

Role Of Food & Cultural Tourism in Developing a Destination Brand – Study of Jaunsar Bawar a Tribal Land.

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to understand the importance of local food & culture to make the area into a destination for tourists. The paper provides insights into different initiatives in field of food & cultural tourism and their implementation process in the context of Jaunsar Bawar.

Design/methodology/ approach – The study is exploratory and endorses the qualitative approach of primary research methodology by adopting a non-random stratified sampling method. The approach of taking semi-structured & open-ended face-to-face interview method has been applied with 20 respondents from varied field of Jaunsar Bawar. Other data has been taking from the author's personal experience and secondary data.

Findings -- The study reveals that the people perceive Culture & Food as an important aspect in enhancing the experience of visiting a place and taking back good memories. This study also tells that food & cultural tourism not only improves the in-bound tourists experience but it also gives impetus to local economy.

Practical Implications

Just like rest of India, Jaunsar Bawar's social and religious life revolves around exotic culture & food habits. The sound of festive drums is all we need to bring out our cooking pots and pans and produce an array of exotic dishes, which Jaunsari tribe describes as 'soul food'. Many a time food may plays an important role in attracting tourists to a certain destination because of its reflection of a region's culture and lifestyle. Food of a destination is also categorized as a part of cultural tourism. It is not only a basic need for tourist but also a cultural element that can positively present a destination. Food & cultural tourism is not only appealing to tourist, but also contributes to the social, economic and environmental development of a destination. The paper aims at the importance of the connection between Food, Culture and tourism, and how it could help in creating a destination brand in the mind of tourists. Each destination of Jaunsar Bawar in Uttarakhand has different levels of attractiveness that can draw tourist from different parts of the world and thus the delicious food & centuries old culture of Jaunsar Bawar can be used as one of the main attraction and promotional tool for the development of tourism in Jaunsar Bawar. In Jaunsar Bawar, the promotion of Culture, food & wine as a component of its destination attractiveness is not even in its infancy stage. Creating back links between the tourist and food production sectors may add value to an area's economy in order to preserve and improve local economic and social life, which is the background of this work. This report will examine the strengths and potential of food promotion in Jaunsar Bawar by utilising a case study technique and the researcher's experience.. Further, the paper will look at cultural heritage features that are unique to Jaunsar Bawar and how these can be used to promote cultural awareness. Also explored will be the role of local communities in promoting Food tourism as part of cultural heritage development.

Keywords: Eno-tourism, Cuisines, Culture, Tourist, Destination Branding, Culture tourism, Gastronomy Tourism.

INTRODUCTION

Visiting historical and cultural landmarks and enjoying local cuisines has long been a fascinating and popular pastime for travellers of all ages throughout the globe. India is emblematic of its cultural and historical richness. India's ancient history has provided present and future generations with an abundance of historical and cultural legacies. The stunning monuments and cultural sites in the nation stand silently today to tell tourists about India's illustrious history. The Indian government recognizes tourism as a vital driver of economic growth, as seen by the country's attempts to preserve its cultural legacy. However, there are several locations that still require rapid care. This research was undertaken in the highland tribal region of Jaunsar Bawar, Uttarakhand, which is situated in the lap of the Western Himalaya and is commonly known as "Dev Bhoomi" or the Land of the Gods. The abundance of heritage monuments and centuries old culture in Jaunsar Bawar makes it a great tourist destination. Heritage sites are desirable destinations in nearly every nation, and thus, the significance of heritage tourism is growing daily. Heritage tourism may be characterized as visiting historical and archaeological sites for educational or recreational purposes. Jaunsar Bawar is a tribal territory in the Indian Himalayan state of Uttarakhand, and it is home to culturally significant historical and archaeological monuments. Jaunsar Bawar has the potential to become an internationally significant historic site. To attract tourists to heritage areas, a well-planned marketing approach is necessary. Numerous industrialised and developing nations have effectively utilised marketing strategies and instruments to attract historical tourism. However, historical tourism marketing in Jaunsar Bawar has not received sufficient attention, and as a result, the number of heritage visitors in this region is significantly lower. This research explores the current, potential, and constraints of Jaunsar Bawar's cultural & food destination.

Literature Review

Cultural & Heritage Tourism

Literature has acknowledged that history and culture are intertwined because "culture is the current application of the aspects of the past" (Timothy & Boyd, 2003). "Heritage is what contemporary society chooses to inherit and pass on to future generations, whereas history is what a historian deems worthy of documenting" (Turnbridge & Asworth, 1996). The National Trust defines cultural tourism as "going to experience the places, objects, and activities that accurately depict the tales of the past." It comprises cultural, historical, and natural resources (2008) National Trust for Historic Preservation. In addition to the tangible artefacts and locations that constitute legacy, there are other practises that are preserved or passed down from one generation to the next. These unseen or "intangible" activities of legacy, such as language, culture, popular song, literature, and fashion, are equally essential to our ability to comprehend our community. Culture consists of the valuable items inherited from previous generations. If the value is local or national, we refer to it as our legacy. (Edgell, 2006). According to Ahmed (2006), heritage sites are those that aid in the comprehension of the past, enhance the present, and will be of importance to future generations. For the places of archeological and architectural values, it is the people and activities that form the cultural heritage.

In addition to archaeological and architectural sites, the cultural legacy consists of people and activities. Silberberg described Heritage tourism in 1995 as a method of economic development that promotes economic growth by recruiting tourists from outside a host community who are interested in the historical, artistic, scientific, or lifestyle/heritage offers of a town, area, organisation, or institution. In addition to the aforementioned, Chang (1999) stated that heritage tourism may meet the cultural and recreational ambitions of the local community, giving citizens with a better feeling of connection to their country and intercultural knowledge both inside and beyond a community. Cultural and historic visitors stay longer and spend more money than other types of tourists, making cultural and heritage tourism an essential instrument for economic growth (Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, 2002). Professor Simon Thurley, Institute of Historical Research, United Kingdom, has stated and explained that Heritage is a production factor in an economy, thus it is an asset and not a liability. In relation to the European Study, Professor Thurley has stated and explained categorically that investing in cultural heritage will help strengthen Europe's economy, with benefits that extend well beyond tourism.

Food Tourism

Food tourism is defined by the World Food Travel Association (WFTA) as the pursuit of unique and memorable eating and drinking experiences. A component of regional agricultural and economic prosperity is gastronomy tourism. It is a vital component of a destination's local tourist promotion. The tourist industry's primary job is to deliver culinary experiences. The connection between food and tourism appears contradictory. Gastronomy Tourism is the study of food and eating experiences that travellers have. Food plays a significant part in food tourism, which strengthens regional identity and preserves cultural heritage. Hall and Mitchell describe food tourism as a "visit to primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, and specific destinations where food tasting and/or experiencing the qualities of specialised food producing regions is the major motivation for travel." It has facilitated regional growth and strengthened local output. Each place has a unique amount of allure that may attract tourists. Authentic and intriguing cuisine may draw tourists to a location. It is possible to relate Gastronomy tourism with a traveler's interest in a destination's cuisine. A place may be utilised as the primary attraction and can use food as the primary attraction, as well as build marketing techniques that emphasise the cuisine of its region. It is essential for marketers of a gastronomy destination to understand the image held by their target audience and how to influence their intention to visit through efficient marketing techniques. Destinations may utilise cuisine to communicate their cultural experience, status, and cultural identity. According to Hobsbawn and Ranger, famous for their flavour and quality cuisines may be transformed into tourism items. According to Riley, the relationship between national food and tourism is contingent on the significance of gastronomy in the national identity-forming social culture. Thus, destinations may utilize their food as a marketing tool. The American Gastronomy Traveller Report, 2013 released by the American travel market research firm Mandala Research has a number of fascinating findings:

- Most travellers combine gastronomy activities with other pursuits, such as culture, heritage, and nature-based pursuits.
- An increasing reliance on peer evaluations and recommendations makes it crucial for locations to spread the word via social media and other user-generated content sources.
- Festivals attract Food tourists; thus, destination-marketing groups could consider having a beer, wine, or Gastronomy festival to showcase local cuisine, products, and unique culinary activities such as chef demos and tastings. Foodies who travel want to be informed. 83 percent of travellers appreciate learning about the local culture and cuisine of the places they visit. And the same number of travellers thinks they will spend extra on meals and beverages. Food tourism is defined as the desire to experience a particular type of food or the produce of a particular region (Hall & Sharples, 2003). Food tourism encompasses a vast array of gastronomic opportunities for tourists (Okumus, Okumus, & McKercher, 2007), as well as numerous economic development schemes (Okumus, Okumus, & McKercher, 2007). Food tourism has been hailed as a vehicle for regional development, bolstering local production through backward links in tourism supply-chain partnerships (Renko, Renko, & Polonijo, 2010; Telfer & Wall, 1996), and is regarded as an important vehicle for delivering sustainable tourism (Renko, Renko, & Polonijo, 2010; Telfer & Wall, 1996). (Everett & Aitchison, 2008; Simms, 2009; Everett & Slocum, 2013). Gastronomy tourism supports all unusual and remarkable gourmet experiences, not only those with four or more Michelin stars. Gastronomy tourism is a significant new niche that encourages economic and societal development as well as new intercultural understandings. It is possible to find gastronomy tourism in both rural and urban regions, and visitors should be able to come year-round. Consequently, its potential for enhancing food safety and security in Jaunsar Bawar should be evaluated. Relevant literature includes specialty tourism, agritourism, Gastronomy tourism, food-based attractions, and food-purchasing incentives. For instance, agritourism (farm tourism) specialises in the inclusion of farm visits for on-site retail sales, leisure, and education (Busby & Rendle, 2000; Veeck, Chee, & Veeck, 2006). As a means of consuming different locations and cultures, gastronomy tourism also examines the behaviours of exploratory eating and participation in possibly foreign foodways (Long, 2004). Food-based attractions may consist of special events, such as food festivals or cooking holidays (Di Domenico &

Miller, 2012; Hall & Sharples, 2008), or the promotion of local food through farmers' markets, enhanced local menu items, and the incorporation of locally grown food produce into the hospitality supply chain (Telfer & Wall, 1996; Torres, 2002).

II. Objectives of the Study:

1. To list the different cultural and food tourism options in Jaunsar Bawar..
2. To establish the benefits of cultural & food tourism to the economy of this area..
3. To analyze the factors enhancing the culture & food tourism in Jaunsar Bawar.

Type of Research: A descriptive research was used to study the potential of Cultural Tourism in Jaunsar Bawar Region.

Methods of Data Collection^[SEP] -**Primary data** was obtained from the local people by taking their personal interviews from a pre designed questionnaire.

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Secondary Data – was collected by refereeing to the various videos available in public domain & literature, which talked in detail about the food & culture of Jaunsar Bawar.

Data Analysis & Interpretation

The interviews were necessary to understand the significance of Culture & food in a region such as Jaunsar Bawar, whether culture & food tourism is a sustainable concept or not, and whether there will be an increase in employment and entrepreneurial opportunities in the Jaunsar Bawar region if there is an increase in cultural & food tourism. In the interviews of 20 respondents it was believed that Jaunsar Bawar has the potential to become a well-known name in field of Cultural & Heritage tourism, popularity of local heritage sites like Ashok's Rock Edict in Kalsi, Ancient village of Jagatgram, Ancient temples of Lakhamandal as well as the culture of Jaunsar Bawar in the national or international tourism industry will definitely increase the sustainability of Cultural & food tourism as many travellers, despite their varied travel purposes, would love to explore the local culture & food to better understand the area and try to learn from them. At the same time, respondents said that cultural & food tourism could also impact other forms of life, as this will have cascading effects.

Importance of Local cuisines in the sustainable development of the economy –

Governments in underdeveloped nations are increasingly adopting national/global marketing and development initiatives (Elmont, 1995). The use of local food can directly or indirectly contribute to the various elements of sustainability in a particular area (see Figure 1), including stimulating and supporting agricultural activity and food production; preventing authentic exploitation; enhancing destination attractiveness; empowering the community (by means of job creation and encouraging hip entrepreneurs); and generating pride regarding food specifically (Telfer & Wall, 1996). Moreover, food service is a significant source of employment and revenue for the tourism industry, and it may help to the development of a sustainable and competitive destination (Elmont, 1995)

FIGURE 1. The Contribution of Local Food to Sustainable Development Within a Destination



The argument is that local foods hold much potential to enhance sustainability in tourism, whereby the tourism planner and the entrepreneur should work hand in hand to satisfy the consumer, contribute to the authenticity of the destination, strengthen the economy and to provide the environmentally-friendly infrastructure of the destination. The potential of Gastronomy as a theme to sharpen destination images, and ascertain their uniqueness in comparison to other countries is also paramount. Where the food can be presented as an icon to which they can identify as a common cultural unifying trait, it can provide Jaunsar Bawar with a brand, equally important like its culture. This would not only serve as a marketing tool but would help eradicate the notion that local foods are inferior leading to a net export of Gastronomy skills rather than a net import of the same, which has been the case over the years.

More importantly, development initiatives explicitly seek to deliver benefits for both the tourism and food-related industry sectors by creating and strengthening back linkages. In this way high quality food and beverage products can enhance the overall tourism product and tourism experiences, while at the same time the tourism related spending would provide an economic stimulus, which indirectly will lead to food security. Furthermore, food service as a generator of jobs and income provides social and economic conditions, which empower individuals to gain access to food, either producing food themselves or earning income to buy food, hence have access to nutritious, safe, personally acceptable and culturally appropriate foods, produced in ways that are environmentally sound and socially just.

According to Gaztelumendi (2012), food tourism may solve cultural and environmental problems in a manner compatible with solely economic reasoning. Recent global tourist development history is filled with ostensibly sustainable approaches and demonstrably unsustainable behaviors. The objective is not to impose fresh, indiscriminate pressure on gastronomy heritage, but rather to exploit it with an eye toward sustainability.

Jaunsar Bawar's Cuisines

The food of Jaunsar Bawar has been heavily influenced over the centuries by the ingredients mostly grown locally. Cattle are regarded as a symbol of wealth across much of Jaunsar Bawar and they are used for dairy product as well as cuisines involving meat. Ground maize or corn is used as the basis for many meals. Maize flour is served with water/milk/buttermilk to form a stiff porridge and is considered as very high in protein and a very healthy food.

There are several dishes like Uluye, Pinnuye, Chillade, Khendadi, Koprodi, babar etc which forms a very healthy vegetarian dietary of people of Jaunsar Bawar during every major or minor festivals being celebrated there. These dishes are mostly consumed with locally made ghee or butter. Jaunsar Bawar is also famous for its pulses especially the Red Rajma of Chakrata that is making its name in the domestic market of India.

Jaunsar is also a heaven for the non-vegetarian food lovers. There are several forms of non-vegetarian dishes of mutton, chicken & fish being cooked with the herbs & spices grown locally which adds a unique flavor to these foods. There is a festival month of Maagh in the month of January being celebrated all across Jaunsar when non-vegetarian food is extensively cooked and grand feast are organized by every families of the villages for local villagers as well as for the relatives coming over. People during this time also dry up the mutton so that it could be preserved for longer duration and this process also add up a unique flavor to the mutton dish.

In addition to a wide variety of food items, the locally made wines named as Pakhoi & Genghati are considered to be an elixir in this part, they are completely made of fruits, food-items & local herbs which adds specifically the amazing taste as well as the medicinal properties to the Gastronomy of Jaunsar Bawar. Their taste, health benefits and the meticulous planning in making them could actually play an important role in developing Eno-tourism in Jaunsar Bawar.

According to Per & Britt Karlsson (2017), Wine tourism is increasingly an important source of revenue directly or indirectly. It contributes to on-site sales of course but perhaps more importantly it

is also a long-term project for a winery to engage in building a brand and establishing a relationship with customers.

Discussions and Observations

The first and most important remark is that food & cultural tourism is not well established in the Jaunsar Bawar region, but it has the potential to become an excellent rallying point for the region. The understanding of Jaunsar Bawar's heritage and culture is still insufficient. As a historic culturally representative region of the Himalayas, Jaunsar Bawar must make earnest efforts to increase the popularity of local culture and history among the region's incoming tourists. Since Jaunsar Bawar is also known as "Land of Mahasu," it attracts a great deal of religious tourists from Himachal, Uttar Pradesh, and Uttarakhand. While doing so, both directly and indirectly, Jaunsar Bawar creates numerous job and career prospects in the tourist and service sectors, as well as several chances for the entrepreneurial expansion of the broader tourism industry. The observations are detailed below. All sectors of the service and corporate industries, as well as all age groups, think that heritage and cultural tourism generates numerous job prospects. As a result of Cultural & Heritage tourism, additional revenue-generating opportunities arise for a variety of other businesses; thus, the business expands and produces more jobs or employment for the locals. As the region's tourist industry develops and expands, the local market and economy of the surrounding area, as well as many other businesses, thrive indirectly.

As more and more people are attracted to the region's culture and heritage, infrastructure in the area receives a boost; this, in turn, improves the living standards of the locals through improvements in education, health care, etc., thereby aiding in the resolution of migration, a major issue in the Himalayan region.

Findings:

Some of the interpretations derived from the analysis are listed below: Cultural and Food tourism in the Jaunsar Bawar region will expand if tourists are exposed to more information and there is more advertising, according to the majority of respondents. The status of tourism in Jaunsar Bawar would increase as a result of enhanced amenities, such as quality homestays, at various tourist locations. The cultural and historic destination should implement more aggressive marketing techniques to raise the exposure of Jaunsar Bawar's culture and history. This will increase awareness of Jaunsar's wonderful culture, and more people will visit to experience it. Locals and the government should focus on the written portion of the culture and heritage so that people may learn more about this location. According to the primary results of the study, the sustainability of the Heritage & Cultural tourism business and the appeal of local culture would attract more tourists to the region, resulting in higher profits and an increase in job possibilities. Due to the expansion of the culture and heritage tourist sector, many ancillary and peripheral businesses within the tourism industry are expanding.

Due to the expansion of the culture and heritage tourist sector, many ancillary and peripheral businesses within the tourism industry are expanding. Recommendations & Suggestions:

1. Raise awareness about Cultural & Heritage tourism and encourage foodies to travel as frequently as possible.
2. Culture is a significant part of everyone's daily life, so a few extra efforts by the locals and authorities can make the Jaunsar Bawar culture more popular.
3. It is crucial to give literature on the region's past and culture at various tourist destinations, since this enhances the region's authenticity and significance.
4. On the 24th of June, Jaunsar Bawar Day could be commemorated on a greater scale, allowing our local artists to showcase the rich culture & local people to show case their local food of Jaunsar Bawar.

5. The Uttarakhand tourist industry should engage in a variety of promotional activities and arrange cultural fairs and exhibitions to promote the local heritage and culture; this will result in a favorable economic expansion.
6. The local entrepreneurs of the Jaunsar Bawar region should sell and publicize their culture and legacy aggressively on various social media platforms and in events hosted in larger cities such as Dehradun, Delhi, etc.
7. Government of Uttarakhand should encourage new businesses with more inexpensive lending rates and facilities to come forward and explore new ideas in the cuisine and cultural tourism of Jaunsar Bawar. Home-stay scheme of Jaunsar Bawar is one such scheme, and this should be promoted more with technical support from the specialist so that local people can showcase the culture of Jaunsar Bawar in a much more effective manner.

According to the study and analysis conducted by the researcher on the issue of Cultural & Gastronomy Tourism's contribution to the creation of job and career prospects, the following are the results reached: The expansion of cultural and food tourism is closely proportional to the regional employment expansion. The future prospects of all businesses associated to the culture industry, such as cuisine, clothing, and festivals, depend on the expansion of cultural and heritage tourism. The expansion of the region's cultural and heritage resources will improve the research in this sector, which in turn will enhance the area's culture, making it more appealing to incoming visitors and boosting the locals' confidence in showcasing their rich heritage to the world.

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