settings and regardless of the tourism setting, considerable restoration effects can be achieved. This highlights the universal appeal and effectiveness of culinary tourism in providing restorative benefits across various contexts and activities.

To conclude, the study underscores the importance of focusing on creating experiences and developing appropriate experience environments rather than relying solely on product-oriented marketing of regional food quality and certifications. To enhance the overall culinary tourism experience, businesses should therefore aim to increase the memorability of visitors' experiences and facilitate restoration beyond simply focusing on local food products, in order to profit from resulting behavioural outcomes.

Research question 4:

- What role does the perceived restorative environment (PRE) play in this context, and how does PRE specifically impact the outcomes in various culinary tourism settings? What role do perceived biodiversity and biophilic design play in creating restorative environments in the culinary tourism context?

Focus group participants indicated that it is the combination of setting and food offering that fosters relaxation and restoration, highlighting the need to communicate both on tourism websites to drive visiting intentions. Once on-site, culinary experiences provide travellers with an escape from their daily environment and stress, allowing them to achieve relaxation. Outdoor and nature-oriented designs, such as biophilic environments, were favoured by participants for their restorative qualities. The experts concluded that culinary tourism settings are highly suited to support all aspects of perceived restorative environments (PRE):

- *Being Away*: Culinary experiences often occur in unique or different settings from everyday life, inherently promoting physical separation. This sense of *being away* can be easily enhanced by selecting distinct and immersive settings. Additionally, since eating and drinking are inherently relaxing, they naturally support mental detachment from daily routines.
- *Fascination*: Culinary experiences can evoke fascination due to their novelty, providing a natural opportunity for unobtrusive education about the destination (e.g., through menu storytelling) and inviting guests to explore and discover through sensory engagement.
- *Extent*: Offering diverse types of culinary tourism experiences, from passive observation to active participation, promotes a sense of immersion and exploration. Experience-oriented and staged settings, in particular, effectively create a sense of vastness that allows guests to feel more immersed.
- *Compatibility*: Aligning pre-trip expectations with settings that fit individual traveller preferences enhances compatibility.

The quantitative survey showed that the compatibility dimension is the highest-rated factor in the perceived restorativeness of a culinary tourism environment. This PRE dimension is a major driver of memorability, satisfaction, and loyalty. At the same time, the sense of extent and being away are key determinants for restoration, while extent and fascination greatly drive the economic impact.

A comparison of different destination types has shown that the compatibility dimension was rated especially high for rural/countryside destinations. The freedom to move around with few boundaries seems to be highly relevant for rural/countryside destinations. All other dimensions do not differ significantly for different destination types. An investigation of different tourism settings shows that the extent dimension was rated significantly better in experience-oriented/staged settings, while the feeling of being away was evoked most strongly in mixed, restaurant and experience-oriented/staged settings. Restaurant settings, experience-oriented/staged settings and mixed settings were assessed as the most compatible ones. The assessment of the fascination dimension did not differ significantly among the tested settings, suggesting that all culinary tourism environments offer similar levels of fascination. To summarise, experience-oriented/staged settings are particularly effective in providing a sense of vastness or immersion due to their extent, making them more engaging for visitors. Mixed, restaurant, and experience-oriented/staged settings are particularly successful in offering visitors a break from their routine, which contributes to the feeling of being away. Overall, these findings highlight the importance of creating environments that offer freedom of movement, immersion, and a sense of escapism to enhance travellers' perceptions of the restorativeness of an environment.

The quantitative analysis furthermore showed that all dimensions of PRE (extent, being away, compatibility, and fascination) significantly enhance memorability, recalled restoration, and satisfaction. However, fascination has a slightly negative effect on satisfaction. Similarly, all PRE dimensions positively impact loyalty, advocacy, and economic outcomes, except compatibility, which has a slightly negative effect on economic impact. A moderated mediation analysis confirmed that PRE drives restoration, satisfaction and memorability, and PRE as a moderator significantly enhances the positive effect of culinary tourism experiences on recalled restoration.

The experiment has shown that restoration outcome is strongly influenced by both its setting (indoor vs. outdoor) and its level of biodiversity. Outdoor, high biodiversity environments are perceived as most restorative. Nevertheless, as perceived biodiversity increases, the effect on restoration outcome is significantly stronger for indoor environments. Overall, the experiment provides evidence that perceived biodiversity significantly boosts restoration outcome in culinary and wine tourism environments, both directly and through the mediating effect of PRE. Biodiversity seems to support *soft fascination*, a core feature of restorative environments, effortlessly capturing attention and allowing mental relaxation. These findings suggest that culinary tourism providers could enhance their offerings by creating biodiverse, restorative outdoor spaces that evoke soft fascination. Such environments do not only meet travellers' needs for relaxation but can also promote positive behavioural intentions, such as revisits, recommendations, and loyalty.

To conclude, this study highlights the importance of restoration and restorative environments within culinary tourism in providing a satisfying and memorable vacation experience. Additionally, it underscores their role in influencing behavioural outcomes that increase customer lifetime value and foster economic benefits for tourism destinations, culinary tourism providers, and stakeholders. Figure 36 displays a visual summary of the findings. It highlights the experiential dimensions, food-related aspects and service quality as main determinants of the culinary tourism experiences, which enhance restoration, satisfaction, and memorability as immediate outcomes, driving subsequent behavioural intentions and economically relevant results such as product-related purchasing intention, loyalty and advocacy. Furthermore, the role of PRE on restoration, satisfaction, and memorability has to be highlighted, as it fosters these immediate outcomes, with a remarkably strong impact as a moderator on restoration in particular. Regardless of the context, considerable restoration effects can be triggered by culinary tourism experiences, confirming their universal appeal. Nevertheless, further analyses have shown that differences in effect sizes can be expected based on consumer-related characteristics (age) and contextual antecedents (experience type and tourism setting). Finally, the experiment has demonstrated that perceived biodiversity, as a specific environmental characteristic, has significant potential in enhancing PRE and restoration outcomes.

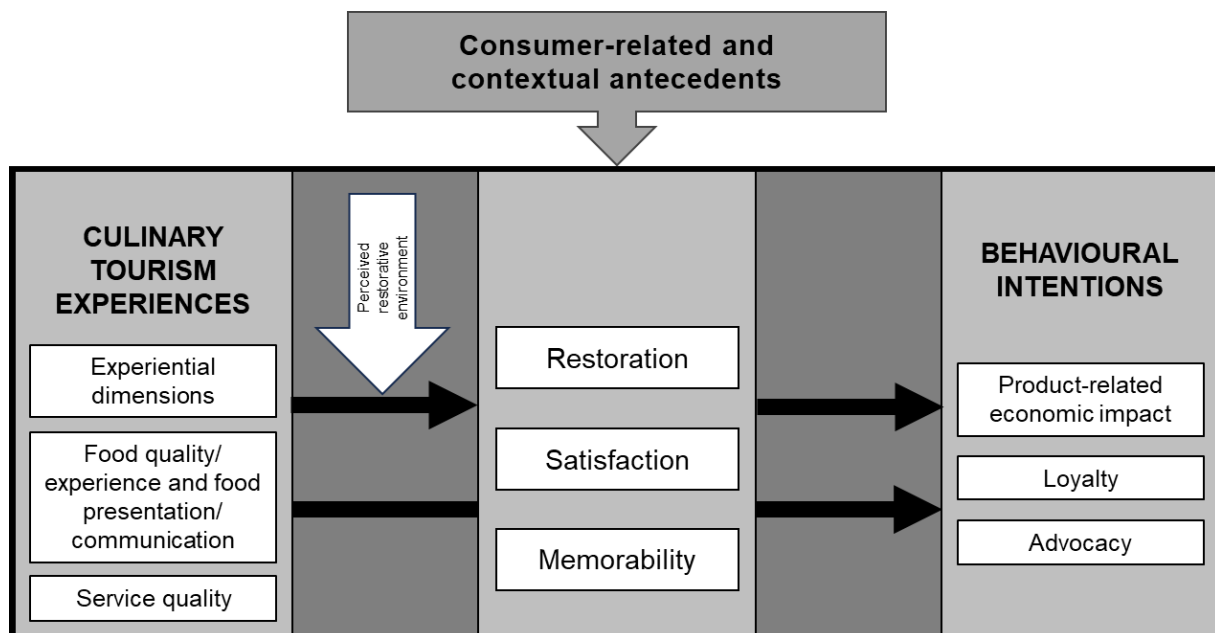


Figure 36: Graphical summary of research results and suggested model for memorable culinary tourism experiences and the role of restoration and perceived restorative environment

5.1 Contribution to theory

This study contributes to the (culinary) tourism literature in several ways:

The findings of this investigation build on earlier general tourism studies by specifically focusing on the emerging field of culinary tourism, where research on memorable experiences is still in its early stages. While previous studies have examined tourism experiences in general and their outcomes, food consumption and related experiences

remain underrepresented, and the unique dimensions characterising travellers' culinary experiences are relatively unexplored. This study specifically addresses the call for further research to explore and validate the antecedents and outcomes of MTEs within specific contexts (see e.g., Hosany, Sthapit, & Björk, 2022).

Firstly, the findings of this research emphasise that the culinary tourism experience encompasses a wide range of diverse aspects. It verifies the multi-dimensional nature of culinary experiences and that the overall experience of all travellers is influenced by food as well as related experiences (see e.g., Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2016). The study confirms that the quality of the overall culinary tourism experience is greatly influenced by factors such as food quality, the variety of local offerings, and experiential dimensions; at the same time, these aspects hold significant potential to create highly memorable experiences (see e.g., Adongo, Anuga, & Dayour, 2015; Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2016; Chandralal & Valenzuela, 2013; Correia, Cunha, Matos, & Fernandes, 2019; Everett, 2016; Morgan, 2006; Pezenka & Weismayer, 2020; Stone, Soulard, Migacz, & Wolf, 2018). However, this study suggests that different types of culinary experiences (observational vs. experiential vs. participative food experiences) result in varying degrees of experiential qualities, memorability, satisfaction and restoration.

Moreover, the study revealed that the environment where the culinary tourism experience occurs plays a crucial role in shaping the overall experience, aligning with findings from related tourism literature (see e.g., Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2016; Bruwer & Lesschaeve, 2011; Correia, Cunha, Matos, & Fernandes, 2019; Jacobsen, 2008; Tomej & Xiang, 2020; Park & Widyanta, 2022; Sthapit et al., 2024a; Stone, Soulard, Migacz, & Wolf, 2018). In specific, it highlights that different contexts (see e.g., Qiu, Sha, & Scott, 2021), but also travellers' characteristics (see e.g., Ignatov & Smith, 2006; Sanchez-Canizares & Castillo-Canalejo, 2015; Yun, Hennessey, & MacDonald, 2011), need to be considered when studying culinary tourism experiences and outcomes.

Furthermore, this study confirms that tourism experiences directly and indirectly affect different consequences (see e.g., Brakus et al., 2009). Building on the general tourism literature that demonstrates how memorable tourism experiences drive various outcomes and post-consumption behaviour (see e.g., Harrington, Ottenbacher, Marlowe, & Siguda, 2019; Kastenholz, Carneiro, Sotiriadis, 2017; Kim, 2018; Lee, Jeong, & Qu, 2020; Liu et al., 2016; Marques, & Loureiro, 2018; Maunier & Camelis, 2013; Rasoolimanesh, Seyfi, Rather, & Hall, 2022; Singh, & Singh, 2019; Tsai, 2016) this study extends that evidence to the field of culinary tourism. For this area, the findings at hand specifically demonstrate that behavioural outcomes, including loyalty, advocacy, and specific product-related behaviours that drive economic impact, are the ultimate results of food and wine tourism experiences, which different determinants of the experience itself can greatly influence. Walls, Okumus, Wang, & Kwun (2011, p. 20) claim that many businesses attempt to design experiences without understanding which dimensions to emphasise and the importance of different dimensions is unclear. This study provides insights into the various determinants of culinary tourism experiences that can enhance specific desired outcomes in this area, such as loyalty, advocacy and economic impact.

While most research on MTEs has primarily focused on traditional outcome variables like loyalty (see Sthapit et al., 2024b, p. 13), this study also explores a new direction by addressing the growing emphasis on different aspects of well-being in the tourism literature (Uysal, Sirgy, Woo, & Kim, 2015) and the “myriad of relationships between tourism and the concept of wellbeing” (Hartwell et al., 2018). It offers a novel perspective by introducing the concept of restoration as a further mediating factor in understanding behavioural outcome variables. One of the few comparable approaches in the wine tourism context is the study of Sthapit et al. (2024a), which found that appealing winescapes are significant and positive antecedents of memorable wine tourism experiences, with eudaemonic well-being and wine purchase intentions as significant and positive outcomes (Sthapit et al., 2024a).

The results of this study confirm that mediators play an important role in explaining the relationship between tourism experiences and behavioural intentions (see e.g., Han & Ryu, 2009; Ladhari, Brun, & Morales, 2008), with the outcome that satisfaction, memorability, and the restorative effects of culinary tourism experiences have to be considered as mediators in this context. This study therefore emphasises that culinary tourism planners need to design experiences with a clear understanding of which experiential and environmental dimensions and factors to prioritise in order to drive ultimate behavioural intentions directly and indirectly, specifically through restoration.

Nevertheless, this study found that while satisfaction only has a modest effect on behaviour, memorability and, particularly, the sense of restoration significantly impact behavioural intentions in the context of culinary tourism. This aligns with Kim's (2018) study, which identified a relatively modest impact of satisfaction on future behaviour, challenging the widely held assumption that ensuring visitor satisfaction guarantees positive future behaviours. The findings therefore suggest that the sense of restoration experienced during a culinary experience plays a more significant role in shaping behavioural intentions. This offers a new pathway for understanding the drivers of behavioural intentions, leveraging the inherently relaxing and restorative nature of culinary tourism experiences. Previous research already indicates that culinary experiences provide travellers with a good opportunity to escape their daily routines and environments, making them restorative (e.g., Lin & Mao, 2015). Consequently, the empirical results provide a fresh perspective on the explanation of behavioural outcomes of culinary tourism across different contexts. This alternative view shifts the focus from a purely satisfaction-centered approach, where “customer satisfaction is the cornerstone of any business's success” (Slocum & Curtis, 2018, p. 121), as it offers new insights into the role of restoration and restorative environments, while also highlighting the major role of culinary tourism experiences in shaping behavioural intentions directly.

Since the role of vacation experiences in contributing to the “vacation effect” – enhancing health and well-being – has been scarcely studied (see e.g., Chen, Huang, & Zhang, 2017; Gilbert & Abdullah, 2004; Kirillova & Lehto, 2016; Wang, Tsai, & Tang, 2019), this study also makes a significant contribution by exploring how culinary tourism experiences specifically promote restorative effects. In specific, it confirms the restorative mechanisms of being away from the daily environment and environmental stimuli of tourist settings as suggested by Lin & Yang (2024) for the context of culinary tourism and particularly emphasises the role of environmental qualities in shaping restorative effects and subsequent behavioural outcomes within the culinary tourism context. By using the perceived restorative environments scale (following Qiu, Jin, & Scott,

2021), this study confirms earlier research suggesting that, in general, locations with higher environmental quality lead to greater restorative outcomes (see e.g., Wyles et al., 2019), and specifically, perceived restorative environments influence tourist outcomes, such as intentions to revisit and recommend (see Backman, Huang, Chen, Lee, & Cheng, 2023; Subiza-Pérez et al., 2021). This bridges the gap between tourism experiences, their restorative qualities, the environment associated with them, and their interplay in the context of culinary tourism.

At the same time, the study also substantiates the idea of the existence of various types of restoration, each with different effects, as suggested by Bornioli & Subiza-Perez (2023). The current study implies that these different layers can also be found in the context of culinary tourism: Non-demanding situations characterised by the absence of stressors, perceived safety, high compatibility, and acceptable overall conditions can be seen as *containment*, which is the most basic layer of restoration (Bornioli & Subiza-Perez, 2023, p. 156). Additionally, aspects such as green and blue infrastructure, biophilic design, moderate complexity of the setting, and moderate multisensory stimulation, which contribute to passive restoration on a higher layer (Bornioli & Subiza-Perez, 2023, p. 156), seem highly relevant in culinary tourism and were confirmed by the current study. While eating and drinking as a vacation activity can usually be classified as a non-demanding experience, integrating the above-mentioned bottom-up features allows this passive restoration to perceive them as inherently restorative. Engaging in observational culinary tourism experiences can serve as a prime example of this passive restoration, leading to stress reduction and attention restoration. In contrast, active restoration, according to Bornioli & Subiza-Perez's (2023, p. 156) view, is typically achieved through top-down features such as personal engagement and social interaction and represents the highest layer of restoration. This does not only lead to attention restoration but also to attention stimulation, cognitive engagement, and well-being (Bornioli & Subiza-Perez, 2023, p. 156). Findings of the current study indicate similar effects for the culinary tourism context: Results of the quantitative study provided evidence that experiential experiences significantly enhance memorability and satisfaction levels but may result in lower restoration. Those of the focus groups suggest that experiences centred around active participation are more attractive, stimulating and memorable than those focusing on pure observation, while this active engagement might be perceived as stressful for certain travellers. This highlights a key recommendation of this study to offer a variety of options and free choices to maximise restorative effects.

Theories on vacation restorativeness offer insights into potential restoration effects in tourism settings but have often overlooked the specific environments in which these effects occur. Restoration theories, such as ART and biophilia theory, however, emphasise the importance of these environments, also for the general tourism context (see e.g., Chen, Huang, & Zhang, 2017; Lehto, 2012; Lehto, Kirillova, Li, & Wu, 2017; Lin & Yang, 2024; Roostika & Mumpuni, 2023). The empirical findings from this study provide a new understanding of environmental qualities, such as perceived restorativeness, within the culinary tourism context. This research is among the first to explore the relationships between culinary tourism experiences and behavioural intentions across different tourism contexts while considering perceived restorativeness of the environment as a potential moderator besides the indirect effects through satisfaction, memorability and restoration. It confirms that restorative environments foster better

restoration outcome (see e.g., Hartig, 2004; Packer, 2014), and in the context of tourism, they contribute to enhanced restorative outcomes for travellers (see Wang, Tsai, & Tang, 2019). The findings therefore confirm the importance of an environment's perceived restorativeness in driving restoration, confirming, e.g., Zhang, Zhang, Yang, & Ma's (2024) result that perceived restorativeness of an environment is an important factor in influencing visitors' well-being. They (ibid.) also highlight that these restorative effects are particularly likely to occur in the context of nature-based experiences. As culinary tourism activities, especially in rural destinations, often involve a nature-based experience (see e.g., agri-tourism), this result seems especially relevant for such tourism encounters.

However, while culinary tourism experiences are most effective at providing restoration in highly restorative settings, surprisingly, such settings potentially downgrade the positive effect on satisfaction and memorability. This implies that in highly restorative settings, the environment itself greatly drives restoration outcome, potentially overshadowing the impact of the culinary aspect. In contrast, in less restorative environments, the culinary experience might be seen as more critical and might be evaluated more rigorously. Nevertheless, in any case, the perceived restorative environment greatly contributes to restoration, memorability and satisfaction.

Therefore, the findings of this study do not only offer valuable insights into culinary tourism experiences and the role of restoration, but also their environments, as the literature recognises that the process of restoration is shaped not only by individual traits and the nature of the experience but also by the characteristics of the surrounding environment (see e.g., Ballantyne, Packer, & Hughes, 2008; Hartig, 2004; Hartig, Kaiser, & Bowler, 1997; Hartig & Staats, 2003; Kaplan, 1995; Packer & Bond, 2010; von Lindern, Lymey, & Hartig, 2017; Walters, Gill, Pham, & Filep, 2024). This study therefore emphasises the importance for tourism providers to understand, design, and manage environmental attributes that support or encourage restorative experiences. While it was shown that an environment designed according to the PRE dimensions enhances the restoration effects of culinary tourism experiences, the experiment also highlighted the role of biodiversity in driving restoration outcome and perceived restorativeness of an environment; finally, focus group discussions also identified further qualities of restorative environments, such as cleanliness and safety aspects.

To date, the specific effect of an environment's biodiversity and its restorative potential has remained open for the culinary tourism context. Therefore, this study tried to extend the understanding of perceived biodiversity effects in culinary tourism settings. The results support the notion that culinary tourism environments perceived to have greater biodiversity yield more significant restorative outcomes, in line with the principles of ART and biophilia theory and many earlier studies focusing on natural environments and their potential to drive restorative outcomes (see e.g., Hartig, Evans, Jamner, & Gärling, 2003; Gillis & Gatersleben, 2015; Hartig, Mitchell, De Vries, & Frumkin, 2014; Kaplan, 2001; Rosenbaum, Ramirez, & Camino, 2018; Scopelliti & Giuliani, 2004; Kumar, Purani, & Viswanathan, 2020; Lee, 2019; Vujcic et al., 2017; Wang, Tsai, & Tang, 2019; White, Pahl, Ashbullby, Herbert, & Depledge, 2013). At the same time, the results are consistent with the study of Orth et al. (2024), which revealed that perceived biodiversity in landscapes fosters restorative effects and influences behavioural intentions. Loureiro, Macagno, Nunes, & Tol (2012) similarly demonstrated in a tourism context that biodiversity and landscape indicators positively impact tourists'

decisions and travel patterns. Specifically, their study highlighted that perceived biodiversity not only shapes behavioural intentions but also affects factors like trip duration. Finally, this study introduces a new argument, suggesting that PRE significantly and positively mediates the relationship between perceived biodiversity and restoration outcome in the context of culinary tourism.

This result is particularly noteworthy: Although natural environments play a crucial role in enhancing the appeal of tourist destinations (Butler, 2000), tourism activities are responsible for triggering negative effects on the biological components of the destinations where they occur (e.g., loss in biodiversity, plant coverage, etc.) (see e.g., Canteiro, Cordova-Tapia, & Brazeiro, 2018). As a result, tourism organisations increasingly recognise their role not only in creating memorable experiences and promoting travellers' restoration but also in protecting nature and restoring biodiversity in destinations. They emphasise the importance of nature and biodiversity for both tourists and providers, urging businesses to prioritise biodiversity concerns in decision-making, as the entire tourism system will benefit from active engagement with biodiversity issues (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2024). This seems especially relevant for stakeholders involved in culinary tourism, as they heavily rely on the richness of biodiversity and natural resources to ensure the availability of diverse, high-quality agricultural and food products and traditional and unique dishes that cannot be replicated elsewhere – the main determinants of memorable culinary tourism experiences as validated in various parts of this study.

To conclude, the results of this research support the idea that creating restorative environments in culinary tourism can enhance restoration, satisfaction and memorability, besides increased behavioural outcomes. Considering the role of restorative environments in culinary tourism is a relatively new concept. However, the study was able to demonstrate that culinary tourism experiences and their behavioural outcomes can vary based on the context, including experience types and specific culinary tourism settings, while they have a rather broad and consistent effect on travellers' restoration. Additionally, it was found that biodiversity, as one potential aspect of environmental quality, bears great potential in driving restoration outcome and behavioural intentions.

Taken together, this study strengthens the idea that culinary tourism experiences have great potential for promoting restoration and suggests a pivotal role for restorative environments in driving behavioural intentions in the culinary tourism context. At the same time, biodiversity, as one potential characteristic of restorative environments, not only enhances travellers' restoration, but also contributes to restoring a tourism destination in the sense of nature-positive and regenerative tourism.

5.2 Practical implications and main recommendations for the tourism industry

The content analysis (study 1) revealed that the marketing potential for culinary tourism experiences is not fully utilised on the official websites of culinary tourism destinations. It is particularly urgent to provide more detailed information about local cuisine and the environments and settings where culinary tourism experiences can be enjoyed. Beyond information on restaurants, tourism settings are not extensively marketed, and details about outdoor and natural environments – often ideal for fulfilling restorative

travel motives of travellers and providing them with restorative on-site experiences – are largely absent.

Official destination websites play a crucial role in communicating the local/regional food offer since they are primary sources of information for potential visitors. As highlighted in subsequent parts of this research, such information is crucial in shaping visitors' perceptions and expectations, influencing their decision-making, enhancing their lasting impressions, and affecting future behavioural intentions.

Furthermore, there is a notable gap in the availability of information for international tourists, as most of the content is only provided in the local language. To better cater to a global audience, it is of great importance to present this information in widely spoken languages like English and the native languages of potential travellers. This approach would not only broaden the reach but also enhance the accessibility and appeal of the destination to a more diverse group of tourists.

Focus group discussions (study 2) revealed that both highly dedicated culinary and average travellers seek local, fresh, and high-quality food, which is usually perceived as authentic and unique. To make an experience especially memorable, all five senses should be engaged. Culinary tourism managers should therefore ensure their offerings meet these requirements and communicate them effectively, as food plays a crucial role in forming regional identities and shaping a destination's culture and image. Culinary experiences should therefore align with the destination's overall environment to enhance authenticity and uniqueness. At the same time, practitioners are encouraged to employ storytelling techniques, as narratives about local food are found to be highly engaging and can serve as valuable learning experiences. This approach can increase interest in regional culinary offerings and potentially drive purchases.

Dining and drinking are considered very relaxing holiday activities. Engaging in culinary experiences can even help to alleviate unpleasant situations, such as long waits. Managers should therefore strategically plan, design and market culinary experiences to maximise their restorative effects. Highlighting unique and relaxing culinary experiences in marketing materials could help to attract more visitors who are looking for a stress-free and enjoyable holiday. Simultaneously, clear communication of what to expect is crucial, not only to ensure a relaxing experience but also to help form realistic expectations, laying the foundation for positive future behaviours based on the level of their fulfillment.

Regarding the environment itself, adding restorative attributes to the culinary tourism setting can often be achieved easily, e.g., by simply providing comfortable seating in non-crowded areas and adding more greenery. Cleanliness, safety, and hygiene are also crucial for a relaxing atmosphere. Furthermore, giving visitors the flexibility and time to enjoy their culinary experience at their own pace enhances relaxation and restoration.

The experts (study 3) emphasised the significance of the culinary tourism setting, noting that it differentiates the culinary tourism experience and helps to make it memorable. The concept of a restorative culinary tourism environment is seen as a new approach with competitive advantage potential. Culinary tourism settings appear to be highly qualified to address all aspects of restorative environments. At the same time,

combining culinary experiences with other tourism activities while prioritising relaxation as a main vacation motive can attract diverse target groups, enhance memorability, satisfaction, and further behavioural outcomes.

Furthermore, culinary experiences should directly involve the individuals who drive and create them, as this significantly enhances their memorability. A broad variety of measures might be implemented here, e.g., cooking classes, tastings and workshops, farm-to-table tours with local farmers, chefs sharing stories about their philosophy, culinary events and trails that connect providers and visitors. Additionally, these approaches can be extended online through content provided on e.g., destination websites, digital platforms, and social media, addressing the lack of online culinary tourism content identified during the content analysis (study 1).

Nevertheless, the experts emphasised the importance of understanding the specific expectations of different target groups and effectively communicating how on-site experiences will meet these expectations. It is therefore recommended that the experiences delivered are monitored and adapted as needed. It should also be noted that the overall customer experience even starts in the planning phase and extends to post-travel. Therefore, all touchpoints along the customer journey should be carefully designed to enhance further outcomes. Identifying "must-have" factors and "delighters" is crucial for understanding their contribution to desired behavioural outcomes.

At the same time, the experts stressed that it is important to consider that many providers create a culinary tourism experience. Therefore, building strong local networks and integrating all providers into the design and delivery of these experiences can enhance the overall experience and foster further economic benefits. By adopting a joint and unified approach, memorable culinary experiences can strengthen the destination's overall image. Conversely, a destination's image can enhance the appeal of local agricultural and food products/brands.

Study 4 examined how perceived biodiversity in culinary indoor and outdoor tourism environments influences restoration outcome. Given their superior performance in both biodiversity and perceptual aspects, high biodiversity and outdoor environments can be key to enhancing restorative culinary tourism experiences. The results of the experiment therefore advise tourism businesses to incorporate diverse natural elements in both indoor and outdoor settings for optimal guest experiences and restorative benefits. In doing so, strong restorative effects can be particularly anticipated in indoor environments. Culinary experiences could also emphasise local biodiversity by showcasing unique, authentic and seasonal ingredients, as well as biodiversity-friendly menus. At the same time, promotional efforts and educational programmes should highlight the restorative benefits of culinary tourism for both travellers and local providers. Finally, creating culinary experiences that connect visitors with nature and local cuisine, such as farm-to-table experiences and collaborations with local chefs, should be prioritised to enhance the overall impact of perceived biodiversity on restoration, as the restoration outcome will eventually trigger further behavioural intentions. Study 4.1. confirmed the significance of perceived biodiversity in promoting restoration and influencing restoration outcome for the wine tourism context, suggesting that wine tourism destinations should also prioritise maintaining and showcasing biodiversity to enhance the restorative experiences of visitors. Culinary and wine tourism destinations that focus on nature-positive and regenerative tourism can particularly benefit from these

findings, as they confirm the positive effect of biodiversity on travellers' restoration and overall experience while also ensuring the resilient and sustainable development of the destination through increased behavioural intentions and enhanced economic value.

The results of the quantitative online survey (study 5) show that culinary tourism experiences strongly impact behaviour directly and indirectly through satisfaction, restoration and memorability. At the same time, PRE enhances recalled restoration, satisfaction and memorability, and PRE as a moderator enhances the positive effect of culinary experiences on recalled restoration. Given the strong direct effect of culinary tourism experiences on behaviour, practitioners should emphasise high-quality and unique culinary offerings to enhance behavioural intentions. This could be done e.g., through the development of signature dishes, a visually appealing plating and presentation, the introduction of quality labels or standards or by pursuing certification processes and the creation of authentic food souvenirs.

To strengthen the positive impact on behaviour, tourism providers should create culinary experiences that not only deliver high-quality food but also enhance the sense of restoration. The focus group discussions identified different aspects related to the temporal, physical, and social environment that help drive restoration outcome, such as non-crowdedness, safety, hygiene, and flexible schedules. And equally important, the environment and, specifically, all perceived restorative environment (PRE) dimensions - such as immersion, freedom of movement, and a sense of being away - can maximise the indirect effects of the culinary tourism experience. Providers could, for example, design their spaces to allow for easy movement and avoid cluttered layouts. They could also integrate immersive experiences that engage all senses to drive the feeling of being away or enhance the feeling of escapism by creating an atmosphere – through e.g., themed dining experiences, culinary adventures, music, lighting, and natural elements – that transports visitors to a different place.

It was also shown that the effect of culinary tourism experiences on restoration is universal across all settings, with no significant interaction effects found between culinary experiences and destination type. Nevertheless, culinary tourism experiences enhance memorability and satisfaction to a greater extent in rural/countryside destinations than in urban/city destinations. Destination managers and providers in both rural and urban areas can therefore benefit from incorporating the aspect of restoration into culinary tourism experiences. Nevertheless, rural destinations can expect higher levels of memorability and satisfaction.

The analysis furthermore demonstrates that experiential experiences enhance memorability and satisfaction levels but result in lower restoration outcome compared to observational experiences. Participative and mixed experiences do not significantly differ from observational experiences in their impact on the measured outcomes. Therefore, culinary tourism managers and providers must adapt the experience type to the desired outcome, e.g., experiential activities such as cooking classes and food tours might engage visitors more deeply, resulting in higher levels of memorability, while observational activities such as visiting food museums or observing the chef preparing a meal can be beneficial to enhance restoration. More passive and observational activities allow visitors to relax and enjoy the experience without the pressure of active participation. Nevertheless, to meet their goals, managers could try to customise offer-

ings depending on the visitor segment or attempt to achieve a balance between restoration and engagement and offer a mix of experiential, participative, and observational experiences with the freedom to choose.

It was also shown that restaurant settings are more memorable and provide greater satisfaction compared to other settings, while mixed settings are perceived as the most restorative ones. This implies a clear focus on the restaurant experience while offering mixed culinary settings to enhance restoration effects. A greater variety and choice (e.g., through the provision of multiple options such as calm indoor spaces, vibrant outdoor spaces with scenic views, purchasing opportunities, etc.) could result in more sensory stimulation, perceived flexibility and comfort, eventually driving restoration effects.

The results furthermore highlight that food quality and experience specifically drive memorability, satisfaction, loyalty, and advocacy among customers. However, improvements in the target-group-oriented presentation and communication are needed to maximise the economic impact as well. Strategies like storytelling and offering opportunities for interaction with producers are recommended. Storytelling can be easily integrated into culinary experiences by sharing narratives about the origins of dishes, the journey of ingredients, or the inspiration behind recipes, whether through menus or digital platforms. Additionally, creating online content, such as videos, social media posts, and culinary blogs that highlight the stories of local producers, chefs or the history of certain ingredients, can engage potential visitors. While focus group discussions indicate a strong interest in such content, it is often lacking, as revealed by the content analysis. Hosting thematic culinary events that focus on local or regional products, traditions and cuisines (e.g., grape harvest festivals) can further enhance the economic impact. Lastly, fostering direct interaction with producers through e.g., culinary workshops, tastings (also in virtual formats), and farm-to-table experiences is strongly recommended.

Finally, with regard to the 4E model, it was found that esthetics and entertainment are crucial for making the experience memorable and fostering satisfaction, loyalty, and positive word-of-mouth. Esthetics are the highest-rated experience dimension in culinary tourism, which again underscores the importance of the visual appeal of culinary tourism settings. Consequently, practitioners should clearly focus on creating visually appealing environments and offers (e.g., esthetic appeal of interior design and plating) as well as entertainment options (e.g., live cooking and interactive dining experiences). However, educational elements need to be handled cautiously, as they might detract from satisfaction, possibly because they shift the focus away from the immediate sensory and emotional pleasures of dining.

Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that travellers' desires might differ. Culinary tourism managers are therefore advised to identify relevant key customer segments and culinary tourism motivations and expectations to tailor their offerings accordingly. Travellers' motivations and preferences, such as the desire for specific types of experiences, can vary widely, which was shown in the focus group discussions. At the same time, the goals of operators (e.g., creating satisfaction or memorability) might vary, and culinary tourism providers might want to prioritise different aspects of their

offerings to enhance specific desired outcomes. This highlights the necessity for strategic planning, particularly in terms of the emphasis on restoration that providers may wish to prioritise to achieve certain goals.

5.3 Limitations of the study and directions of further research

Despite the valuable insights provided by the empirical studies, several limitations have to be acknowledged to contextualise the findings and guide future research efforts.

Study 1 focused on the contents provided on official destination websites only. As social media platforms are becoming more and more important for promoting gastro-tourism at both macro-level destinations and micro-level networks and entrepreneurs and for facilitating eWOM (Williams, Yuan, & Williams, 2019), further studies should also analyse the official content provided through various social media channels of tourism destinations. At the same time, as online technologies and content are constantly evolving (Buhalis, Leung, & Law, 2011) and as culinary tourism is an emerging field, the results of this content analysis may differ significantly when compared to future analyses. Longitudinal studies investigating the development of culinary tourism offers and their official promotion might therefore help to generate more insights here. Consequently, the scope of the content analysis, as well as its temporal relevance, is clearly limited, as it can be assumed that website contents are frequently updated. Furthermore, this content analysis is purely text-based, neglecting multimedia content, which is of great importance in online tourism communication strategies (Zhao & Zhang, 2024). With technical advancements, a content analysis of these materials could significantly enrich the results. Additionally, new phenomena such as *food-stagramming* also influence culinary tourism experiences and behaviour as shown by Fathy, Salem, Zidan, & Abdien (2024). Investigating culinary tourism experiences and their results based on food representation in social media will therefore also affect culinary tourism promotion and destination marketing (Ranteallo & Andilolo, 2017) and should be covered in upcoming studies. Finally, a potential subjectivity in the interpretation of data due to the researcher's biases and perspectives has to be acknowledged, although various approaches were followed to minimise potential biases here.

Study 2 was based on a focus group discussion approach. Focus group discussions typically have limited generalisability due to the small number of participants (Chenail, 2010). However, Chenail (2010) proposes several strategies to enhance and evaluate the generalisability of qualitative research findings. One such strategy involves identifying and examining other cases that are similar yet distinct from the case under investigation (Chenail, 2010). As the literature suggests that personal characteristics of a traveller might influence tourism experiences and behaviour, further target groups should therefore be investigated in upcoming studies. The study at hand covered the perspectives of four different groups (young travellers, family travellers, international travellers, and travellers aged 40+). However, other target groups might report different experiences and behaviours, e.g., elderly travellers, travellers with food-related restrictions such as allergies, intolerances or dietary preferences, experienced vs. inexperienced travellers, and determined vs. incidental culinary travellers. Furthermore, group dynamics and moderator skills and biases might have affected the data collection process and outcomes. Additionally, social desirability bias might have resulted in

socially acceptable or expected responses from participants. However, this seems rather unlikely since the topic itself may not be perceived as sensitive. Finally, the results are subject to the researcher's interpretation. Due to time and budget constraints, it was not possible to involve multiple researchers in the data analysis process, which could have enhanced reliability following a team-based approach.

Study 3 centred on the tourism experts' perspective. Although the experts could provide extensive insights into culinary tourism experiences, their design, and outcomes, evaluating the role of restorative environments posed more challenges for them. A few experts suggested reaching out to well-being researchers or practitioners in the wellness tourism field. Therefore, future studies should integrate the viewpoints of experts and researchers concentrating on quality of life, well-being, and restoration, as these aspects could not be addressed comprehensively in study 3. Specifically, content related to ART (Attention Restoration Theory) and biophilia theory could be covered in a rather general manner only, and the experts' opinions might be influenced by their personal experiences and backgrounds. Finally, broadening the rather narrow scope of interviewees should help avoid potential selection and response bias, extending beyond the expertise of tourism experts. Besides, the selected experts offer a Western perspective only, with a particular emphasis on German-speaking countries, especially Austria. Further studies would benefit from incorporating a broader range of perspectives, both in terms of content and geographical or cultural backgrounds. Again, it has to be mentioned that the results are subject to the researcher's interpretation and interviewer skills and biases might have affected the results.

Study 4 investigated the effect of tourism settings and their perceived biodiversity levels on restoration as well as behavioural intentions. Here, it has to be acknowledged that the controlled environment of the online experiment, as well as the contrived culinary tourism settings might not accurately reflect real-world conditions, affecting the external validity of the results. This lack of realism when viewing pictures might result in a less immersive experience and less intense sensory inputs. Therefore, field experiments conducted in real-world settings would be crucial not only for further investigating causal mechanisms but also for enhancing external validity. This was also suggested by Mayer, McPherson Frantz, Bruehlman-Senecal, & Dolliver (2009) as they acknowledge that much research on the restorative aspects of nature has been conducted using virtual environments, such as nature viewed on a screen. Furthermore, participants' responses might have been influenced by their prior culinary experiences and their individual preferences, which could have introduced bias. Although the experiment's online presentation using Unipark was carefully tested, technical issues (e.g., variations in the colour of the stimuli due to differing screen quality) could have affected the results as well. Similarly, the data collection environment (e.g., distractions or breaks while completing the potentially lengthy questionnaire) could have impacted the fieldwork.

Furthermore, potential limitations may arise from how key concepts are operationalised and measured. The way how variables (e.g., biodiversity) are defined and measured might not capture the full complexity in the context of culinary tourism experiences, e.g., only the visual perception of biodiversity was manipulated in the presented pictures. This predominantly visual-centric approach to investigating the sensory elements of culinary tourism experiences was also criticised by Muskat et al. (2024, p. 666), who reinforced Pezenka & Weismayer's (2020) call for a deeper integration of

the multi-sensory nature of culinary tourism experiences here. Expanding the measurement of biodiversity including sensory stimuli beyond visual appeal presents a promising avenue for further research in this context. Additionally, it must be acknowledged that although two tourism scholars evaluated the visual stimuli and manipulation checks were conducted for the stimuli created, the final selection of pictures and elements displayed on these pictures might have influenced the results. Moreover, restoration outcome was captured using self-reported measures only. Although these self-report scales are commonly used (Han, 2018), comprehensively verified (Han, 2021), and a strong association between subjective/self-reported and objective measures of restoration was found (Bolouki, 2023), measuring actual physiological responses could enhance the validity of findings and provide complementary insights for this specific context, as culinary tourism experiences are highly sensory in nature.

Study 5 investigated the effects of culinary experiences on behavioural outcomes, as well as potential mediators and moderators in this context. As shown, a survey approach was used here to generate data. Nevertheless, self-selection and non-response biases might have affected the results of this quantitative study, as non-respondents might differ significantly from those who participated. Social desirability might also have influenced respondents' answering behaviour, although culinary tourism experiences might not be perceived as a sensitive topic per se. Additionally, self-report measures, which are frequently used in memorable tourism experiences research, rely on retrospective reports, which are susceptible to memory construction and recall bias (Hosany, Sthapit, & Björk, 2022). This issue has to be acknowledged for this study as well.

Furthermore, not all potential respondents have equal access to the Internet, which could have excluded certain demographics, particularly older adults or those in lower socioeconomic groups. Again, the data collection environment (e.g., distractions or breaks while completing the potentially lengthy questionnaire) could have affected the results. Potential limitations also stem from the ways in which key concepts were defined and measured: Although many earlier studies investigated culinary tourism experiences and their determinants, a lack of consensus on how to measure them can be seen (Hoang, 2023). Similarly, the literature provides a range of restoration/restorativeness scales (Han, 2018). Further studies could therefore try to evaluate the appropriateness of these scales for different culinary tourism contexts and to validate them accordingly.

Sampling limitations have to be acknowledged as well. Within the sample, younger and female travellers are overrepresented compared to the general traveller population (see e.g., EUROSTAT, 2025; UN Tourism, 2025), limiting the generalisability of findings related to potential distributions and sizes of specific segments. Nevertheless, the survey approach intended to examine associations, as well as moderation and mediation effects. Given that moderation-mediation analysis is inherently correlational (Preacher, Rucker, & Hayes, 2007), it is crucial to acknowledge the limitations of quantitative correlational studies, as highlighted by Butcher & Yodsuwan (2024). This means that such approaches cannot provide definitive insights into causality (Butcher & Yodsuwan, 2024). Malhotra, Nunan, & Birks (2017, p. 304ff) describe concomitant variation (as evidence of a strong association between an action and an observed outcome), along with the time order of occurrence and the absence of other causal

factors as conditions for establishing causality. A temporal sequence of culinary experiences preceding outcomes such as satisfaction, restoration, and subsequent behavioural responses can be inferred from theoretical inputs. Additionally, a high correlation between the variables can be observed. However, the absence of an experimental approach involving manipulation and randomisation limits the ability to establish causality. Further studies using counterfactual approaches (see e.g., Imai, Keele, & Tingley, 2010) or longitudinal and cross-lagged panel models (see e.g., Maxwell, Cole, & Mitchell, 2011) could provide more insights here. Furthermore, it has to be assumed that other causal factors or unobserved confounding might limit the results, e.g. through further variables such as destination-related (e.g., accessibility) and tourist-related factors (e.g., travel companions). Rudolph, Williams, & Díaz (2024) highlight that unobserved confounding issues might arise in mediation analyses, as there may be hidden confounders affecting the relationships between exposure and outcome, exposure and mediator, and mediator and outcome. Finally, moderation-mediation models assume linear relationships (Preacher, Rucker, & Hayes, 2007), neglecting non-linear or dynamic interactions, e.g., tourists might enjoy trying new and unfamiliar food to a certain extent, as shown in the focus group discussions, but too exotic and finally unpleasant culinary experiences might reduce overall satisfaction or restoration outcome. To summarise, the causal relationships among the variables under consideration still remain unclear, highlighting the need for further studies using experimental designs to establish the causes of behavioural outcomes, as well as to assess their nature and strength in the context of culinary tourism.

Generally, resource constraints have to be acknowledged at this point for all study approaches as well: financial resources allowing access to participants and data (e.g., to recruit theoretically representative samples) might have restricted the depth, breadth and generalisability of the research. Additionally, ethical considerations such as ensuring confidentiality and obtaining informed consent might have limited the scope of data collection during expert interviews as well as focus group discussions. Finally, many aspects of this study are based on non-(native) English inputs. Although careful back-and-forth translations were conducted to develop the data collection instruments, potential translation biases must be acknowledged (e.g., when translating verbatim responses from expert interviews, focus group discussions, and open-ended survey responses).

Related to contents, further research could incorporate the idea of regenerative tourism more comprehensively. As proposed by Bellato & Pollock (2023, p. 1), “[...] regenerative tourism should centre place and its communities to restore harmonious and reciprocal relations between humans and the rest of nature.” This concept perceives tourism as a contributor to the overall health and well-being of places and communities. This idea of “regenerative thinking” suggests looking at tourism as part of a bigger social-ecological system contributing to health and well-being. Therefore, further approaches need to think beyond tourism and focus on the well-being of all parts of the system, and new methods of measuring different aspects of well-being might be necessary in this context, as also suggested by Bellato & Pollock (2023). Similarly, Esau & Senese (2022) recommend studying reciprocal community-guest relationships and investigating how experiential wine and food tourism might boost the well-being of these communities. Further research could, for example, explore the role of local and agricultural food products, along with biodiversity efforts in their production, to develop sustainable

and resilient food and agri-tourism strategies that benefit both local producers and visitors.

Additionally, a natural progression of this work would be to incorporate cultural and social contexts. As culinary tourism experiences are usually influenced by cultural contexts and backgrounds (Long, 2004; Su & Horng, 2012), the findings obtained through the chosen samples might not be applicable to different backgrounds. Specifically, preferences for particular tourism settings, their spatial design, and recommendations for restorative environments may vary across cultural backgrounds, as highlighted by Subiza-Pérez et al. (2021). Moreover, social interactions within the travel group can also influence tourism experiences and behavioural intentions (Song, Ali, Cobanoglu, Nanu, & Lee, 2022) and dining experiences in specific, as especially restaurants are often visited for social purposes (Cao, Li, DiPietro, & So, 2019). Therefore, this social aspect should be included in further studies. Similarly, the presence of other people and their interaction can also be seen as an impediment to restoration (Subiza-Pérez et al., 2021) and seems a promising area for further research.

Godovykh & Tasci (2020) emphasise that consumer-related outcomes, such as emotions and transformation, are key outcomes of tourism experiences, alongside product/brand-related outcomes like behavioural intentions. At the same time, Kastenholz, Marques, & Carneiro, (2020) claim that sensory-rich place experiences can significantly enhance emotions. As culinary tourism settings can be seen as highly sensorial places, further studies should investigate the emotional impact of tourism environments along with their restorative effects. Hereby, further studies should not only focus on recovery from stress and mental fatigue but also seek to understand immediately resulting emotions like joy, excitement, and wonder and how they contribute to overall well-being and pleasure. Nevertheless, it has to be acknowledged that emotion studies might require new approaches such as objective physiological measures besides subjective measures, and should incorporate real-time or near-real-time experience measurements (Shoval, Schvimer, & Tamir, 2018).

Similarly, the aspect of transformation could be integrated into further studies: Tourism often exposes individuals to new experiences, which can lead to lifelong changes through transformative experiences. Zhao & Agyeiwaah (2023) suggest that such experiences become transformative when they are integrated into a person's daily life and worldview. Esau & Senese (2022) specifically highlight the transformational potential of wine and culinary tourism in promoting sustainability. They suggest that by focusing on the circular economy of regional gastronomic dishes and promoting participatory activities around local food and wine, a region can become more resilient and encourage sustainable behaviour and attitudes in tourists. For the context of forest park visits, Zhang, Zhang, Yang, & Ma (2024) have, for example, already proven that the perceived restorativeness of an environment is a key driver of visitors' well-being and subsequent pro-environmental behaviour (e.g., proper waste disposal, enhanced responsibility to protect the environment). Future research could therefore explore the potential of transformative experiences in culinary tourism in driving attitudinal changes (e.g., enhancing pro-environmental attitudes) and sustainable behaviours (e.g., driving purchases of local agricultural products instead of mass-produced goods) besides the restorative effects on travellers. However, Neuhofer (2025) notes that measuring transformative experiences requires long-term follow-up.

Furthermore, the role of the culinary tourist's pre-travel motivation and expectations should be investigated in upcoming studies, as the effect of culinary tourism experiences on satisfaction, memorability, restoration as well as on behavioural intentions might differ related to the importance of food as a travel motivation; e.g., Hahm, Kwun, & Kang (2023) have demonstrated that recreational motivation plays a moderating role in studying the effects of environmental stimuli on satisfaction and behavioural responses within the context of alternative golf tourism. Similarly, Björk & Kauppinen-Räsänen (2014) highlighted that the attitude and expectations towards local food encounters influence food tourism experiences. Finally, the extent to which restoration is desired during a vacation or in a specific setting might also have an influence on these effects and on how individuals perceive the restorative potential of the environment. For example, Twedt, Rainey, & Proffitt (2019) suggest that individuals in need of restoration (due to depleted cognitive, emotional, or physical resources) may evaluate the environment's restorative potential differently compared to those who do not need restoration. Finally, exploring the impact of an individual's need for deceleration appears promising for future research: Sager, Timm, Hoffmann, & Orth (2023) proposed that their need-for-deceleration scale helps to identify customer segments who desire a slower pace of life and may be more receptive to products that facilitate deceleration, which could benefit slow food travel providers.

Furthermore, future research could explore the impact of negative culinary tourism experiences and their impact on behavioural intentions, as research on memorable food tourism experiences has largely focused on positive ones (Stone & Sthapit, 2024). At the same time, it was already shown that positive and negative experiences can contribute to the creation of lasting memories (see e.g., Sihombing, Antonio, Sijabat, & Bernarto, 2024; Stone & Sthapit, 2024). Investigating how different types of memorable negative culinary experiences (e.g., poor service, dissatisfaction with food quality, or environmental factors) affect future decisions could therefore offer valuable insights for both tourism providers and destination marketers.

Finally, further research in this direction would profit from incorporating and investigating concepts such as 1) co-creation, 2) authenticity, and 3) the impact of technology on tourism experiences, as generally suggested for the field of food tourism by Okumus (2021): Following Carvalho, Kastenholz, & Carneiro (2023), tourism co-creation and culinary experiences are connected, as tourists' active involvement, local interactions, personalisation, and emotional and cognitive engagement are key to creating memorable and distinctive tourism experiences. Therefore, further research should include co-creation aspects such as interaction and personalisation, as well as the consumer's role in creating their own experiences, beyond the idea of memorable experiences that are intentionally designed by providers (Schmitt, 1999). With ongoing debates surrounding the meaning of locality and authenticity (Sims, 2009), experiences from consuming authentic food remain underexplored. This suggests a need for further studies to focus more on the concept of authenticity. Finally, investigating the effects of technology-enhanced tourism experiences remains scarce in the general tourism literature (Neuhofer, Buhalis, & Ladkin, 2014), and specifically in the field of culinary tourism, despite the growing importance and use of automation and technology in this sector (e.g., service robots) (Fusté-Forné & Ivanov, 2021). The perception and evaluation of such technology-based and enhanced experiences and their behavioural as well as

restorative outcomes should therefore also be covered in further studies while assessing the ongoing relevance and applicability of existing frameworks such as Pine & Gilmore's (1998) 4E framework.

Lastly, the limitations of the underlying framework (Theory of Tourism Consumption Systems by Woodside & Dubelaar, 2002) need to be acknowledged. The sequential approach might overemphasise the assumption of rational and linear decision-making, as tourists' decision-making processes are often highly complex and influenced by many factors (Li, Liu, Dai, & Chen, 2022). Additionally, it was shown that new and atypical culinary tourist segments have emerged, such as those engaging in *food-stagramming*, for whom the model might be inappropriate.

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APPENDIX

- Appendix 1: Interview guideline for focus group discussions (study 2)
- Appendix 2: Focus group participants (study 2)
- Appendix 3: Coding tree focus group discussions (study 2)
- Appendix 4: Interview guideline for expert interviews (study 3)
- Appendix 5: List of experts (study 3)
- Appendix 6: Coding tree expert interviews (study 3)
- Appendix 7: Data collection instrument for experiment (study 4)
- Appendix 8: Questionnaire for quantitative survey (study 5)
- Appendix 9: Effects of the experience type on the relationship between culinary tourism experiences and restoration, satisfaction and memorability (study 5)
- Appendix 10: Effects of the destination type on the relationship between culinary tourism experiences and restoration, satisfaction and memorability (study 5)
- Appendix 11: Effects of the tourism setting on the relationship between culinary tourism experiences and restoration, satisfaction and memorability (study 5)
- Appendix 12: Testing moderated mediation between culinary tourism experiences and behaviour for different experience types (study 5)
- Appendix 13: Testing moderated mediation between culinary tourism experiences and behaviour for different destination types (study 5)
- Appendix 14: Testing moderated mediation between culinary tourism experiences and behaviour for different tourism setting (study 5)
- Appendix 15: Evaluation of individual biodiversity aspects of culinary tourism environments (study 4)
- Appendix 16: Esthetics, dining atmospherics and dining scape preference evaluations for different environments (study 4)
- Appendix 17: Emotional responses related to different environments (study 4)

Appendix 1: Interview guideline for focus group discussions (study 2)

Interview guideline

Date:

Time: start: end:

Moderator(s):

Participants:

- ☐ Introduction of the moderator(s)
- ☐ Explanation of the project
- ☐ Permission for audio/video recording
- ☐ Information related to anonymity and good research practice

Introduction	
- Andereck, Bricker, Kerstetter, & Nickerson (2006) - Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello (2009) - Braun-LaTour, Grinley, & Loftus (2006) - Hosany & Witham (2010) - Kruger, Viljoen, & Saayman (2013) - Oh, Fiore, & Jeoung (2007) - Pine & Gilmore (1998) - Quan & Wang (2004) - Shaw & Ivens (2002) - Sipe (2018)	- Could you please introduce yourself and briefly describe your general travel behaviour. - Please explain your photo/anecdote. <i>(Before the discussion, participants will be asked to bring a photo from their most memorable tourism experience or to think of an anecdote related to their most memorable tourism experience and to share it in the discussion.)</i> - What makes this experience so especially memorable? Why do you enjoy thinking back on this holiday experience? - To what extent did sensory or culinary elements play a role in this experience?
Elements of memorable (culinary) tourism experiences	
- Andereck, Bricker, Kerstetter, & Nickerson (2006) - Cutler & Carmichael (2010) - Hosany & Witham (2010) - Kim (2014) - Kim, Ritchie, & McCormick (2012) - McCabe (2002) - Morgan, Elbe, & Curiel (2009) - Oh, Fiore, & Jeoung (2007) - Quadri-Felitti & Fiore (2012) - Quan & Wang (2004) - Shaw & Ivens (2002) - Walls, Okumus, Wang, & Kwun (2011)	From your point of view, what contributes to a successful holiday experience? What has to be fulfilled so that you will remember it positively?

• Fossgard & Fredman (2019) • Gentile, Spiller, & Noci (2007) • Grove, Fisk, & Dorsch (1998) • Jacobsen (2008) • Jennings & Weiler (2006) • Pearce (2011) • Quan & Wang (2004)	• What role do human relationships and human components (e.g., service staff, fellow travellers, etc.) and "non-human" components (e.g., the environment, the offerings and activities on site) play?
• Agyeiwaah, Otoo, Sunkul, & Huang (2019) • Everett (2016) • Hall & Mitchell (2005) • Kauppinen-Räsänen, Gummerus, & Lehtola (2013) • Mason & O'Mahony (2007) • Morgan (2006) • Pearce (2011) • Stone, Soulard, Migacz, & Wolf (2018) • Sutton (2010) • Tsai (2016)	• To what extent do you think food / eating / drinking are part of a successful holiday experience? • What types of culinary experiences do you prefer and how do you assess the following? • Culinary experiences <i>to see and observe</i>, e.g., a museum explaining the history/origin of a culinary product • Culinary experiences <i>to taste and indulge</i>, e.g., wine tasting • Culinary experiences <i>to participate</i>, e.g., cooking classes
Outcomes of memorable tourism experiences	
• Ballantyne, Packer, & Sutherland (2011) • Coudounaris & Sthapit (2017) • Fernandes & Cruz (2016) • Hosany & Witham (2010) • Kim (2018) • Kruger, Viljoen, & Saayman (2013) • Mody, Suess, & Lehto (2017) • Oh, Fiore, & Jeoung, (2007) • Pillemer (2003) • Ritchie, Carr, & Cooper (2003) • Sotiriadis & Gursoy (2016) • Stone, Migacz, & Wolf (2019) • Zhang, Wu, & Buhalis (2018)	• Please complete the following sentence: <i>„A nice holiday experience that I enjoy remembering is most likely to get me...”</i> • What actions are you most likely to take after a trip with positive and memorable experiences? Please think of the example discussed in the introduction as well (photo / anecdote). • Recommendation/positive word of mouth? • Return visit? • Repurchase of products that I got to know on this trip (e.g., wine, groceries, etc.)? • Others?
Role of environments and experiencescapes	
• Andereck, Bricker, Kerstetter, & Nickerson (2006) • Bitner (1992) • Fossgard & Fredman (2019) • Moosberg (2007) • Morgan (2006) • Packer (2014) • Pizam (2010) • Schmitt (1999) • Sharma & Rather (2015) • Singh, & Singh (2019) • Stamboulis & Skayannis (2003)	• In your opinion, what role does the environment play for your holiday experiences? How should the environment be designed so that you will remember this experience positively (which properties, features ...)? What might cause negative effects? • What properties should a vacation environment have so that it has a positive effect on the recreational and restorative value of your vacation?

• Svabo, Larsen, Haldrup, & Bærenholdt (2013) • Walls, Okumus, Wang, & Kwun (2011)	○ How do you assess the role of the physical environment (space, seating, relaxation areas, design, greenery, natural elements ...)? ○ How do you assess the role of the sensory environment (esthetics, colors, background noise ...)? ○ How do you assess the role of the social environment (other guests, fellow travellers and companions ...)? ○ How do you assess the role of the cognitive environment (signs, information boards...)? ○ How do you assess the role of the temporal environment (time pressure, adherence to schedules ...)?
Role of restoration and restorativeness	
• Chen, Huang, & Zhang (2017) • Hartig (2004) • Hartig, Kaiser, & Bowler (1997) • Lehto (2012) • Lin (2014) • Packer (2014) • Pals, Steg, Siero, & van der Zee (2009) • Pearce (2011) • Scopelliti & Giuliani (2004)	• To what extent is rest / relaxation an important motive for your vacation? • To what extent can culinary experiences contribute to your relaxation and restoration on vacation? • How do (culinary) holiday experiences have to be designed so that they contribute to your relaxation and restoration? What role does the tourism environment play?

Appendix 2: Focus group participants (study 2)

Focus group 1 – International travellers (1:44 hrs.)

Participant No.	Gender	Age	Nationality
P1 – Anna	Female	30	Finland
P2 – Stefan	Male	22	Bulgaria
P3 – Peter	Male	43	Austria
P4 – Markus	Male	22	Austria
P5 – Luis	Male	28	Mexico
P6 – Veronika	Female	25	Slovakia

Focus group 2 – Young travellers (1:19 hrs.)

Participant No.	Gender	Age	Nationality
P7 – Mio	Female	22	Austria/Japan
P8 – Robin	Male	23	Austria
P9 – Alexander	Male	27	Austria
P10 – Henna	Female	25	Pakistan
P11 – Martina	Female	22	Austria
P12 – Viktoria	Female	22	Austria

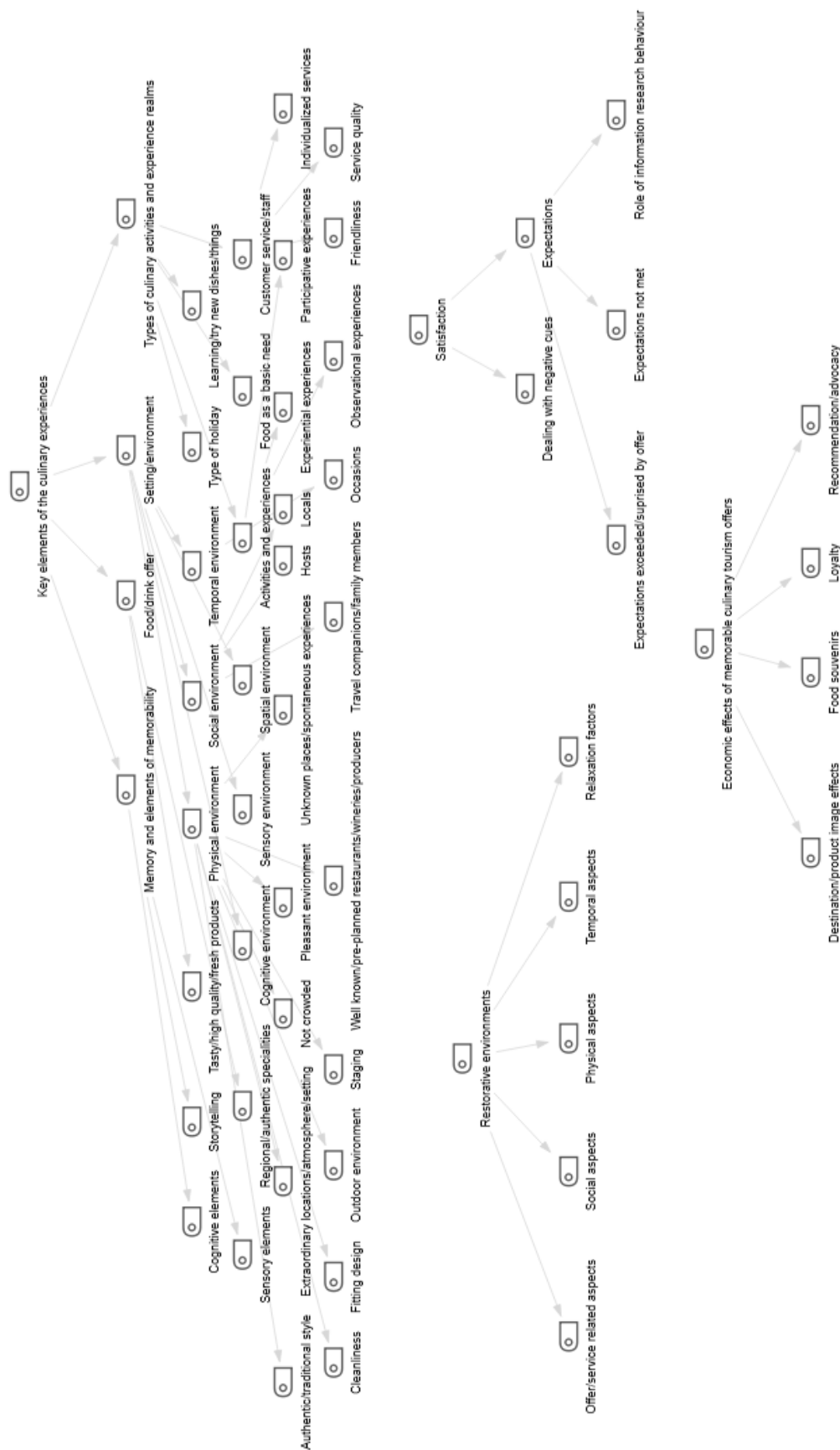
Focus group 3 – Families (1:20 hrs.)

Participant No.	Gender	Age	No. of children (age)	Nationality
P13 – Sonja	Female	41	2 (11, 15)	Austria
P14 – Rainer	Male	35	2 (1, 5)	Austria
P15 – Andrea	Female	45	1 (12)	Austria
P16 – Claudia	Female	44	2 (5, 9)	Austria
P17 – Christoph	Male	38	2 (6, 8)	Austria
P18 – Michaela	Female	40	3 (3, 6, 9)	Austria

Focus group 4 – Travellers aged 40+ (1:35 hrs.)

Participant No.	Gender	Age	Nationality
P19 – Michaela	Female	52	USA
P20 – Josef	Male	58	Austria
P21 – Oskar	Male	47	Austria
P22 – Andreas	Male	43	Austria
P23 – Brigitte	Female	55	Austria
P24 – Reinhard	Male	49	Austria
P25 – Constanze	Female	42	Austria

Appendix 3: Coding tree focus group discussions (study 2)



Appendix 4: Interview guideline for expert interviews (study 3)

Expert interview guideline

Date:

Time: start: end:

Interviewer(s):

Interviewee(s):

- ☐ Introduction of the interviewer(s)
- ☐ Explanation of the project
- ☐ Permission for audio/video recording
- ☐ Information related to anonymity and good research practice

Introduction	
	• Could you please introduce yourself and inform us about your personal professional background related to culinary tourism?
Elements of the culinary tourism experience	
• Andereck, Bricker, Kerstetter, & Nickerson (2006) • Cutler & Carmichael (2010) • Hosany & Witham (2010) • Kim (2014) • Kim, Ritchie, & McCormick (2012) • McCabe (2002) • Morgan, Elbe, & Curiel (2009) • Oh, Fiore, & Jeoung (2007) • Quadri-Felitti & Fiore (2012) • Quan & Wang (2004) • Shaw & Ivens (2002) • Walls, Okumus, Wang, & Kwun (2011) • Fossgard & Fredman (2019) • Gentile, Spiller, & Noci (2007) • Grove, Fisk, & Dorsch (1998) • Jacobsen (2008) • Jennings & Weiler (2006) • Pearce (2011) • Quan & Wang (2004)	• From your point of view, which (key) elements contribute to a culinary tourism experience? ○ How important are human relationships and human components (e.g., service staff, fellow travellers, etc.) and "non-human" components (e.g., the setting/environment, the culinary offer and activities)?
Memory and memorability of culinary tourism experiences	
• Agyeiwaah, Otoo, Suntikul, & Huang (2019) • Everett (2016) • Hall & Mitchell (2005) • Kauppinen-Räsänen, Gummerus, & Lehtola (2013) • Mason & O'Mahony (2007) • Morgan (2006) • Pearce (2011)	• What culinary experiences or types of experiences are most memorable for travellers? • What is most likely to be remembered? Why? • How do you evaluate culinary experiences in terms of their memorability? • How do culinary tourism experiences have to be designed in order to be memorable?

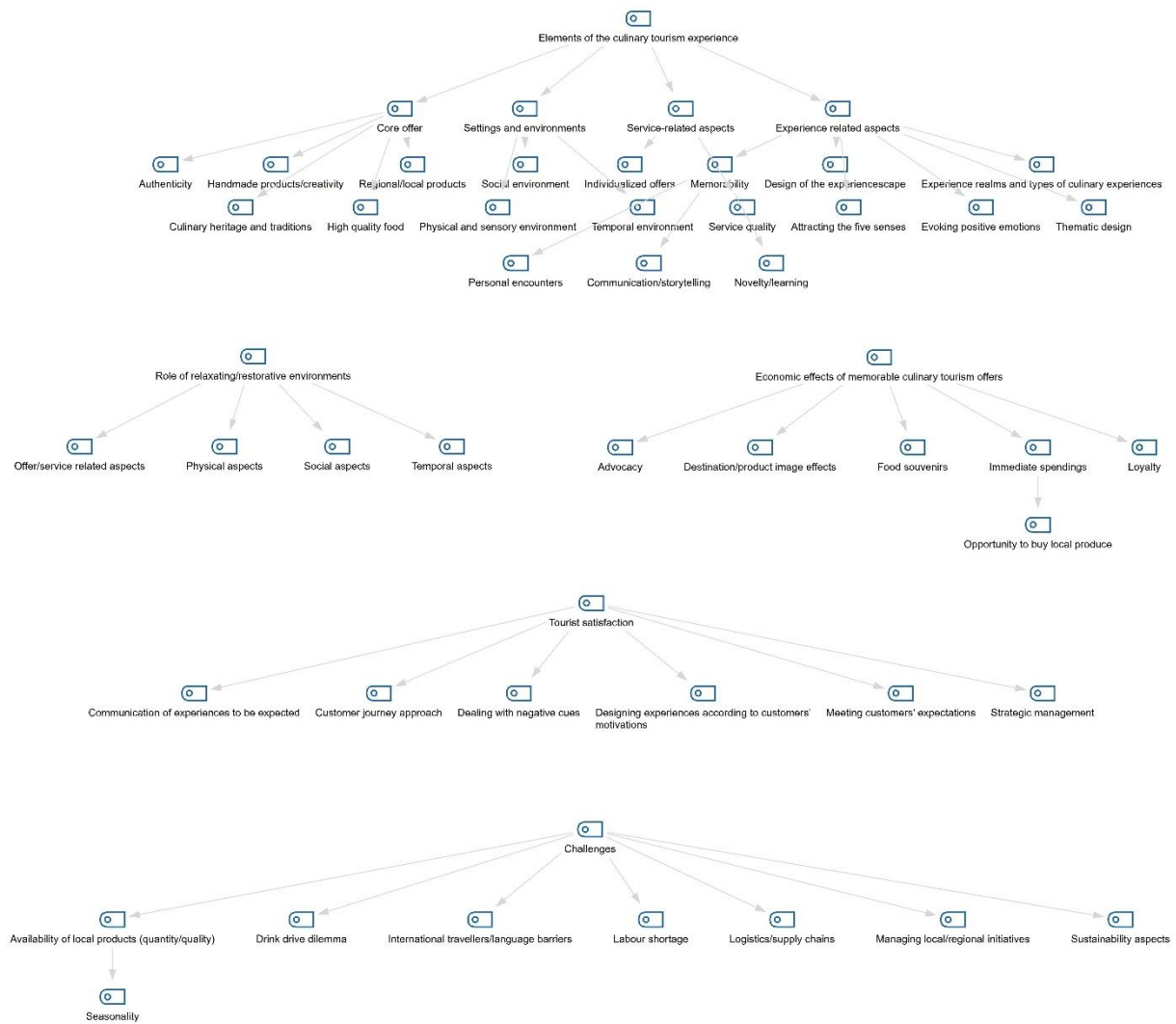
• Stone, Soulard, Migacz, & Wolf (2018) • Sutton (2010) • Tsai (2016)	• Can you think of any outstanding examples? What makes them so special?
Outcomes of memorable culinary tourism experiences	
• Ballantyne, Packer, & Sutherland (2011) • Coudounaris & Sthapit (2017) • Fernandes & Cruz (2016) • Hosany & Witham (2010) • Kim (2018) • Kruger, Viljoen, & Saayman (2013) • Mody, Suess, & Lehto (2017) • Oh, Fiore, & Jeoung, (2007) • Pillemer (2003) • Ritchie, Carr, & Cooper (2003) • Sotiriadis & Gursoy (2016) • Stone, Migacz, & Wolf (2019) • Zhang, Wu, & Buhalis (2018)	• In your opinion, what might be the outcomes of positive and memorable (culinary) tourism experiences? ○ To what extent might the customer value be influenced? ○ To what extent can guest satisfaction, recommendation and loyalty be influenced? ○ To what extent can everyday behaviour be influenced, e.g., buying regional food?
Role of environments and experiencescapes	
• Andereck, Bricker, Kerstetter, & Nickerson (2006) • Bitner (1992) • Fossgard & Fredman (2019) • Moosberg (2007) • Morgan (2006) • Packer (2014) • Pizam (2010) • Schmitt (1999) • Sharma & Rather (2015) • Singh, & Singh (2019) • Stamboulis & Skayanis (2003) • Svabo, Larsen, Haldrup, & Bærenholdt (2013) • Walls, Okumus, Wang, & Kwun (2011)	• What elements should a memorable culinary tourism setting have? ○ How do you assess the role of the physical environment (space, seating, relaxation areas, design, greenery, natural elements ...)? ○ How do you assess the role of the sensory environment (esthetics, colors, background noise ...)? ○ How do you assess the role of the social environment (other guests, fellow travellers and companions ...)? ○ How do you assess the role of the cognitive environment (signs, information boards...)? ○ How do you assess the role of the temporal environment (time pressure, adherence to schedules ...)?
Role of restoration and restorativeness	
• Chen, Huang, & Zhang (2017) • Hartig (2004) • Hartig, Kaiser, & Bowler (1997) • Lehto (2012) • Lin (2014) • Packer (2014) • Pals, Steg, Siero, & van der Zee (2009) • Pearce (2011) • Scopelliti & Giuliani (2004)	• To what extent can culinary experiences contribute to a traveller's relaxation and restoration on vacation? • How do culinary tourism experiences have to be designed so that they contribute to a traveller's relaxation and restoration?

Appendix 5: List of experts (study 3)

Expert no.	Position	Organisation	Location	Date of interview	Duration	Mode
E1	Executive Director	World Food Travel Association	USA	16.03.2023	0:22	Online – Zoom
E2	Manager and hotel development expert	Niu Hotels	Europe	24.03.2023	0:30	Online – MS Teams
E3	Marketing manager and coordinator of wine & culinary tourism products	Salzburger Land Tourismus (DMO)	Austria	14.04.2023	0:35	Online – MS Teams
E4	Agricultural marketing expert	Austrian Chamber of Agriculture	Austria	18.04.2023	0:31	Online – MS Teams
E5	Project manager for wine & culinary tourism initiatives	Weinviertel Tourismus (DMO)	Austria	22.05.2023	0:45	Online – MS Teams
E6	Head of Product	IDM Südtirol - Alto Adige	Italy	23.05.2023	0:21	Online – MS Teams
E7	Coordinator culinary and regional affairs	Energy and Environment Agency of Lower Austria	Austria	24.05.2023	0:44	Online – MS Teams
E8	Chef/cook to rent	Traditional Austrian restaurant/self-employed (rent-a-chef company)	Austria	24.05.2023	0:20	Online – MS Teams
E9	Consultant	Tourism consulting agency focusing on destination management	Austria	31.05.2023	0:36	Online – MS Teams

		and culinary tourism experience design				
E10	Manager of the initiative "Netzwerk Kulinarik"	Agrarmarketing Austria (AMA)	Austria	05.06.2023	0:19	Online – MS Teams
E11	Professor (expertise: economy in tourism management, product development, service design)	TH Deggen-dorf	Germany	06.06.2023	0:40	Online – MS Teams
E12	Manager "Genuss-land Ober-österreich"	Amt der OÖ Landesregie-rung	Austria	13.06.2023	0:24	Online – MS Teams
E13	Managing director	Weintourismus Burgenland	Austria	05.07.2023	0:31	Online – MS Teams
E14	Culinary tourism product developer and manager of the "Slow Food" initiative	Kärnten Wer-bung (DMO)	Austria	14.07.2023	0:20	Online – MS Teams

Appendix 6: Coding framework expert interviews (study 3)



Appendix 7: Data collection instrument for experiment (study 4)

Herzlich willkommen zu dieser Umfrage. In welcher Sprache möchten Sie an dieser Befragung teilnehmen?

Welcome to this survey. In which language would you like to respond to this survey?

Bitte wählen Sie Ihre bevorzugte Sprache.

Please select your preferred language.

☐ English

☐ Deutsch

Dear respondent,

we are currently conducting a survey on culinary tourism experiences and their environments. We would like to invite you to participate in our study. Completing the questionnaire will take you about 8 minutes. Your answers are strictly confidential and anonymous.

Thank you very much for participating in our survey!

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU

Please indicate your gender:

☐ female

☐ male

☐ non-binary

☐ I prefer not to say

Please state your age:

years

What is your nationality?

☐ Austria

☐ Germany

☐ Hungary

☐ Italy

☐ Poland

☐ Slovakia

☐ Other:

Please characterize your current living environment:

☐ Completely urban

☐ Rather urban

☐ Rather rural

☐ Completely rural

How often do you visit tourism environments where culinary experiences are offered, such as dining at restaurants and visiting tasting rooms/winerys/markets etc.?

☐ Once a month or more often (1)

☐ (2)

☐ (3)

☐ (4)

☐ (5)

☐ (6)

☐ Once a year or less (7)

CURRENT STATE

Below is a number of statements, people have made when asked to describe their present states. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of them by ticking the corresponding box.

Right now, I am...

... in a good mood (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	... in a bad mood (7)
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly agree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	Strongly disagree (7)
I have a frequent desire for periods of peace and quiet.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel my life is rushing by.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My need for deceleration is very high.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I often experience the feeling that time flies by.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have a strong need for slowing down my life.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

EXPOSURE TO NATURE

Please share your usual exposure to the natural environment:

Most of my everyday environment is natural. (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	Very little of my everyday environment is natural. (7)
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please indicate how much you notice the natural environment in your everyday life:

A great deal (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	Not much (7)
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please indicate how often you're exposed to nature-rich environments outside of your everyday environment:

Once a month or more (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	Once a year or less (7)
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please indicate how much you take notice of the nature in natural environments:

A great deal (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	Not much (7)
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly agree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	Strongly disagree (7)
Not interacting with nature affects my ability to easily cope with unpleasant thoughts.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Visualizing natural scenes makes me happy.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
To maintain physical health, I have to interact with nature.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interacting with nature keeps me optimistic.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel uneasy when I am apart from nature for a long time.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am more capable of gathering my thoughts on the things I need to do when I am close to nature.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Strongly agree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	Strongly disagree (7)
In order not to feel anxious, I have to interact with nature.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Interacting with nature makes me happy.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel relaxed when I think of nature.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am more positive when I think of nature.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Not interacting with nature poorly affects my physical health.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Next you will see a photograph of a tourism/hospitality scene. Please look at it carefully – we will next ask you to complete a few questions about it.

Stimuli 1



Stimuli 2



Stimuli 3





Stimuli 4

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

I think this environment is...

	Strongly agree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	Strongly disagree (7)
rich in species.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
wild.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
rich in plants.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
rich in animals.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
varied.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
natural in character.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

All in all, I find the biological diversity in this scene is...

very high (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	very low (7)
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

When viewing this scene,...

	strongly agree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	strongly disagree (7)
I imagine myself to be part of a larger cyclical process of living.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I think of the natural world as a community which I belong to.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel a sense of oneness with the natural world around me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

RESTORATION

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

	Strongly agree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	Strongly disagree (7)
I get new enthusiasm and energy for my everyday routines from this environment.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I can forget everyday worries there.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My concentration and alertness clearly increase there.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Strongly agree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	Strongly disagree (7)
I would feel calmer after being in this environment.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Visiting this tourism environment is a way of clearing and clarifying my thoughts.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
After visiting this environment, I would feel restored and relaxed.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

	Strongly agree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	Strongly disagree (7)
This place seems limitless to allow exploration.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
This place meets my expectations.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There are many interesting things in this place that draw my attention.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
This culinary experience there allows to follow my own pace.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Strongly agree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	Strongly disagree (7)
This place suits my personality.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
This place is a refuge from unwanted distractions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is a clear order in the physical arrangement of this place.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am engrossed by this place.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Strongly agree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	Strongly disagree (7)
There are few boundaries to limit my possibility for moving around.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
This place gives me a break.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Everything matches the overall environment.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am able to encounter culinary experience there autonomously.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Strongly agree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	Strongly disagree (7)
This place makes me wonder about things.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
This place is different from where I usually live.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

ASSESSMENT OF THIS SETTING

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

	Strongly agree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	Strongly disagree (7)
The scene shown in the photograph is visually appealing.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

	Strongly agree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	Strongly disagree (7)
There are a variety of colors present in the servicescape.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is a lot to look at in the servicescape scene.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There are a variety of elements present in the servicescape.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The servicescape setting contains a lot of elements/noticeable features.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

	Strongly agree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	Strongly disagree (7)
The servicescape screens either interesting or uninteresting features that might lie ahead.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The servicescape setting appears very spacious and open so that you can see deep and wide from your view point.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The servicescape light level is good enough without deep shadow obstructing your complete view.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

	Strongly agree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	Strongly disagree (7)
The servicescape has visible walkways to find your way around.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The servicescape setting contains some landmarks which help to locate where you are.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The servicescape setting has good clarity of layout or presence of signage which can apparently assist finding your way around in the setting.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

	Strongly agree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	Strongly disagree (7)
The various elements of the servicescapes 'hang together' very well.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The arrangement of the servicescape appears visually balanced.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The elements of the servicescapes have good harmony with the surroundings of the servicescape, without deep contrast.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

How easy do you find it to visually process this scene?

Very easy (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	Very difficult (7)
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

How easy is it for you to visualize this scene with your eyes closed?

Very easy (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	Very difficult (7)
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

How easy would you find the task to describe this scene at a later point in time?

Very easy (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) Very difficult (7)

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

PREFERENCES

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

	Strongly agree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	Strongly disagree (7)
I like this servicescape very much.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I prefer this servicescape over all other servicescape of this kind I have ever been/seen.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

	Strongly agree (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	Strongly disagree (7)
I like the design of this environment (décor, style, furnishing, setting, etc.).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I like the spatial layout of this environment (seat space, privacy, etc.).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I like the ambience of this environment (lighting, colors, etc.).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

This servicescape is...

pleasant (1) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ unpleasant (7)

This servicescape is...

arousing (1) ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ not arousing (7)

INTENDED BEHAVIOUR

How likely would you be to decide having a culinary experience in this tourism environment?

Extremely likely (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) Extremely unlikely
(7)

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

How likely are you to say positive things about this tourism environment to other people?

Extremely likely (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) Extremely unlikely
(7)

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

How likely are you to visit this type of tourism environment?

Extremely likely (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) Extremely unlikely
(7)

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Thank you very much for your participation!

Appendix 8: Questionnaire for quantitative survey (study 5)

Herzlich willkommen zu dieser Umfrage. In welcher Sprache möchten Sie an dieser Befragung teilnehmen?

Welcome to this survey. In which language would you like to respond to this survey?

Bitte wählen Sie Ihre bevorzugte Sprache.

Please select your preferred language.

☐ English

☒ Deutsch

Dear respondent,

the IMC Institute Tourism, Wine Business and Marketing would like to invite you to participate in our survey on culinary tourism experiences during leisure trips. Completing the questionnaire will take you about 8-10 minutes. Your answers are strictly confidential and anonymous.

Thank you very much for participating in our survey!

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU

Please indicate your gender:

☐ Male

☒ Female

☐ Other

Please state your age:

years

What is your nationality?

☐ Austria

☒ Germany

☐ Other:

Do you travel at least occasionally for leisure purposes?

☐ Yes

☐ No, I don't travel for leisure purposes at all

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR MOST RECENT VACATION

How would you classify your most recent vacation?

Please indicate the main purposes of your trip (max. 3).

☐ Visiting friends and relatives

☐ Medical and health tourism

☐ Holidays at the lakeside

☐ Spa and wellness tourism

☐ Holidays in the mountains

☐ Cruise

☐ Camping

☐ Shopping

☐ Culinary tourism/wine tourism

☐ Family trip

☐ Nature-based/rural tourism

☐ Holidays at the seaside, beach/coastal tourism

☐ Visiting an event/festival

☐ City trip

☐ Active/sport tourism

☐ Cultural tourism

☐ Other:

How would you classify the destination where you spent your last vacation?

☐ Urban/city

☐ Rural/countryside

Please think of the most memorable food/drink experience that you had during this vacation (e.g. restaurant visit, wine tasting, cooking class...).

Please describe this experience briefly.

Please note that all of the following questions are about this experience.

ACTIVITIES AND SETTING

Where exactly did the food/drink experience occur?

- ☐ Stores offering various regional and typical products under one roof (e.g. Eataly stores)
- ☐ Street food
- ☐ Picnic
- ☐ Farm/orchard/u-pick location
- ☐ Winery/brewery/distillery
- ☐ Food/wine/beer route
- ☐ Local restaurant
- ☐ Theme restaurant
- ☐ Markets (e.g. food market, farmers' market)
- ☐ Dinner theatre
- ☐ Festival/event (e.g. wine festival, country fair)
- ☐ Cooking class
- ☐ Wine store
- ☐ Company visit/visiting an experience world (e.g. chocolate production site, food processing facility)
- ☐ (Highly) Rated restaurant (e.g. Michelin star rated restaurant)
- ☐ Outdoor dining
- ☐ Other:

How would you classify this food/drink experience?

- ☐ OBSERVATIONAL culinary tourism experience, e.g. visiting a museum which explains the history/origin of a product, watching the production process
- ☐ EXPERIENTIAL culinary tourism experience, e.g. wine tasting, restaurant visit, trying regional specialties
- ☐ PARTICIPATIVE culinary tourism experience, e.g. cooking class

COMPANIONS AND SERVICE QUALITY

Who participated in the experience?

☐ Only me

☐ Spouse/partner

☐ Child/children

☐ Other family members/relatives (e.g. parents)

☐ Friends/colleagues

☐ Other customers/guests

☐ Locals

☐ Host(s) (e.g. the farmer while doing farm holidays, the vintner leading the wine tasting)

☐ Others:

How do you assess the service quality of staff involved in this food/drink experience?

	7 - Strongly agree	6	5	4	3	2	1 - Strongly disagree
The service staff offered customized services.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The service staff was nice and friendly.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The services provided were impressive.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

CULINARY EXPERIENCES

How much do you agree to the following statements related to this food/drink experience?

	7 - Strongly agree	6	5	4	3	2	1 - Strongly disagree
The setting of the culinary experience was attractive and aesthetically pleasing.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The experience really enhanced my skills.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I felt I played a different character there.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It stimulated my curiosity to learn new things.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The setting provided pleasure to my senses.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	7 - Strongly agree	6	5	4	3	2	1 - Strongly disagree
It was pleasant just being there.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I learnt a lot during this culinary experience.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I felt like I was in a different time or place.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
This culinary activity included positive surprises.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The experience let me imagine being someone else.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	7 - Strongly agree	6	5	4	3	2	1 - Strongly disagree
This experience made me more knowledgeable.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I completely escaped from my daily routine.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It was a real learning experience.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
This culinary experience was amusing.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
This culinary activity was entertaining.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	7 - Strongly agree	6	5	4	3	2	1 - Strongly disagree
This culinary activity was fun.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
This culinary experience was captivating.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The setting pays close attention to design details.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

FOOD EXPERIENCES

How much do you agree to the following statements related to this food/drink experience?

	7 - Strongly agree	6	5	4	3	2	1 - Strongly disagree
The food and drinks I consumed there were truly authentic for the region I visited.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The social environment of the culinary experience was pleasant (e.g. travel companions, locals).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The food and drinks offered during this culinary experience are based on a common overall theme.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The dishes/food and drinks I consumed there were locally produced.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	7 - Strongly agree	6	5	4	3	2	1 - Strongly disagree
The food and drinks I consumed tell interesting stories about their producers, the region etc.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The food and drinks I consumed there were of high quality.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
During this culinary experience I was able to get in touch with the producer(s) (e.g. wine maker).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The food and drinks I consumed there represent the destination's culture.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

EXPERIENCE ENVIRONMENT

How much do you agree to the following statements related to the environment of this food/drink experience?

	7 - Strongly agree	6	5	4	3	2	1 - Strongly disagree
This place made me wonder about things.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
This place gave me a break.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
This place was a refuge from unwanted distractions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
This place was different from where I usually live.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There was a clear order in the physical arrangement of this place.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There were many interesting things in this place that draw my attention	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I was able to encounter this culinary experience autonomously.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	7 - Strongly agree	6	5	4	3	2	1 - Strongly disagree
There were few boundaries to limit my possibility for moving around.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I was engrossed by this place.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
This place seemed limitless to allow exploration.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Everything matched the overall environment.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
This place met my expectations.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
This culinary experience allowed to follow my own pace.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
This place suited my personality.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

MEMORIES

How much do you agree to the following statements related to this food/drink experience?

	7 - Strongly agree	6	5	4	3	2	1 - Strongly disagree
I have wonderful memories about this culinary experience.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I won't forget culinary experiences on this vacation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I remember many positive things about these culinary experiences.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

RECALLED RESTORATION

How much do you agree to the following statements related to this food/drink experience?

	7 - Strongly agree	6	5	4	3	2	1 - Strongly disagree
I calmed down.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I felt restored and relaxed.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I forgot everyday worries.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My concentration and alertness increased.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I gained new spirit for my everyday routines.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	7 - Strongly agree	6	5	4	3	2	1 - Strongly disagree
I became more self-confident.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My vitality and energy increased.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My thoughts were clarified.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I gained faith in tomorrow.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

LOYALTY

How much do you agree to the following statements?

	7 - Strongly agree	6	5	4	3	2	1 - Strongly disagree
I consider this culinary experience at the destination my first choice.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I consider visiting the destination again to have similar culinary experiences.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

RECOMMENDATION

How much do you agree to the following statements?

	7 - Strongly agree	6	5	4	3	2	1 - Strongly disagree
I spoke positively of the culinary experience at this destination to others.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I told stories about the experience at this destination to family members and close personal friends.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I recommended the culinary experience at this destination to someone who seeked my advice.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

EFFECTS

How much do you agree to the following statements?

	7 - Strongly agree	6	5	4	3	2	1 - Strongly disagree
I bought food or beverage products as gifts after this culinary experience.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When at home, I bought food and drinks again that I first encountered while on this trip.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I bought food souvenirs after this culinary experience to consume them at home.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

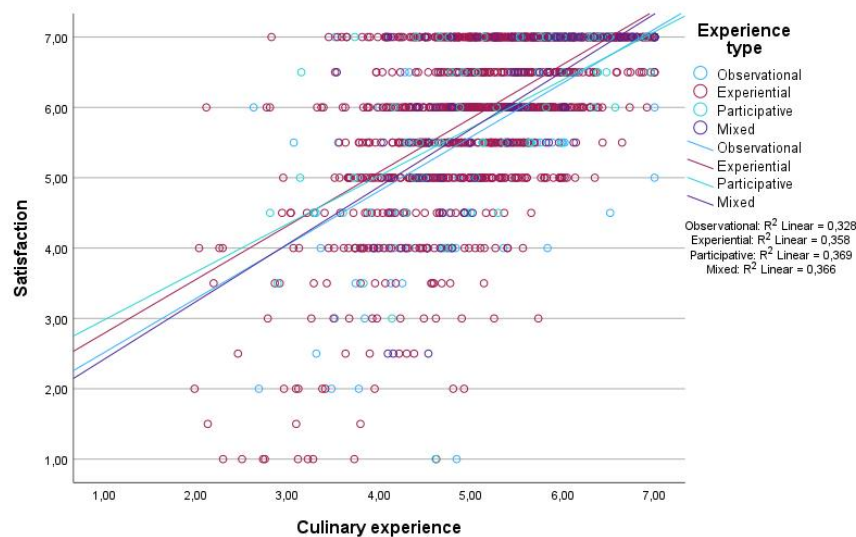
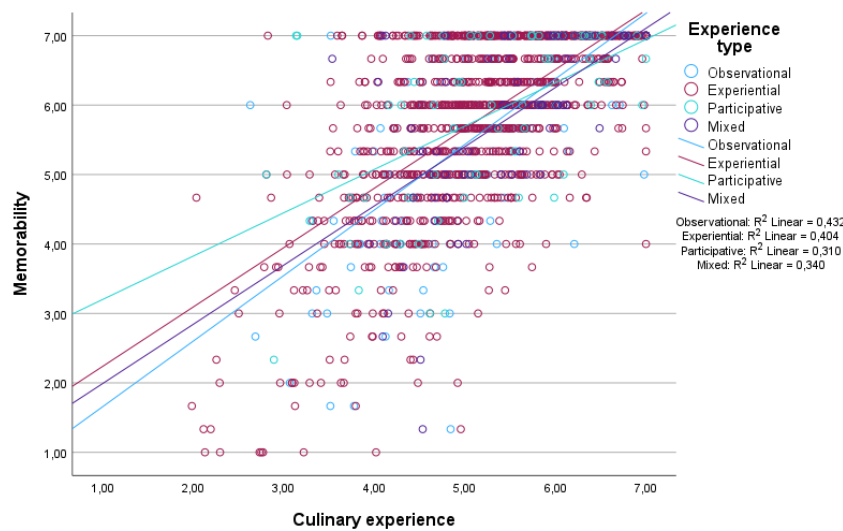
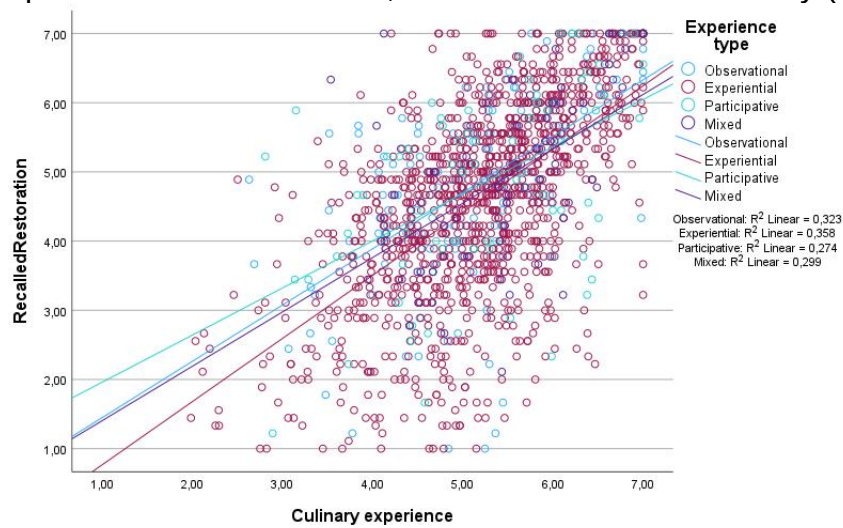
SATISFACTION

How much do you agree to the following statements?

	7 - Strongly agree	6	5	4	3	2	1 - Strongly disagree
Overall, I was very satisfied with this culinary experience.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Overall, my expectations related to the culinary experiences of this vacation were met.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

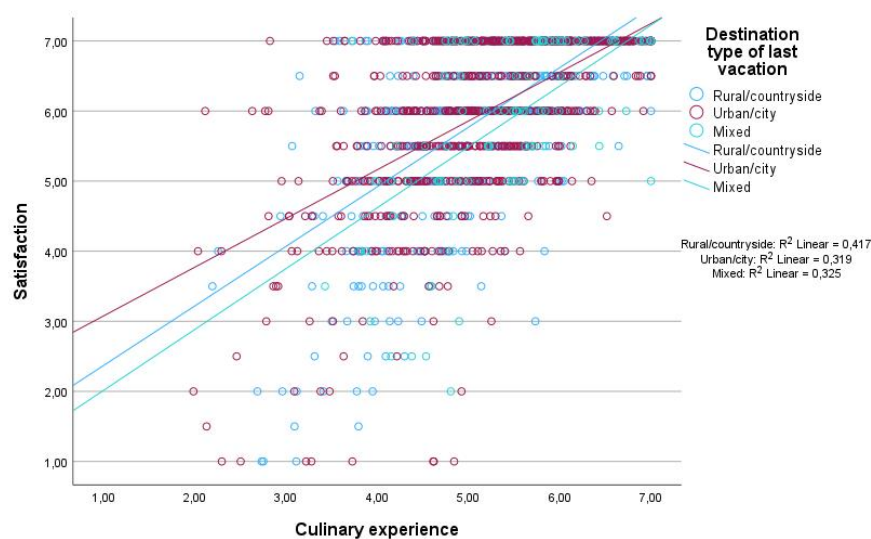
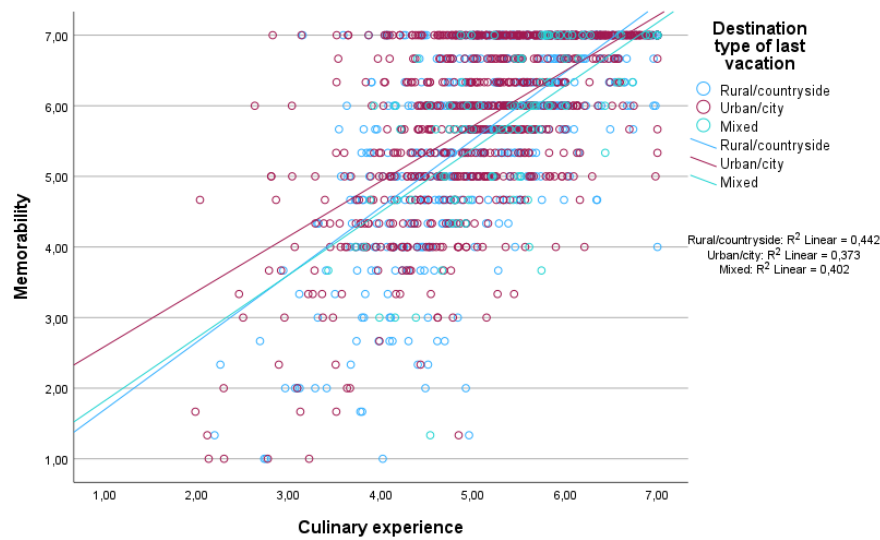
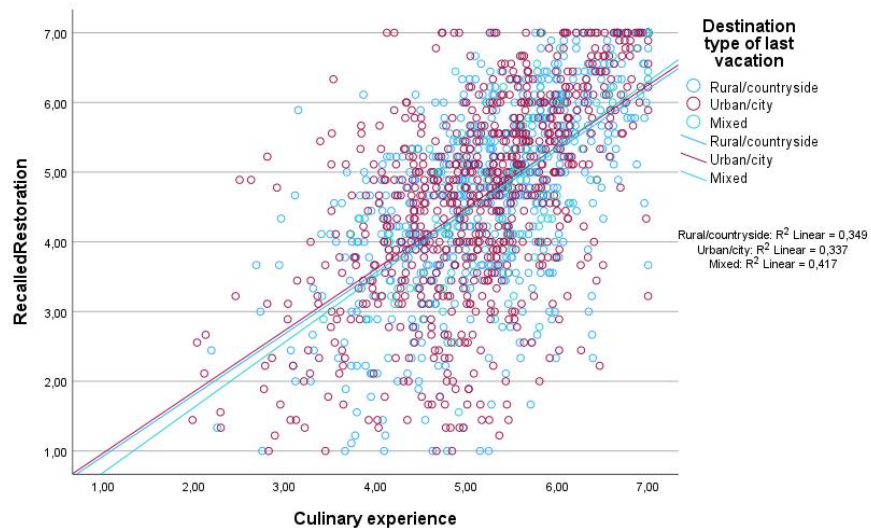
Thank you very much for participating in our survey!

Appendix 9: Effects of the experience type on the relationship between culinary tourism experiences and restoration, satisfaction and memorability (study 5), n=1,461



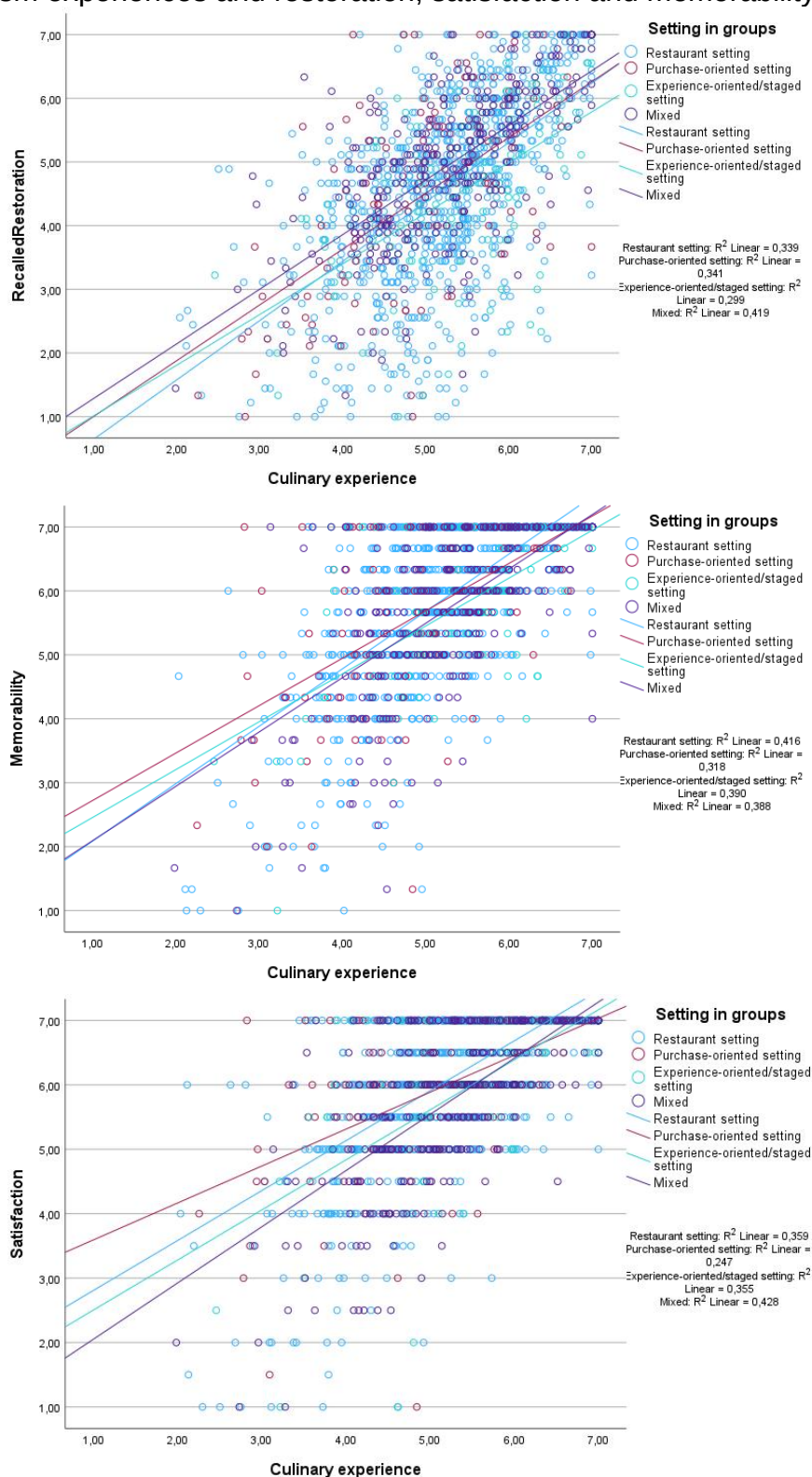
Based on HAYES PROCESS Model 9 (Hayes, 2013) with experience type as a multi-categorical moderator (Z), n=1,461.

Appendix 10: Effects of the destination type on the relationship between culinary tourism experiences and restoration, satisfaction and memorability (study 5)



Based on HAYES PROCESS Model 9 (Hayes, 2013) with destination type as a multi-categorical moderator (Z), n=1,461.

Appendix 11: Effects of the tourism setting on the relationship between culinary tourism experiences and restoration, satisfaction and memorability (study 5)



Based on HAYES PROCESS Model 9 (Hayes, 2013) with tourism setting as a multi-categorical moderator (Z), $n=1,461$.

Appendix 12: Testing moderated mediation between culinary tourism experiences and behaviour for different experience types (study 5)

Predictors	Observational (n=147) <i>B</i>	Experiential (n=1169) <i>B</i>	Participative (n=74) <i>B</i>	Mixed (n=71) <i>B</i>
Outcome: Memorability				
R ²	.52	.53	.67	.57
Cul. tourism exp.	.51	.40	.23	.46
PRE	.52	.48	.56	.59
Cul. tourism exp. x PRE	-.18	-.18	.00	-.38
Outcome: Satisfaction				
R ²	.39	.45	.69	.54
Cul. tourism exp.	.44	.41	.32	.60
PRE	.39	.36	.52	.39
Cul. tourism exp. x PRE	-.15	-.15	.01	-.40
Outcome: Restoration				
R ²	.51	.47	.75	.55
Cul. tourism exp.	.09	.41	.03	.09
PRE	.88	.65	1.03	.80
Cul. tourism exp. x PRE	.06	.09	.25	.19
Outcome: Behaviour				
R ²	.52	.59	.77	.47
Cul. tourism exp.	.12	.49	.37	.64
Restoration	.31	.28	.45	.31
Memorability	-.00	.20	-.15	.15
Satisfaction	.37	.06	.24	-.20
Direct effect of Culinary tourism experiences on Behaviour				
	Observational	Experiential	Participative	Mixed
	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>
R ²	.12	.49	.37	.64
Conditional Indirect Effects of Culinary tourism experiences on Behaviour through mediators x PRE (at mean)				
	Observational Effect	Experiential Effect	Participative Effect	Mixed Effect
Memorability	-.00	.08	-.04	.07
Satisfaction	.16	.02	.08	-.12
Restoration	.03	.11	.01	.03

Note: n=1,464. CI=confidence interval. HAYES PROCESS Model 7 (Hayes, 2013): Bootstrap sample = 5,000. Significant (p<.05) coefficients in bold.

Appendix 13: Testing moderated mediation between culinary tourism experiences and behaviour for different destination types (study 5)

Predictors	Rural/ country- side (n=574)	Urban/city (n=788)	Mixed (n=94)
	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>
Outcome: Memorability			
R ²	.60	.49	.54
Culinary tourism experiences	.48	.36	.22
PRE	.52	.47	.70
Cul. tourism experiences x PRE	-.24	-.15	-.16
Outcome: Satisfaction			
R ²	.53	.40	.41
Culinary tourism experiences	.52	.35	.37
PRE	.33	.39	.51
Cul. tourism experiences x PRE	-.24	-.10	-.22
Outcome: Restoration			
R ²	.52	.45	.46
Culinary tourism experiences	.29	.36	.65
PRE	.80	.66	.31
Cul. tourism experiences x PRE	.11	.10	.17
Outcome: Behaviour			
R ²	.53	.60	.53
Culinary tourism experiences	.47	.42	.61
Restoration	.27	.33	.27
Memorability	.19	.14	.01
Satisfaction	.04	.12	.05
Direct effect of Culinary tourism experiences on Behaviour			
	Rural/ country- side	Urban/city	Mixed
	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>
R ²	.47	.42	.61
Conditional Indirect Effects of Culinary tourism experiences on Behaviour through mediators x PRE (at mean)			
	Rural/ countryside	Urban/city	Mixed
	Effect	Effect	Effect
Memorability	.09	.05	.00
Satisfaction	.02	.04	.02
Restoration	.08	.12	.18

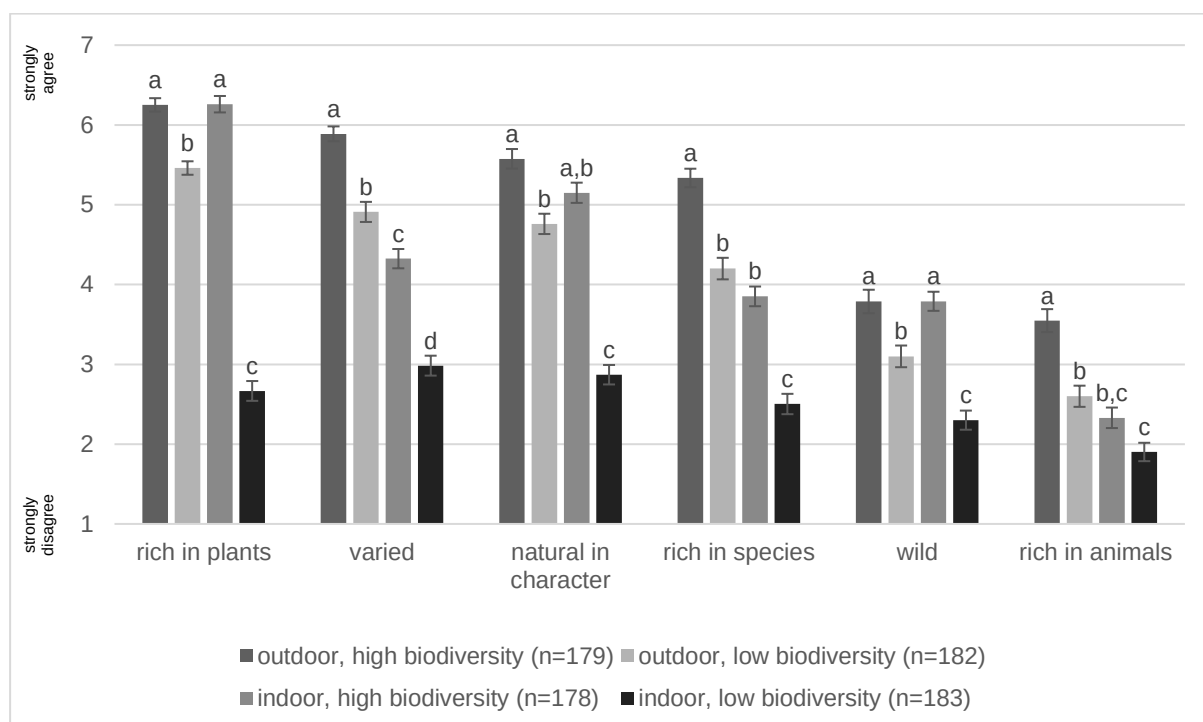
Note: n=1,464. CI=confidence interval. HAYES PROCESS Model 7 (Hayes, 2013): Bootstrap sample = 5,000. Significant (p<.05) coefficients in bold.

Appendix 14: Testing moderated mediation between culinary tourism experiences and behaviour for different tourism settings (study 5)

Predictors	Restaurant setting (n=838)	Purchase-oriented setting (n=106)	Experience-oriented/staged setting (n=113)	Mixed setting (n=337)
	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>
Outcome: Memorability				
R ²	.55	.44	.53	.51
Cul. tourism exp.	.38	.33	.43	.35
PRE	.50	.62	.39	.60
Cul. tourism exp. x PRE	-.20	-.15	-.18	-.16
Outcome: Satisfaction				
R ²	.47	.31	.47	.50
Cul. tourism exp.	.35	.30	.50	.55
PRE	.40	.43	.30	.37
Cul. tourism exp. x PRE	-.19	-.01	-.22	-.18
Outcome: Restoration				
R ²	.47	.48	.51	.52
Cul. tourism exp.	.30	.35	.36	.38
PRE	.75	.80	.76	.60
Cul. tourism exp. x PRE	.11	-.05	.23	.04
Outcome: Behaviour				
R ²	.60	.59	.43	.53
Cul. tourism exp.	.51	.34	.18	.36
Restoration	.28	.30	.18	.34
Memorability	.18	.11	.35	.10
Satisfaction	.08	.23	.10	.08
Direct effect of Culinary tourism experiences on Behaviour				
	Restaurant Setting	Purchase-oriented setting	Experience-oriented/staged setting	Mixed setting
	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>
R ²	.51	.34	.18	.36
Conditional Indirect Effects of Culinary tourism experiences on Behaviour through mediators x PRE (at mean)				
	Restaurant setting	Purchase-oriented setting	Experience-oriented/staged setting	Mixed setting
	Effect	Effect	Effect	Effect
Memorability	.07	.04	.15	.04
Satisfaction	.03	.07	.05	.05
Restoration	.08	.11	.07	.13

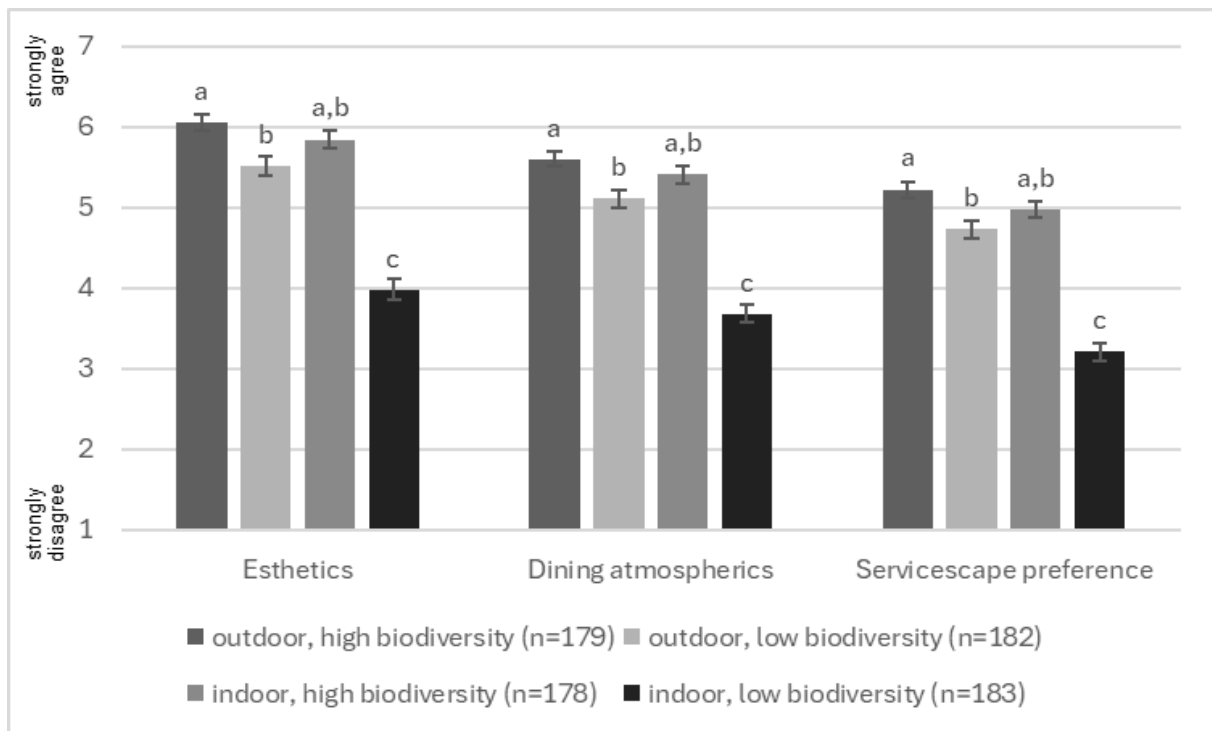
Note: n=1,464. CI=confidence interval. HAYES PROCESS Model 7 (Hayes, 2013): Bootstrap sample = 5,000. Significant (p<.05) coefficients in bold.

Appendix 15: Evaluation of individual biodiversity aspects of culinary tourism environments (study 4)



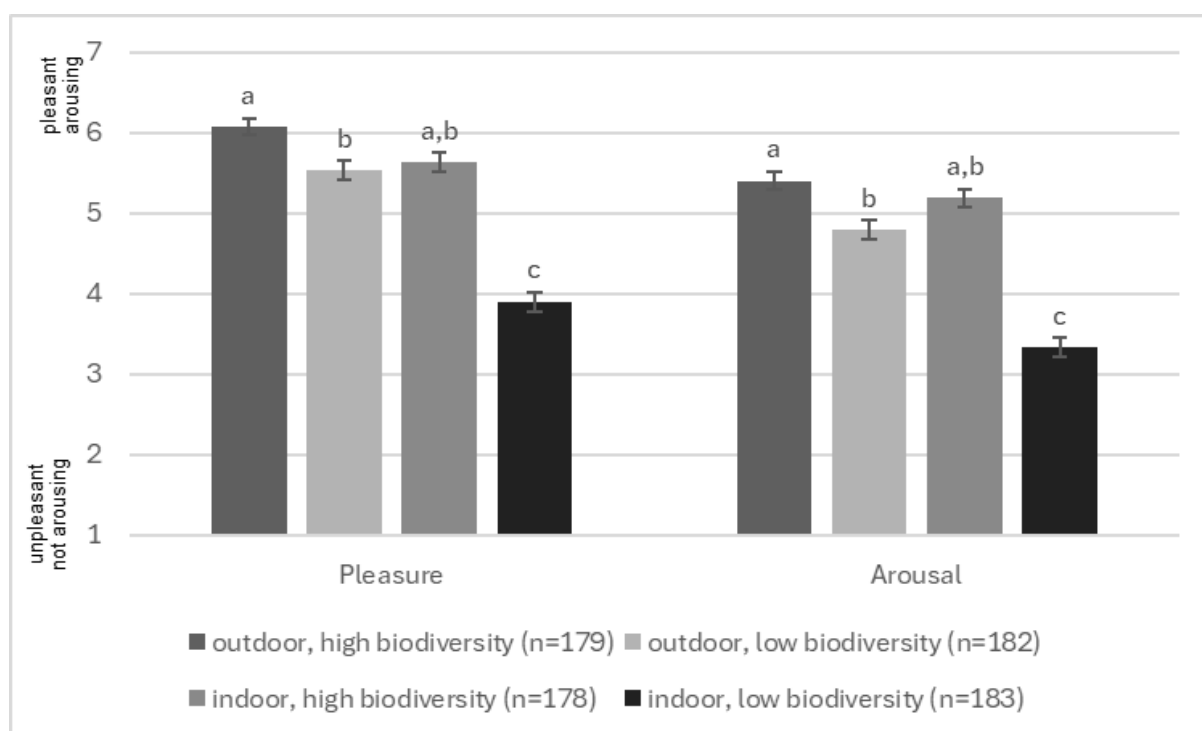
The column graph presents arithmetic means for all environments on a 7-point Likert-type interval scale (1 “strongly disagree” – 7 “strongly agree”). The error bars present standard errors of the mean. Results are based on a Kruskal Wallis tests: $\chi^2_{\text{rich in plants}}(3, 722)=338.83, p<.001$; $\chi^2_{\text{varied}}(3, 722)=223.15, p<.001$; $\chi^2_{\text{natural in character}}(3, 722)=195.98, p<.001$; $\chi^2_{\text{rich in species}}(3, 722)=189.68, p<.001$; $\chi^2_{\text{wild}}(3, 722)=82.36, p<.001$; $\chi^2_{\text{rich in animals}}(3, 722)=86.06, p<.001$. Lowercase letters indicate significant differences based on post-hoc comparisons ($p<.05$).

Appendix 16: Esthetics, dining atmospherics and dining scape preference evaluations for different environments (study 4)



The column graph presents arithmetic means for all environments on a 7-point Likert-type interval scale (1 “strongly disagree” – 7 “strongly agree”). The error bars present standard errors of the mean. Results are based on Kruskal Wallis tests: $\chi^2_{\text{esthetics}} (3, 722)=162.03, p<.001$; $\chi^2_{\text{dining atmospherics}} (3, 722)=160.13, p<.001$; $\chi^2_{\text{service scape preference}} (3, 722)=158.35, p<.001$. Lowercase letters indicate significant differences based on post-hoc comparisons ($p<.05$).

Appendix 17: Emotional responses related to different environments (study 4)



The column graph presents arithmetic means for all environments on a 7-point Likert-type interval scale (1 "strongly disagree" – 7 "strongly agree"). The error bars present standard errors of the mean. Results are based on Kruskal Wallis tests: $\chi^2_{\text{pleasure}} (3, 722)=161.42, p<.001$; $\chi^2_{\text{arousal}} (3, 722)=138.65, p<.001$. Lowercase letters indicate significant differences based on post-hoc comparisons ($p<.05$).