

Authors: John, T. Mgonja, Kenneth, F. Backman and Sheila, J. Backman

Advisor: Kenneth, F. Backman

Title: Assessment of International Tourists' Perception on Local Foods in Tanzania

Department: Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management (PRTM), Clemson University, South Carolina

Abstract:

Consumption of local food is broadly recognized as an essential part of tourists' experience. Locally distinctive food can be important both as a tourism attraction in itself and in helping to shape the image of a destination. Local food experiences have the potential to contribute considerably to sustainable development, help maintain regional identities and support agricultural diversification. While local foods have the potential to reduce poverty in rural communities, their image and perception to tourists has remained largely unexamined. The aim of this paper was to evaluate the way international tourists perceive local food in Tanzania. Data was collected using questionnaires (N = 540) at Kilimanjaro International Airport (KIA), which serves tourists who have just completed their visits from the most popular "Northern Circuit" of Tanzania National Parks. The findings show that (74.5%) of the respondents agreed that overall local food was of good quality and (58.5%) agreed that local food was safe to eat. However, respondents felt strongly that the hotels they stayed in did not provide many varieties of local foods (42.3%) or sufficient information about local foods (36.5%).

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