

Food, Tourism and Destination Differentiation: The Case of Rotorua, New Zealand

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“I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning”.

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As this thesis sought participant input, ethical approval was required from AUT Ethics Committee (AUTEC). **Ethics Application Number 04-130**

ABSTRACT

Policy makers, industry and researchers are paying considerable attention to the importance of the relationship between food and tourism in destination differentiation from competitors and in contributing to economic development. There is a vital role for food in broadening a destination's appeal; increasing visitor yield; enhancing visitor experience; strengthening regional identity; and stimulating growth in other sectors. Thus, food contributes to the overall sustainable competitiveness of a tourism destination.

Despite growing research interest in food and tourism, there is still work to be done to bring the relationship of these two elements into focus. In order to better understand the role that food plays in tourism destination differentiation and development this PhD research draws on globalisation theory, world culture theory, tourism development theory and network and cluster theory. Particular attention is paid to the role that global processes play in shaping regional competitiveness and resultant policy initiatives.

The empirical focus of the research is on the case of Rotorua, New Zealand, located in the Bay of Plenty in the central North Island. Rotorua is one of the premier tourist destinations in New Zealand, however, on a range of socio-economic indicators it ranks poorly compared with other regions in the country. The region is rich in scenic resources and Maori cultural heritage and these are the main attractions of the district. With the exception of the traditional Maori hangi, the contribution of food in tourism has not been emphasized strongly by regional food/tourism stakeholders. This study argues that greater use of local food in the region's tourism offers a means of potentially strengthening the district's development and differentiation.

A thorough content analysis of national and regional tourism organisation marketing on the Internet and in brochures reveals that food features prominently in the *100% Pure* New Zealand Internet campaign and in a number of regional

tourism promotions. Rotorua is shown to lag behind many regions in its use of food as a feature of the local tourism experience.

Interviews with 50 tourism and food industry experts provide a range of insights into the issues associated with attempting to increase the role of food in tourism in Rotorua, and in New Zealand more generally. A variety of issues and constraints which work against developing the role of food in tourism are identified. The research highlights that there is little in the way of an identifiable regional cuisine in Rotorua. There is also lack of communication between local food and tourism stakeholders and an absence of effective networks. A variety of suggestions are then presented on ways to more effectively link food to tourism in Rotorua. The research highlights the importance of developing regional food network groups and the linking of food into local tourism strategies. The potential to better develop indigenous dimensions of food in tourism is also examined.

Not every region can market themselves as 'food tourism' destinations but most have some potential to increase the role that local food plays in tourism and development. The Rotorua case shows that there is potential to use food as a tool to achieve destination differentiation and development in regions whose success and renown is based on attractions other than food.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Increased tourism demand and competition between destinations have been attributed to the effects of globalisation (Costa and Buhalis, 2006). Destinations are competing in increasingly contested markets with little to distinguish them from each other (Kotler, Haider and Rein, 1993). This has caused destinations to focus on distinctiveness of place by using local attributes in the launching of innovative, new products and brands, which can help establish a more unique selling proposition (Haven-Tang and Jones, 2006).

In recent years food has gained recognition by governments, business, and academics as an integral part of the tourism product, and as a means of differentiation for destinations. There are many benefits to be had in linking food and tourism for all stakeholders concerned (Hall and Mitchell, 2006). Local food is a vital element that can help create a sense of 'place' and heighten destination appeal (Haven-Tang and Jones, 2006). Local produce adds authenticity to the tourist experience and provides motivation for visitors to come to a location (Sims, 2009). Tourists may even be tempted to stay longer in one place because of the availability of food products and related activities (Hall and Mitchell, 2006). Tourism provides an additional sales outlet for food producers and tourism-related spending on locally produced food products helps to stimulate and revitalise local economies (Boyne, Hall and Williams, 2003). Increasingly food is used in development initiatives to strengthen tourism destinations, and to create linkages of benefit to both the food production industry and the tourism industry (Boyne, Williams, and Hall, 2002; Hall, Sharples, Mitchell, Macionis, and Cambourne, 2003; Hashimoto and Telfer, 2006).

Food is a significant component of overall tourist spend. Wolf (2006, p. 19) states that "nearly 100% of tourists dine out while travelling, and food and beverage consistently rank first in visitor spending". In New Zealand, dining out was found to be the most important activity for 57% of international visitors (Statistics New Zealand, 2004). In a study of rural tourism in the UK it was revealed that as much as 40% of tourist expenditure is spent on food (Boyne &

Hall, 2004). In other examples, visitors to Singapore spend 13% of their budget (Henderson, 2004) and Du Rand, Heath and Alberts (2003) found that international tourists to South Africa spend an average 8%, and domestic tourists 24% on food. A generally accepted estimate is that tourists spend, on average, one third of their travel expenses purchasing food (Meler and Cerovic, 2003). In New Zealand statistics show the share of total tourism expenditure on food and beverage in 2009 was 11%. This is compared with spending on accommodation 9%; other tourism products 12%; and retail sales 21% (Statistics New Zealand, 2009).

According to Pyo, Uysal, & McLellan, (1991) tourists not only spend a substantial amount of their total expenditure on food, it is also the least likely activity for tourists to cut costs on. In addition, Enteleca Research and Consultancy (2001) reported 67% of holiday makers to the UK were prepared to pay more for quality food and drink and that between 32% and 66% of tourists either buy or consume local foods during their visit. Food fulfils a functional need of tourists; hence it consists of a considerable part of tourism expenditure in both individual and organized travel (Jones & Jenkins, 2002, p. 115).

Howard (2001, p. 3), in research conducted in the Napa Valley, reports that “the linkage of the food and tourism industries has the potential to increase the number of visitors to a region, extend the length of visitor stay, and increase revenue generation.” In linking regional food with tourism, there is strong potential for local economic development. Wolf puts this in simple terms when he states:

Tourism inter-linked with local foods helps support the livelihoods of local agricultural producers and promotes the maintenance of high quality and purity in food and drink. When tourists fill otherwise empty restaurant tables, more sales are made. More sales mean more profit and more capital to reinvest in the community.

(Wolf, 2002, p. 11)

The social and cultural significance of food in tourism has also gained recognition (Hall, Mitchell, Scott and Sharples 2008; Haven-Tang and Jones, 2006; Long, 2004; Sims, 2009). As Jones and Jenkins write:

Food is now used as a means of developing new niche markets, supporting regional identities, developing quality tourism and sustainable tourism. Food has therefore developed from being a basic necessity for tourist consumption to being regarded as an essential element of regional culture.

(Jones and Jenkins, 2002, p. 115)

Many countries and regions around the world are focussing on the opportunities that the linkage of food and tourism provides and have used it as a point of competitive advantage and as a means of destination differentiation. For example, every Australian state and territory now has a wine and food tourism strategy and a body in place to coordinate wine and food tourism (Mitchell and Hall, 2001). Canada has a national Culinary Tourism Development Strategy (Canadian Tourism Commission, 2003). Other countries that have incorporated the use of food in tourism as an important component of their tourism strategies include Scotland, Wales, United Kingdom, Germany and Singapore (Boyne, Hall and Williams, 2003; du Rand and Heath, 2006, p. 208). Several European destinations, in particular regions of France, Italy and Spain use their food/wine reputation to promote tourism (du Rand and Heath, 2006, p. 208).

The various initiatives surrounding the development and implementation of food and tourism associations range from culinary tourism strategies to the integration of food into national tourism strategies. Integral to this is the establishment of food and tourism networks, tourism web sites and marketing initiatives dedicated to food, the development of culinary events including festivals, documentation of culinary heritage, and food related activities such as dedicated food tours and cooking holidays (Hall, Mitchell and Sharples, 2003; Long, 2003; Henderson, 2004).

In New Zealand, with the update of the New Zealand Tourism Strategy (2010 to 2015), the Ministry of Tourism has recognized the significant untapped potential proffered by the use of food in tourism. The updated strategy allows for a more pro-active marketing of food in international tourism promotions and considers

ways in which the tourism and food industries may work together for mutual benefit (Ministry of Tourism, 2007b).

The national tourism strategy informs and facilitates regional tourism strategy and policy. Linking food with tourism has also been recognized by some regional tourism organisations in New Zealand as an integral element of a range of tourism experiences sought by New Zealand's target market – the 'Interactive Traveller'. In regions such as Northland, Hawke's Bay, Nelson and Marlborough, and Central Otago, dedicated committees of local stakeholders have been established to develop and promote regional opportunities that combine food and tourism. Despite this recent elevation of food in tourism, there is still work to be done to bring the relationship between food and tourism into focus.

1.1 Food and tourism

There are an array of uses for local food in regional tourism, ranging from meeting the tourist's biological and functional need to eat, to the use of produce in regional tourism promotion to differentiate destinations and create a sense of 'place' through regional identity. Food may also add value to a core tourism product and become the focus for special events. Additionally food maybe used as a stand-alone niche attraction (Jones and Jenkins, 2002, p. 115), referred to by tourism writers as gourmet tourism, cuisine tourism, culinary tourism, or food tourism (Okumus, Okumus and McKercher 2007, p. 19).

Much of the current research on food and tourism has focused on *food tourism*, from the perspective of the food tourist, as a type of narrowly defined special interest tourism. Food has also been studied in the context of agri-tourism. For example, in a seminal work on food tourism, Hall and Mitchell define food tourism as:

Visitation to primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants and specific locations for which food and tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of a specialist food production region are the primary motivating factors for travel.

(Hall and Mitchell, 2001, p. 308)

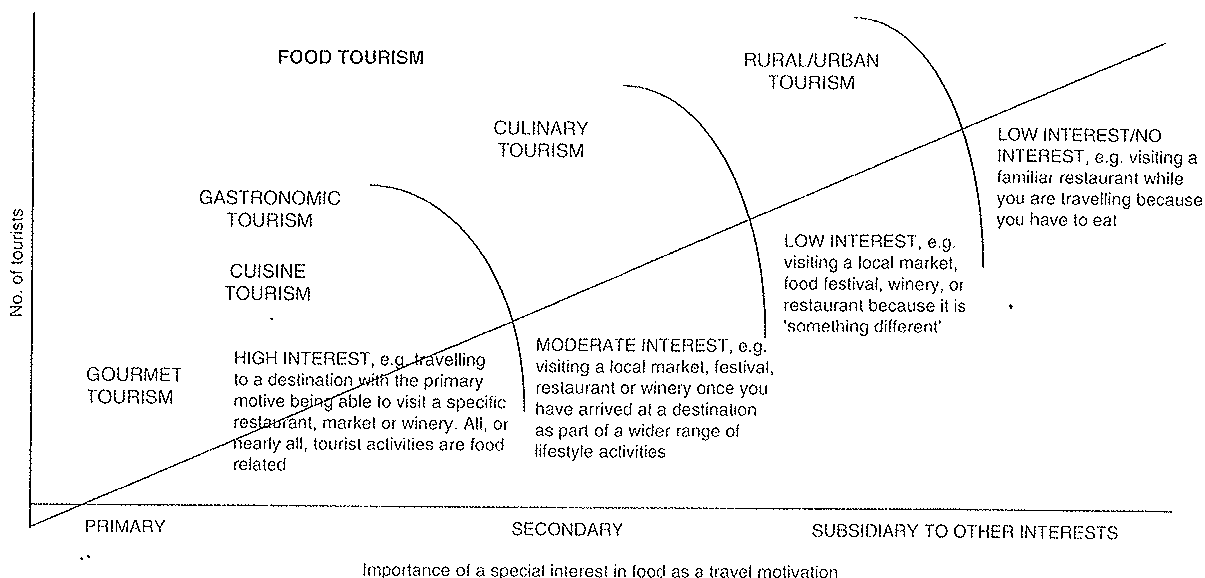
Hall and Mitchell (2005, p. 74) point out that this does not mean that any restaurant experience when travelling can be considered as food tourism, rather, the desire to experience the food, dish or cuisine must be the major motivation for the visit. In the above definition a distinction is made between “tourists who consume food as part of the travel experience, and those whose activities, behaviours, and even destination selection is influenced by an interest in food” (Hall and Sharples 2003, p. 9). According to Novelli (2005, p. 13), when the sole motivation for travel to a destination is according to particular needs and interests, the tourism experience falls into the category of ‘special interest’ or niche tourism.

In recognition of the different roles that food may play in tourism, Hall and Mitchell (2005, pp. 74-75) have categorised the food tourist in relation to the importance they place on food as a motive for travel (Figure 1.1). The first high interest subset is gourmet/cuisine and gastronomic tourism. This is associated with expensive or ‘top end’ restaurants, wineries and festivals. Nearly all activities in this high interest grouping are food related. The focus of gourmet and gastronomic tourism incorporates culture, ‘sense of place’, landscape, health and well being. In this instance food is of primary importance over other interests.

The second subset of food tourism is labelled culinary. Culinary tourism encompasses more general food ventures as part of a wider range of lifestyle activities such as visiting a local festival or market. In this subset, food is of secondary importance to other interests. In the remaining categories, there is low interest in food, for example, visiting a local market or winery “because it is something different.” Hall and Mitchell (2005, p. 75) refer to this as rural/urban tourism.

The final unlabeled grouping on the continuum is that of low interest or no interest at all, for example, the consumption of food whilst travelling as a biological need. Hall and Mitchell (2005, p. 74) explain that the distinction between these groupings is important because it highlights the diversity of marketing opportunities for food and wine tourism. The continuum clearly associates food and tourism from the perspective of the special interest tourist.

Figure 1.1: Food tourism as special interest tourism



(Hall and Mitchell, 2005)

In contrast Wolf (2002, p. 5) describes culinary tourism as simply – “travel in order to search for, and enjoy, prepared food and drink.” This includes all memorable culinary experiences, not just those with reputations for ‘fine dining’ but equally a memorable food experience at a “roadside café in the middle of nowhere.” Culinary tourism may also include, for example, a visit to a farmers market, provided it sells prepared food, as well as a special meal in the home of a friend, attending a special event at a new or famous restaurant or bar and eating at a ‘locals-only’ restaurant. This definition is very broad and unlike Hall and Mitchell’s definition, little distinction is made between tourists who are specifically motivated to travel to a destination and take part in specific food tourism activities and others, for whom food is not the primary motivation for travel.

The Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC) characterises culinary tourism (as opposed to food tourism) as including:

... a variety of culinary, agri-tourism and agri-food activities, developed expressly for tourists, that show case food and beverages and provide an opportunity for visitors to discover dishes indigenous to each region while learning about the talent and creativity of artisans.

(CTC, 2003, p. 3)

Agri-tourism is defined as:

... a tourism activity that complements agriculture and is located within an agricultural operation. Agri-tourism puts tourists and excursionists in touch with host agricultural producers who, by providing accommodation and information, afford them an opportunity to learn about the agricultural community, agriculture and farming.

(CTC, 2003, p. 4)

Wolf (2002, p. 7) argues that food tourism “is inherently more urban than agricultural tourism”. This is because with greater populations there is a greater concentration of cafes and restaurants, “and a greater propensity for culinary experimentation” (Wolf, 2002, p. 7).

Ignatov and Smith, (2006, p. 238) write that at the crux of food is the fact that it conveys something of another culture, identity, people or traditions that may be unique to the destination or region being visited. In this respect food has been identified as part of cultural tourism (Herbig, 1998; Reynolds, 1993; Simpson 1999). For example, Long recognises culinary tourism as:

... an intentional, exploratory participation in the ‘foodways’ of an ‘other’- participation including the consumption or preparation and presentation for consumption of a food item, cuisine, meal system, or eating style considered as belonging to a culinary system not one’s own.

(Long, 2004, p. 21)

‘Foodways’ as defined by Ikeda (1999, p. 153) are “food habits and practices with respect to food acquisition, food preparation, food storage, distribution of food among family members, meal and snack patterns, food combinations, uses of food, beliefs about food, and identification of core, secondary, and peripheral foods in the diet.” It is the exploration and intention, according to Long (2004, p. 22), which define these instances as tourism. People become food tourists because they are curious about other ‘foodways’, rather than because of a mere need to satisfy hunger. The ‘otherness’ in Long’s (2004, p. 23) context refers to “the anthropological notion of humans defining the world according to their own socially constructed perceptions of reality.” The perception is that the world is divided into the known and unknown or ‘other’.

Food and cuisine are clearly an integral part of the culture of communities and destinations and tourists want to experience and 'taste' the region they are visiting (Wolf, 2003; Bessiere, 1998). The reality is that most tourists experience the cuisine of 'others' at some time, intentional or not. Hall and Mitchell (2006, p. 147) recognise that in fact "there is only a small number of tourists who will travel just for reasons of food." This thesis, therefore, approaches the role of food in tourism from the broader perspective of the interrelationship between the tourism industry and the food industry: "food, like other groups of factors such as transport, accommodation, attractions and activities, is a basic and crucial element of the tourism product" (Hjalager and Corigliano, 2000, p. 23). In this respect food can be viewed as a resource for local community and local stakeholders; in particular in the linking of food and place within the context of the value that food can add to a tourism destination. This includes the potential contribution of food to sustainable regional competitiveness and development.

Holloway (1998) recognised that many tourism destinations focus on the consumer in their design and development approach rather than adopting a resource-orientated approach. This, he argues, leads to identikit destinations with little differentiation barring the location. A resource based approach focuses on the natural and cultural attributes that contribute to a sense of place (Haven-Tang and Jones, 2006). In recognising a greater role for food in tourism rather than that of the confines of special interest tourist, it broadens both the market for, and the supply base of food in tourism, and it not only expands backward economic linkages, but also recognises important social and environmental perspectives. As Jones and Jenkins point out:

The evidence currently available suggests that food is becoming an important means of providing new tourism products that 'sell' the 'distinct character' and 'culture' of a destination. Food is also a potential antidote to stagnating mass tourism demand and a means of supporting and promoting sustainable tourism.

(Jones and Jenkins, 2002, p. 116)

1.2 Thesis Aims and objectives

Wolf (2006, p. 51) suggests that “food and cuisine are the most overlooked components of the travel experience” arguing that food is “emerging as the only aspect of the visitor’s experience that still holds potential for further development in the global tourism industry.” As Boyne, Williams, and Hall (2002, p. 91) state: the “inter-linkages between tourism and food are many and deep.” Food and drink are an inseparable part of the overall tourism experience. It is therefore surprising that these elements of the tourist experience have largely been overlooked by destinations and researchers, or relegated to a relatively minor role in attempts to explain tourism development processes (Hall and Mitchell, 2005, p. 73).

Until recently the role of food in marketing destinations has also received very little attention (du. Rand, Heath, & Alberts, 2003; Skuras, Dimara and Petrou, 2006). In particular, there is a lack of research on the extent that food is used in tourism promotion and development in destinations whose success in the tourism industry is generally based on primary attractions other than food (Okumus, Okumus and McKercher, 2007). Those destinations that do link food in tourism marketing and promotion often do not do so effectively (Okumus et al., 2007). Given the highly competitive environment that is a feature of tourism today, it is important that New Zealand capitalises on the food and tourism potential to strengthen and promote each local region in an enhanced and authentic way.

A case study of Rotorua, located in the Bay of Plenty region of New Zealand, provides the focal point for this research. The district of Rotorua includes the City of Rotorua, which is developed on the south side of Lake Rotorua, as well as fourteen lakes and a large rural community under the jurisdiction of Rotorua District Council (see Figure 1.2). In an area of approximately 270,800 hectares (Destination Rotorua Marketing, 2007b), the district’s resident population is 67,800 with in excess of 55,000 people residing in Rotorua City (Destination Rotorua Marketing, 2007b).

Figure 1.2: District of Rotorua



Source: Bay of Connections (2009)

Rotorua is an important tourism destination in New Zealand, for both domestic and international visitors alike. As in other New Zealand regions, the Bay of Plenty and Rotorua has been affected by massive social and economic change during the last two decades. The region is noted for relatively high unemployment and low socio-economic status compared with other New Zealand regions (Destination Rotorua Strategy Group, 2004; Business and Economic Research Limited (BERL) 2007). Tourism is looked to as having the potential to provide jobs and income, particularly in Rotorua.

This study argues that greater use of local food in the region's tourism economy offers a means of strengthening the regional tourism product, and at the same time, may also contribute to the district's development and diversification. Although Rotorua has been the subject of much tourism research in the past, the local food industry has not been researched in the context of tourism and regional development until now. The case study is designed to identify barriers

and opportunities for the use of local food in tourism. This is important for the further development of tourism in the district, and for other industry sectors such as agriculture, which may benefit through backward linkages. An analysis of the districts' marketing materials also contributes to the understanding of how food image is used in place promotion in Rotorua in comparison to other destinations in New Zealand, and the extent to which food is currently promoted in national and regional tourism promotions. Overall, the case study provides the opportunity to link food and tourism theory with practice.

The over-arching aim of the research is to determine the potential for local food to strengthen tourism in Rotorua, help differentiate the destination, and contribute to regional economic development.

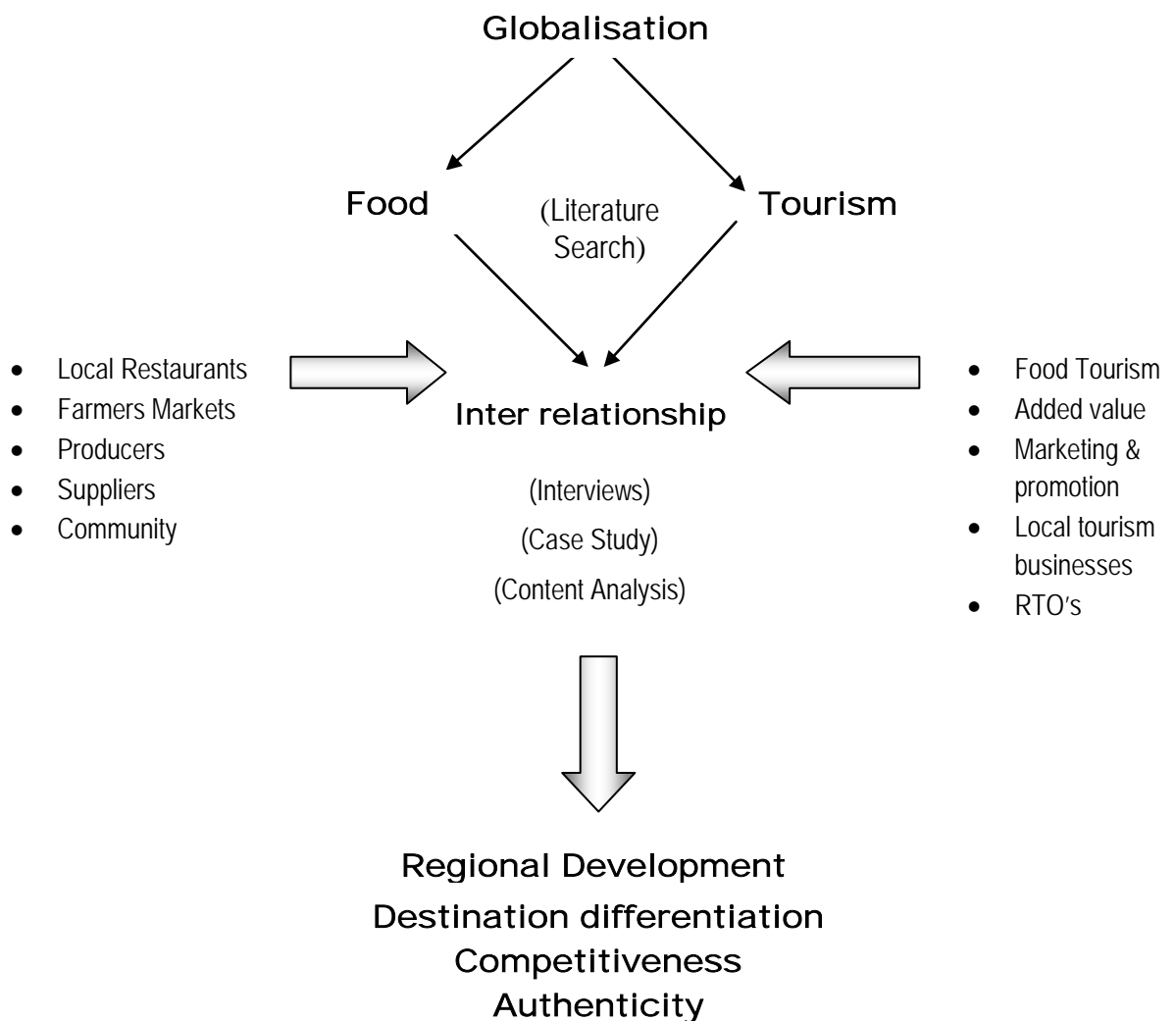
To this end the objectives of the research are to:

- Assess the current role of food in tourism in Rotorua
- Identify barriers that restrict the linkage of local food and tourism in Rotorua
- Identify ways in which local food can be used to strengthen and sustain regional competitiveness in the district of Rotorua
- Determine how food is used in tourism place promotion in Rotorua and in other regions of New Zealand
- To contribute to the growing literature on food and tourism – with a focus on the framework provided by globalization theory

A framework for the research is outlined in Figure 1.3. Globalisation theory and the resultant search for a sense of place and local 'connectedness' provides the context and understanding for the recent elevation of food in tourism. A review of related literature points to the many synergies to be had in linking food and tourism and highlights the way in which these sectors may contribute to regional development. The framework incorporates elements of the food industry, such as local restaurants, farmers markets, producers, and suppliers, with aspects of the tourism industry including yield, attractions, management, and destination promotion.

The interrelationship between the two industries in Rotorua is examined through expert interviews, a case study, and through content analysis of marketing materials. The potential outcomes in building closer relations between food and tourism as indicated in the framework include regional development, regional differentiation, and a competitive destination with authentic appeal.

Figure 1.3: Research framework for linking local food and tourism



1.3 Thesis organisation

Chapter two provides a review of the key literature and concepts that underpin the research. In setting the context for the research, the first section of the literature review focuses on theories of globalisation. Consideration is given to agents of change on a macro-level that have influenced consumption patterns and shaped the tourism industry today, and hence provide an explanation for the increased awareness of food as a valuable tool in tourism marketing and development. At the crux of any discussion on tourism within the context of globalisation, is how local economies may develop and thrive and unique cultures and environmental features survive within the globalised structure (Milne and Ateljevic, 2001, p. 370).

Following on in this Chapter, themes important to the research are addressed. This includes an overview of the interrelationship between food and tourism from an historical perspective, beginning with the time of the 'Grand Tour' to the cultural centres of Europe when cuisines from different countries began to take on their own style, through to the present day influences of popular culture on lifestyle and eating. Today food can be said to have a hedonistic importance for many travelers, rather than a purely functional one. This is followed up by a discussion on authenticity and the concept's applicability to food. Some writers suggest that the cultural setting in which food is presented to tourists is more important than whether or not the food itself has genuine historical 'authenticity'.

Tourism has become an integral part of developmental policy and economic strategy in many countries. A discussion on food, tourism, and regional development ensues, with a focus on 'sustainable competitiveness'. Part of this discourse focuses on the role of clusters and networks in local economic development and as a means of combating global competitive forces. Fierce competition between destinations has also highlighted the need for effective marketing of place. This section of Chapter two addresses the value in linking food in tourism promotional campaigns, in particular, for New Zealand tourism marketing, and its focus on a defined target market. Finally, tourism strategy and policy in New Zealand is discussed with regard to the role of food in tourism policy.

The research philosophy, methodology, and processes of analysis used in this research are discussed in Chapter 3. The study adopts a predominantly qualitative approach to data collection through the application of grounded theory. The thesis focuses on a case study of the district of Rotorua, located within the wider Bay of Plenty Region (Figure 1.2). In-depth interviews with food and tourism industry experts and other key stakeholders are conducted to understand attitudes and perceptions in developing closer food and tourism links in the district. In addition, a content analysis of official tourism web sites and brochures has been employed to examine the extent to which food is used to promote Rotorua and other destinations in New Zealand. Included in this chapter are details of the design of the study, data collection techniques, and methods of analysis used.

Chapter four provides contextual and background information on the case of Rotorua. In this chapter an historical overview of tourism development in Rotorua is presented, focusing on the interrelationship between food and tourism in the district from the early days of tourism to present day. This chapter also includes the presentation of tourism statistics on visitors to Rotorua, their spending patterns; as well as an overview of food and tourism specific businesses in the region. Potential strengths and opportunities for the greater integration of local food within tourism in the District are examined. Rotorua tourism strategy is also given due consideration with regard to the 'vision' for the destination and role of local food in tourism.

Chapter five is dedicated to a content analysis of Tourism New Zealand's web-based marketing of food in tourism, RTO internet tourism promotions, and RTO tourism brochures. The Chapter begins with an analysis of Tourism New Zealand's marketing positioning of food on the official Tourism New Zealand web site. This is followed by a study of regional web sites and brochures. Frequency of food images are recorded along with those destinations promoting special food features. The geographical focus of food promotions is also subject to analysis. The second part of the chapter focuses on the type of foods and the adjectives used in promotions to describe food. Comparisons are made between Rotorua and other destinations. The marketing materials were also analysed for food themes that are projected through marketing images- such as

food in hospitality, food and festivals and food and culture. This provided an indication of market positioning of food in RTO promotions. Results from this chapter are designed to illustrate the extent to which local food is promoted in Rotorua tourism, thus helping to meet two of the core research objectives.

Results and discussion based on data collected in interviews held with expert stakeholders directly connected to the food and tourism industries are presented in Chapter six. Industry experts have a good understanding of development needs of a destination and can identify issues that are not always in the tourist view or domain. In addition they may also see what is possible, for example, they may be able to see potential links with other sectors, identify gaps in the industry and be aware of tourism trends. Ultimately expert industry stakeholders determine the nature of the tourism product.

During the interview process a variety of constraints and opportunities for the integration of local food in Rotorua tourism became apparent. This directly helped to meet three of the core research objectives. A key discussion focused on the difficulty in defining New Zealand national and regional cuisine and the problems of sourcing reliable and consistent supplies of local produce. Further dialogue surrounded the authenticity of hangi food and whether or not a non-existent wine industry posed a barrier to integrating food and tourism in Rotorua. Interviewees were also asked their opinion as to their willingness to work together to promote local food and whether or not local food could be used to create a point of difference for the region. Questions were also aimed at understanding attitudes towards the marketing of food and responsibility for this.

The concluding chapter establishes the overall significance of the relationship between food and tourism in Rotorua, synthesising the discussion developed throughout the thesis. The chapter begins with an overview of the core research objectives and the methodology employed in the study. A summary of the results is also provided. Insights gained from the research are discussed along with the implications and contributions of the findings for academics and their research, and businesses and operatives currently integrating food and tourism or those seeking to set up new links between the two sectors. Implications of the findings are also aimed at regional tourism operatives charged with

coordinating tourism in the regions. Finally, areas where there are still gaps and uncertainties are highlighted in a future research agenda.

CHAPTER TWO

CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR FOOD IN TOURISM

This chapter opens with a discussion of the impacts of globalisation on tourism. In some quarters the impacts are imbued with negativity: for example, globalisation is seen as a threat to national and/or local cultures and identities (Mowforth and Munt, 2003; Ritzer, 1996). Others view the effects of globalisation more positively with talk of the 'global village' (Sklair, 2002) and point out that the 'shrinking' of the globe through technology and communication has resulted in reduced cost of long-distance travel and increased tourism supply and demand (Brown, 2000). Food, fast becoming an important and essential element in tourism, is also not immune to global pressures. The first part of this chapter seeks to address the homogenising impact of globalisation and the challenges and opportunities this presents for tourism destinations.

This is followed by a discussion of a range of topics specifically addressing the interrelationship between food and tourism. Food is indicative of 'place' and it is this important factor that lends authenticity and distinctiveness to destinations. One of the many advantages of linking food in tourism is its recognised contribution to regional development (Hjalager and Richards, 2002; Sharpley, 1999; Santich, 2007; Eastham, 2003). Central to this is the protection and strengthening of local food supply chains and economic linkages between local producers, suppliers and the tourist (Hall, Mitchell and Sharples, 2003). The focus on 'place' and the 'local' within globalised structures outlined in the literature also indicates that food has a significant role to play not only in 'place' marketing but also in the sustainable competitiveness of both the industry and the region. Finally, consideration is given to New Zealand government policy and its impact on tourism, yield and regional development.

2.1. Globalisation, tourism and food

Sklair (2002, p. 34) states "there is no single agreed definition of globalisation." Globalisation can be described as a phenomenon whereby events, decisions and activities on one side of the world often have a significant impact on individuals and communities in other areas of the world (Giddens, 1990, p. 3).

Globalisation, according to Harvey (1990, p. 10), is about the “condensing of space and time” in terms of technological development and the “mobility of capital, people, ideas and information on a universal scale.” Also, historically there is no agreed ‘starting point’ of globalisation, although Waters (2001, p. 1) suggests that globalisation is a concept that appears to have evolved in the 1990s.

Sklair (2002, p. 35) also argues that the concept of globalisation is not clearly distinguished from the concept of ‘internationalisation’ or indeed post-modernism. According to Brown (2000, p. 16), globalisation encompasses the following trends: the worldwide spread of a neo-liberal capitalist system; the growth of transnational companies (TNCs), and their ability to operate free of national restrictions; an increase in the speed and flow of capital in money form; and the use of computerised and satellite-relayed technology which inhibits national regulation of information flows.

Robertson (1992) provides a different perspective to the widely held perception that economic forces, through mostly transnational corporations, drive the globalisation process. He argues that globalisation is an independent force with many contributing factors. In reality, the process of globalisation is not a new phenomenon. For example, culture, religion, travel and technology have all contributed to the process of globalisation at different times throughout human history.

Sklair (2002, p. 39) reviews two other perspectives on globalisation. ‘Global Polity Theory’ conceptualises the decline in power of nation states, the “increasing significance of global institutions”, and the organisation of global governance to solve common problems and promote global civil society and security. Organisations such as the United Nations lend some credence to this theory. This, states Sklair (2002, p. 43), “turns the whole world into a sort of global village.” Secondly, ‘Global Culture Approach’ or ‘World Culture Theory’, a relatively new perspective and part of the postmodernism tenet, argues that “globalisation is driven by a homogenising, mass-media based culture” (Mowforth and Munt, 2003, p. 25).

The emergent culture is characterised by Big Macs, Coke and the Web. This, according to Mowforth and Munt (2003, p. 25) is seen as a threat to national and local cultures and identities, particularly those of the developing world whose people may find it difficult to “sustain their traditional lifestyles in the face of an imposition of western values and beliefs, and the consequent erosion of cultural difference and authenticity.” Much of the emerging global cultural consumerism is based on American lifestyles, and as Mowforth and Munt (1998, p. 12) put it, “a shrinking world where local differences are steadily eroded and subsumed in a homogeneous mass or single social order.” Ritzer refers to this as the ‘McDonaldisation’ of society and defines this as:

... the process by which the principles of the fast food restaurant – standardisation and rationalisation – are coming to dominate more and more sectors of American society as well as the rest of the world.

(Ritzer, 1996, p. 1)

In marked contrast, Jameson states that globalisation is about a:

... celebration of difference and differentiation; suddenly all the cultures around the world are placed in tolerant contact with each other in a kind of immense cultural pluralism which would be very difficult not to welcome.

(Jameson, 1998, pp. 56–57)

Globalised goods and ideas are construed, adapted and incorporated in diverse ways to suit the local. Indeed it can be argued that there are relatively few standardised global products. For example, in New Zealand McDonald’s has introduced the ‘Kiwi Burger’ which incorporates beetroot into the standard McDonald’s hamburger, and McDonald’s burgers in India contain lentils rather than beef. This is an example of what some researchers have called ‘glocalisation’ (Robertson, 1995, p. 25).

Meethan (2001, p. 3) argues that tourism is part of the commodification process that is an inherent feature of globalisation. As such, tourism is best conceptualised as a “global process of the commodification, packaging and consumption of images, cultures, and places” (Meethan, 2001, p. 3). Thus, tourism is considered one of the macro forces that constitute the ‘spread’ of

globalisation (Teo and Lim, 2003). In contrast, Brown (2000, pp. 18–20) contests the role of tourism as a globalising force, focusing on the dominant forces that lie outside the industry's control. While acknowledging that clearly tourism is an integral part of the international political economy, and that indeed tourism exemplifies many aspects of globalisation, Brown argues that it is the external and economic system of which tourism is a part that is the globalising force, rather than tourism itself.

Brown (2000, p. 19) also refutes arguments linking tourism and cultural homogenisation, suggesting mass communications in the form of television and film and the worldwide export of mass-produced standardised products are more responsible for cultural homogenisation than tourism. As Sharpley (1999) points out, cultures constantly evolve over time and modern advances in communication technology and the global spread of Western cultural manifestations, such as McDonald's, have a far greater impact on culture than tourism itself. Sharpley (1999, p. 207) also acknowledges that tourism may make a positive contribution to the preservation of a culture in that traditional ways of life re-emerge or the old ways are retained for tourist consumption.

There is no doubt, however, that globalisation has had a significant impact on tourism supply and demand. For example, advances in technology and communication have seen the globe 'shrink', resulting in reduced cost of long-distance travel, and innovative marketing of tourism destinations. International travel is now easier and faster. There has also been an increased demand for new destinations and unique experiences (Brown, 2000, p. 18).

In reference to World Culture Theory, Meethan (2001, p. 10) states that there are two main quandaries over global culture concerning theorists: (1) How is individual identity to "survive in the face of emerging global culture?" and (2) What will be the relationship between local cultures, territorial identities and the emerging global culture? Globalisation in the 'global culture approach' is often viewed as a negative force that undermines the 'local'. The concept of the 'local' generally connotes "a smaller place characterised by close-knit social relationships, place-based identities and the realities of everyday life that turn the location from a 'physical space' into a place" (Featherstone, 1996, p. 47). In

something of a paradox, preoccupation with the 'global' actually pushes concerns for the 'local' to the forefront of marketing, research and analysis.

World Culture Theory when applied to food consumption can be used to explain the tension between the global and the local (Robertson, 1995) and the reasons for a reaffirmation of local food and food systems. For example, the inception in 1989 of the 'Slow Food Movement' in Paris represents a celebration of the 'local' and the efforts of individual communities to protect traditional food heritage against the fast-food trend. The 'Slow Food Movement' is an international body set up in the defence of biodiversity, promoting local food worldwide in an effort to preserve not only traditional methods of food production and preparation but also to conserve cultural identities (Petrini, 2002, pp. 4–5). Now based in Italy, the Slow Food movement has 65,000 members in 45 countries. The symbol of Slow Food is the snail and its main project is the 'Ark'. In other words, like Noah's Ark, its goal is to save and "promote diversity and high quality, sustainable food production" (Civitello, 2004, p. 317).

With regard to food, the forces of globalisation and localisation appear to complement each other, enabling a globalisation of tastes and at the same time a growing awareness and appreciation for the 'local'. In the context of food and tourism, the forces of globalisation have exposed people to 'foreign' foods in their own countries and this has stimulated a desire to taste 'foreign' foods whilst on holiday. In another perspective on globalisation and food, Fischler (1993, cited in Bessiere, 1998, p. 24), refers to the 'back-to-nature myth' where the desire for nature and the past is seen as a counter tendency to globalisation, and associated urbanisation; it is an escape from technology-based society and a reconnection with one's 'roots'. Bessiere (1998, p. 24) suggests that "today's city dweller escapes in a real or imagined manner from his daily routine and ordinary fare to find solace in regional and so called 'traditional' food."

Bessiere (1998, p. 24) uses the notion of 'back to nature' to explain the preoccupation with heritage and the consumer demand for 'natural' foods such as farm-fresh produce and stoneground breads, and for home-style cuisine and regional cooking. Getting 'back to nature' is also a reflection of an increased

distrust of modern agricultural production methods and processed foods with the use of chemicals and food additives. In taking Bessiere's research one step further, it could be implied that it is in fact the traceability of produce that is growing in importance in the face of multinational food supply, rather than just the desire to return to 'natural' foods. Holloway and Kneafsey (2000) suggest that farmers' markets are the logical outcome of these trends as they are associated with the local and allow the consumer to interact directly with the producer of the food.

Hall, Mitchell, Scott and Sharples (2008, p. 221) make reference to the "social construction of the 'modern' farmers' market." The authors suggest that the modern manifestation of the farmers' market has a social function that is greater than just the purchase of fresh foods. Farmers' markets are social constructs and act as a manifestation of the nostalgic desire to get 'back to nature'. They are also manifestations of identity and community. Holloway and Keafsey (2000, p. 293), suggest that farmers' markets act as "alternative" spaces (to corporatised supermarkets) and as "reactionary/nostalgic" spaces in the face of globalisation of food production and systems.

Poon (1989), in her bid to explain changes in tourist behaviour in a globalised age, has identified characteristics of the post-Fordist or 'new' tourist, as opposed to traditional tourist typologies. She argues that there was a move in the 1980s and 1990s away from the traditional three 'S's (sun, sand and surf) associated with forms of mass tourism. Poon (1989), and later Novelli (2005), argue that post-Fordist tourists are seeking alternative forms of tourism that are interactive and reflect people's overall lifestyle interests and activities. For example, today there are a growing number of people who are unable to cook and more people dine out than ever before. Yet 'lifestyle channels', television shows, radio shows, and magazines such as *Cuisine* and *Australian Gourmet Traveller*, dedicated to food, cooking and travel, have gained in popularity as part of new leisure interests and travel activities (Hall and Sharples, 2003, p. 2). For example, Sharples (2003, p. 102) cites a growing interest in cookery-school holidays and Myer-Czech (2003) reports on the growing popularity of food trails in Austria.

'New' tourists are described as experienced travellers, well educated, well informed, independent, unpredictable and diverse. Local culture and regional development are increasingly seen as key components of 'new tourism' and as valuable sources of new initiatives designed to capture traditional and new markets (Poon, 1989, p. 74). Pine and Gilmore (1999) acknowledge the role that experiences play in building deeper and more personal relationships with consumers. Essentially business success comes from creating experiences which engage consumers emotionally through staged interactions in an 'authentic' and memorable way. This presents food and tourism businesses with greater prospects for increased revenue returns. For example, the convergence of food and tourism provides tourists with the opportunity to participate in travel experiences in a more meaningful way. Wolf (2002, p. 2) epitomises this view when he states that "culinary tourism is both experiential and interactive." Dining is likened to a "form of interactive theatre", where the interaction of staff and hosts is viewed as a kind of 'entertainment' for the customer.

In reference to wider processes of economic and cultural globalisation, Hall and Mitchell (2001, p. 310) have identified broad global changes that have occurred in cuisine and food. These are described within the context of "waves of change" (Hall and Mitchell, 2001, p. 310), identified as follows: the mercantile wave of the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries, when European traders transferred plants and animals between the New and Old Worlds; the migration wave of the eighteenth to mid-twentieth centuries, in which large numbers of European and, to a lesser extent, Asian settlers took their food and cuisine with them as part of the large-scale migrations; and the communication and technology waves of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. For example, in the last century rapid improvements in transport technology have enabled the large-scale transport of food products around the world, while the communications revolution supports global marketing of food products and 'place' promotion on an international scale. The heightened role of the media also promotes and creates cuisines (for example, through food programmes such as *'Kai Time on the Road'*) in areas quite culturally distant from the cuisine's place of origin (Hall and Mitchell 2001, p. 310).

According to Hall and Mitchell (2001, p. 310), food once considered particular to a region and a season can now be purchased anywhere and at any time. Gillespie (2001) believes this has led to an internationalisation of food, cuisines and eating habits, and a decline in the concept of national or regional cuisine. In research conducted on the effect of globalisation on food, Riley (2000, p. 192) has identified forms of cuisine that cross national borders. As a result of international tourism, national cuisines such as English and Irish pub food have been exported abroad. Riley also identified a type of international 'hybrid' food that is a construct of marketing and food and beverage managers. According to Riley (2000, p. 193), hotel cuisine is an example of 'hybrid' food, consisting of a set of homogeneous dishes designed to suit all tastes. Riley (2000, p. 193) suggests that international hybrid food has come about because local cuisine, being less well known, is perhaps therefore perceived as 'less safe' compared with international cuisine.

The modern macro-sociological theories of globalisation have been used to explain changes in food consumption patterns all over the world. Globalisation has been attributed with the destruction of food-related traditions like home cooking, local and regional dishes and buying locally produced foods. At the same time concerns have been increasing over the decline in healthy eating and good nutrition (Schlosser, 2001). Schlosser (2001, p. 242) claims that one ramification of the globalisation of food is the cultural change and homogenisation brought about by the increase in popularity and availability of fast food. As the fast-food industry became highly competitive in the United States, companies opened overseas franchises to ensure continued growth. Fast-food franchises of multinational companies are also often the first to arrive in countries newly opened to trade and, as they open in new countries, they also bring with them their major suppliers. As a consequence Schlosser believes that:

... the values, tastes, and industrial practices of the American fast food industry and the West are being exported to every corner of the globe, helping to create a homogenised international culture.

(Schlosser, 2001, p. 229)

Hall and Mitchell (2002) believe that competitive advantage is to be gained from being able to offer locally produced, unique products and not on the production of low-value, mass-produced products such as fast food.

Finally, ethnic foods that have become popular in the West have been transformed to meet western tastes and the convenience of the food market, providing another example of a homogenised international culture. Traditional dishes and diets have been altered beyond recognition; hence food may be differentiated on menus as 'authentic' or 'westernised', (for example Thai takeaway food in New Zealand which has 'Kiwi' hot or 'Thai' hot options for seasoning) (Schlosser 2001, p. 230). Schlosser (2001) and Germov and Williams (2004) attribute the growing standardisation of tastes to the role of multinational food corporations and the economic aspects of 'free' trade agreements in ensuring that branded, processed food products are available throughout the world. The logos and symbols of many of these brands have become indicative of a certain lifestyle and represent the trappings of popular culture.

Alternative development models of tourism based on local sustainability have emerged in the wake of the negative outcomes associated with the globalisation of the industry. Such 'alternative' models represent an attempt to maximise equitable economic benefits of tourism for local people and reduce the socio-cultural and environmental impacts of traditional tourism models. Holden (2006, p. 127) has identified the following characteristics of alternative tourism models: (1) The pace of development is directed and controlled by local people rather than external influence, and development is small scale with high rates of local ownership. (2) Environmental conservation is important with the minimisation of negative social and cultural impacts. (3) Linkages to other sectors of the local economy such as agriculture are maximised, thus reducing the reliance on imports. (4) There is emphasis on attracting a market segment that is interested in education in the local culture and environment, and willing to accept local standards of accommodation and food.

To counteract the negative effects of global forces and provide for 'ethical' food supply, Hall and Sharples (2008b) suggest an 'alternative', more ethical and

sustainable 'food system' for communities. A local food system is characterised by a "deliberate close producer–consumer relationship within a designated place or local area" (Hall and Sharples, 2008b, p. 27). The advantages of localising food systems lies in bridging the growing divide between producers and consumers and in giving priority to local social, economic and environmental health rather than focusing completely on corporate profit (Food System Economic Partnership, 2006; Buck, Kaminski, Stockman and Vail, 2007 cited in Hall and Sharples, 2008b, p. 27).

Buck et al. (2007, cited in Hall and Sharples, 2008b, p. 27) identify the following benefits of local food systems: economic leakage from the region is reduced as less money is lost to external corporations; the horticultural and agricultural sectors are strengthened with money exchanged for food returning directly to suppliers; jobs are created; consumers and producers are linked in an efficient infrastructure, effectively cutting out intermediaries – this can provide a competitive advantage for local business community members; entrepreneurship is encouraged; the community is healthy and revitalised with consumers having access to freshly grown and produced foods; consumers have the opportunity to develop direct relationships with food producers; and there are increased environmental benefits as food has less distance to travel to markets. Ultimately local food systems support the viability of small to medium lifestyle blocks and farms. This helps to create a sense of 'place', and to conserve the local culture and history of a region (Boniface, 2003, p. 84; Hall and Sharples, 2008b, p. 27).

Feagan and Krug (2004, cited in Hall and Sharples, 2008b, p. 28) developed another 'alternative' food concept: the 'foodshed'. This is linked to the "bio-regionally orientated concept of the watershed". Central to this concept is the proximity of a major metropolitan area to a fertile hinterland. Characteristics of the 'foodshed' include the shortening of food chains, with closer ties between producers and consumers linked with a public awareness of the 'costs' associated with mass-produced industrial food systems. In creating public awareness of the costs it is hoped that "producers and consumers will rethink their food production and purchasing decisions" (Hall and Sharples, 2008b, p. 29). In actual fact, closer ties between consumer and producer and proximity to

a large metropolitan area would appear to be key requisites for a successful farmers' market. However, Eastham (2008) adds one more condition into the mix for a successful farmers' market, and that is the requirement that:

... disposable income of potential consumers is such to provide sufficient income to farmers to make the market a viable option. Markets that have fewer customers and lower consumer expenditure will result in a decline in the number of stall holders, thus making the market less attractive to customers ...

(Eastham, 2008)

Farmers' markets and other community food events are recognised as significant aspects of local food systems. One of the main tenets of farmers' markets is that they are of benefit for local community sustainability. Farmers' markets encourage entrepreneurship and provide a start for fledgling businesses within local food systems (Boniface, 2003). Many vendors at farmers' markets often lack the capital to open a retail outlet – farmers' markets provide an economical venue where vendors can hone their business skills and improve their understanding of consumer needs (Guthrie, Guthrie, Lawson and Cameron, 2006).

Hall and Sharples (2008b, p. 30) have identified the following ways in which farmers' markets can help entrepreneurs overcome start-up barriers: farmers' markets provide a testing ground for product innovation and diversification; there are opportunities to add value to products through packaging and branding; and they provide vendors with the opportunity to expand the size and diversity of their customer base through direct sales to the consumer. Farmers' markets also provide a stable platform from which to promote products without the major expense of individual advertising, and they can provide vendors with the opportunity to earn extra income above and beyond normal retail business. Moreover, products sampled at the markets may also encourage sales at other outlets (Hall and Sharples, 2008b). However, the success of a farmers' market is contingent on its branding and identity. Indeed, it is the representations of identity that explains the attraction to farmers' markets for tourists (Holloway and Kneafsey, 2000; Boniface, 2003).

2.2 Linking food and tourism

In historical writings on tourism there are many incidental references about food – many of which complain about the awfulness of the food travellers were obliged to consume (Tannahill, 1988, p. 230). Tannahill (1988, p. 230) states food and drink were very similar across the continent. In the eighteenth century, gentlemen were encouraged to complete their education by undertaking a 'Grand Tour', or pilgrimage, to the cultural centres of Europe (Collier, 1997, p. 42). As the number of travellers increased (many of them book-writers), reports of foreign food reached home, and cuisines from different countries began to take on their own style.

Bryant, DeWalt, Courtney and Schwartz (2003, p. 10) also identify that, with the migration of people into the cities, together with mass production of food and advertising, regional cuisines developed based on the popular cooking styles of the major urban centres. For example, pasta from Rome, Turin and Milan developed into an Italian cuisine; butter and cream dishes, and red wine became indicative of French cuisine; and fish and chips became popular in Britain, as did 'hot dogs' in America. Bryant et al. (2003, p. 11) state that "by the end of the nineteenth century, most major countries had their own national cuisines" or foods that could immediately be identified as characteristic of 'place'.

According to Tannahill (1988, p. 326), it was not until the early to mid-nineteenth century and the beginnings of the restaurant industry that characteristic national and regional styles of food and cooking emerged, and food and wine itself became a travel product. The exchange of ingredients and the increasing knowledge of food and cuisine across cultures acted as a forerunner for the interaction of culture, food and drink, and tourism (Boniface, 2003). This also marked the advent of the cook book and the democratisation of gastronomy. However, the number of travellers who took a particular interest in food and wine at this time was small because travel was often difficult, time-consuming and very expensive – factors which all prohibited widespread travel.

Industrialisation not only had a major influence on the organisation of society and work practices but also on what people ate, as well as when and where

they ate it (Bryant et al., 2003, p. 6). Three meals a day were consumed rather than two as a direct result of longer working days away from home. The midday meal, traditionally a heavy meal, became lighter and was consumed at the factory rather than at home, in order to hasten a return to work.

As technology improved and disposable income allowed, more people began to travel and this resulted in increased awareness of food and wine as part of the travel experience (Hall and Mitchell, 2005, p. 75). Gillespie (2001, p. 11) maintains that the 1900 Michelin Guide for travellers, which rated the quality of food and hospitality in establishments across France and latterly Europe, played (and continues to play) an important role in the intermingling of food and tourism.

In the 1920s the first wine trails were introduced in Germany as the number of automobile owners increased and the construction of *autobahn* encouraged recreational travel. After the Second World War interest in food and wine began to grow rapidly with the end of rationing and with the movement of people, but it was not until the late 1970s that there was interest on any large scale (Hall and Mitchell, 2005, p. 75).

Many travellers to New Zealand over the past 100 years have documented accounts of the food, providing a historical record of the linkages between food and travel (Lymburn, 2004). For example, Simpson quotes Eric Linklater (1951) upon his visit to New Zealand:

The natural quality of the food [in New Zealand] is so good that it deserves both skill and reverence in the kitchen. What lordly dishes a French housewife would make of it! But the New Zealanders, like the Scots, think that baking is the better part of cookery, and spend their ingenuity, exhaust their interest, on cakes, and pastries and ebullient, vast cream sponges. Soup is neglected, meat mishandled. I have seen their admirable mutton brought upon the table in such a miserable shape that the hogget – so they call a sheep of uncertain age – appeared to have been killed by a bomb, and the fragments of its carcass incinerated in the resultant fire.

(Simpson, 1999, p. 123)

Arriving from Britain in 1957 the first General Manager for the THC chain, Eric Colbeck, had the following to say about food and food service in New Zealand:

None of the staff had any training in the preparation and service of food and New Zealand was rather known for its disdainful receptionists. The cooking was very simple and almost tasteless, with everything covered in brown gravy ...

(Tourism New Zealand, 2001).

Hall and Mitchell (2005, p. 76) and Lymburn (2004, p. 10) attribute increased interest in food and drink to agricultural restructuring in the developed world. As a result of changes to international trade agreements, including the removal of tariffs and reductions in agricultural subsidies, struggling food producers began to diversify into new products and find new ways of doing business. For example, New Zealand developed and marketed Chinese gooseberries and venison meat (kiwifruit and cervena) and began wine production. Direct personal contact with customers, as at farmers' markets, also became an important means of increasing public awareness of new food products and increasing revenue (Bessiere, 1998).

Long (2004, p. 20) encapsulates the nexus between food and tourism when she states that "culinary tourism is about food as a subject and medium, destination, and vehicle for tourism." Long views culinary tourism as a means for people to investigate and discover foods new to them and in so doing learn about other cultures and ways of life. Tourism also provides communities with the opportunities to use food in order to market and "sell their histories" and reinforce and sustain identities. Thus, many of the motivations for travel and tourism consumption can be met and fulfilled through a culinary experience.

According to Long (2004, p. 24), culinary 'other' or unfamiliar cuisines can be experienced in different ways. The first way is culturally, through the experience of "foodways" that are not one's own. This is the most common way in which culinary tourism is enacted, and is the basis of most of the interaction between food and tourism. Ethnic cookery demonstrations and restaurants specialising in cuisines from other countries and international cook books are all indicative of cultural culinary 'other'.

The second 'other' defined by Long (2004, p. 24) is region. This refers to "the demarcation of boundaries and landscapes shaped by cultivation and 'foodways' that are geographically removed from one's own." There is a growing awareness of the importance of regionalism in gaining competitive advantage through differentiation and as a means of reaffirming cultural identity. Reynolds (1994, pp. 189–194), Richards (2002, pp. 1–20), Hall, Mitchell and Sharples (2003), and Civitello (2004) all suggest using regional differences in food to gain competitive advantage.

Hall, Mitchell and Sharples, (2003, p. 35) state that the French have long been aware of the importance of regional differentiation. While there is no literal translation into English, the French use the term *terroir* to describe the combination of place and food characteristics. Long (2004, p. 25) defines the concept of *terroir* as an integral part of 'region' – that is, a French term used to describe "the combination of soil, climate and culture that gives wine and food products defining characteristics of place."

Long's (2004) third category of 'other' is time. This refers to the presentation of 'historical' foods and also to 'futuristic' foods. Foods from the past provide great potential for tourism experiences. This includes re-enactments of feasts such as hangi and concerts, cooking and re-creating old recipes, and the growing and cooking of heirloom ingredients no longer readily available. The emphasis is on environmentally sound food production techniques and sustainability. Farmers' markets provide a ready outlet for heirloom products. Culinary 'other' may also be represented by ethos and religion that is not one's own. A growing spiritualism in conjunction with food, manifest in philosophical stances such as vegetarianism, veganism and the production of organically grown produce, also provides for new experiences.

While Long's (2004) explanation of experiencing culinary 'otherness' provides possible reasons for heightened interest in cuisine and tourism, there is also the potential added benefit of the possibilities of exporting the food back to the countries from which the tourists originate (Hall and Sharples, 2003, p. 10). Through export, local food economies are reinforced, the conservation of food and biodiversity is encouraged, agriculture and food production is improved,

and local identity can be sustained (Hall, Mitchell and Sharples, 2003, pp. 54–55).

Increased commercialisation and interest in food is also attributable to the role of the media in popularising what was once an aspect of 'high culture'. Through television, food has become educational as well as entertaining, and an explicit link between food and travel and tourism has been made (Sharples, 2003, p. 110; Lymburn, 2004, p. 7). There is now a host of food and travel and gourmet travel programmes on television. For example, chef Gary Rhodes presents a whole television series of cookery from around the world, produced *in situ*.

According to Sharples (2003, p. 113), "the media undoubtedly form a pervasive and invasive aspect of culture which has enormous influence on destination and place image, as well as on taste." This, in effect, has 'lifted' food from the realms of functionality and hospitality and elevated cuisine in importance in today's western lifestyle, facilitating the transition of food and drink from a necessity to a status commodity (Hall and Mitchell, 2005, p. 76).

The tourism/food connection provides opportunities for food producers to add value to their product by creating a tourist experience around the raw materials; for example, New Zealand can become 'Kiwi Fruit Land'. Conversely, "gastronomic experiences can add value to tourism by providing the tourist with a link between local culture, landscape and food, and by creating the 'atmosphere' so essential to a memorable holiday experience" (Hjalager and Richards, 2002, p. 224). For example, there is a large array of food-related souvenirs available at international airports. In New Zealand airports these products are noticeably honey- or kiwifruit-based biscuits, sweets and chocolates.

There are also a number of psychological variables in an individual's 'style' of travel and choice of travel destination; these include perception, attitudes and beliefs. Motivation is considered the most important variable because it is the main "driving force behind all behaviour" (Richardson and Fluker, 2004, p. 66). Basic motivational theory, such as Maslow's 'hierarchy of needs', "describes a process of internal psychological factors such as needs, wants, and goals"

(Richardson and Fluker, 2004, p. 66). Marketing is essentially aimed at meeting these needs. There are a wide range of factors that motivate consumers to buy tourism products. However, Swarbrooke and Horner (1999) state that the motivating factors can essentially be split into two groups, namely:

- those that motivate a person to take a holiday (the 'push factors'), and
- those that motivate a person to take a particular holiday to a specific destination at a particular time (the 'pull factors'), i.e. those factors which influence destination choice.

'Push factors' include economic, social, political, demographic and socio-psychological dimensions, such as escapism, nostalgia, romance, prestige, sensation seeking, learning, and spiritual fulfilment, that motivate people to 'get away from it all'. Pull factors are those that make a destination attractive for consumers; these include climate, attractions, safety and lifestyle (Richardson and Fluker, 2004, p. 67; Swarbrooke and Horner, 1999). Fields (2002, p. 37) argues that food achieves both these functions by "pushing people away from their familiar foods and eating patterns" and "pulling them towards new and exciting foods". Food is therefore an important factor in tourist motivation.

Lang Research (2001) concluded that those with a high interest in food and wine were more likely to be motivated to travel by the following factors: personal indulgences such as visiting casinos, gambling and experiencing the good life – which includes fine cuisine and being pampered; interest in exploration – examples would be visiting historical sites, natural wonders and food-tourism attractions; and romance and relaxation, both in terms of experiencing romance and intimacy, and having time to rest, relax, recuperate and enjoy good food.

These factors indicate that food contributes a hedonic aspect to the overall tourism experience. Indeed, Boniface (2003, p. 24) writes that the tourist is "constantly looking for and needing a 'high'." Food fulfils the requirement for sensory and tactile pleasure and instant gratification perhaps more than any other tourist attraction. The 'high' maybe gratified in a special taste and sensation of an unusual food or drink, or in the sensory pleasure of discovering a rich and flavoursome new dish.

Mitchell and Hall (2003, p. 69) also point to the hedonistic aspect of food in tourism, in that eating becomes an experiential rather than a functional part of travel. This is in a similar manner to Urry's (1999) notion of the 'tourist gaze' as distinct from 'everyday looking', which removes sightseeing from the mundane. Mitchell and Hall (2003, p. 69) point out that when on holiday there is a higher involvement in food and its consumption than occurs in the normal everyday functionalism of eating, and that the travel experience heightens sensory awareness and imagination and contributes to a sense of escapism from everyday existence.

Food involves all the senses of taste, smell, touch and sight and this helps to provide for, and fulfil, visitors' need for new sensations. Greater symbolic significance is often also attached to the occasion. As Long (2004, p. 22) explains, food "engages one's physical being, not simply as an observer, but as a participant as well." Thus, it is the hedonic and aesthetic nature of food in tourism, for the sake of experiencing it in itself, that satisfies sensibilities, rather than what the food represents in satisfying hunger. It is this point that is the essence of the growing motivation for linking food and tourism and that which enables 'local' food to become an attraction in its own right and, furthermore, just as important as any other tourist attraction in a given area. For example, farmers' markets, producers in the rural sectors and wineries, in conjunction with "the landscape within which they are located" (Hall and Mitchell, 2005, p. 86), all provide motivation and reasons for visiting areas – creating a 'sense of place'.

Motivation for travel and the type of travel undertaken can also be considered in terms of specific market segments or niches and tourists' psychological preferences and behaviour (Plog, 1974). Boniface (2003, p. 19) states that "the tourist who is interested in cuisine as part of the tourism experience is likely to be a well-educated, older person (although not exclusively) gaining satisfaction from a deep and relaxed pace of tourism experience." Boniface (2003, p. 20) also identifies another sector whose focus is on gourmet food, and large quantities of alcohol. She refers to the 'party animal' and extrovert "wanting to exchange a measured daily life for an exuberant existence of over-indulgence while on holiday." In between these groups is the 'upscale lifestyler' whose

chosen holiday is the epitome of the high-life in terms of designer hotels and designer food to match.

Plog (1974) categorised tourists according to a continuum of psychological type based on interests, needs and behaviour. At one end of the continuum are people who prefer to travel with a group to established tourism destinations. These tourists are called 'psycho-centric', and are characterised by often being anxious and lacking in self-confidence and a sense of adventure when travelling. At the other extreme of the continuum are the 'allocentric' tourists. These are tourists with a sense of adventure, a preference for exploration, and great self-confidence. Allocentric tourists are often referred to as 'travellers' rather than tourists, as 'tourist' implies mass tourism. Tourist destinations can also be placed on a similar scale, as can tourist attractions (McPherson, 2005, 3).

Plog (1974) argues that allocentrics can thus be regarded as neophilic; i.e. they have a fascination with novel and new phenomena, whereas psycho-centrics have neophobic tendencies, or a fear of the novel or new (Mitchell and Hall, 2003, p. 76). These terms taken from biology are also applicable to human attitudes to food (Fischler, 1993, cited in Bessiere, 1998). In relation to food and tourism, Cohen and Avieli (2004) regard neophobic tendencies as an impediment to food tourism, because individuals are reluctant to taste foods new to them. This type of tourist may seek comfort in familiar foods in mass tourism resorts. Conversely, those with neophilic tendencies are open to new taste experiences – "very often the traditional or 'peasant' food not supplied by the mainstream tourism industry" (Fields, 2002, p. 40). According to Fields, (2002, p. 40) the most basic foods can also satisfy status and prestige motivations as tourists sample and experience foods "that they or their friends are not likely to encounter at home." Neophilic and neophobic classifications are particularly significant for the study of food in tourism as they contribute to an understanding of consumer behaviour of tourists when exposed to unfamiliar foods.

2.2.1 Authenticity in tourism

MacCannell (1999) maintains that inherent in the concept of new or alternative tourism and the 'escape' from consumerism and the homogenising influences of globalisation is the search for 'authenticity'. Living in today's modern, alienating society, tourists are driven to 'experience' authenticity, which may involve the reconstruction or 'staged authenticity' of a "cultural heritage or a social identity" (MacCannell, 1999, p. 13). Soper (2007) argues that many people are dissatisfied with the so-called 'consumer society' and the 'inauthentic' nature of modern lifestyles. This has led to a change in consumption behaviour and the choice of products that they consider to be more ethically sound. Meethan (2001, p. 90) points out that this assumes that modernity, within the realms of tourism and the processes of globalisation, standardisation and commodification, has not been a positive experience for global societies. These processes have led to feelings of disaffection and the inevitable loss of uniqueness and authenticity that defined a nation, people or geography. This approach also assumes that the pre-modern past was 'authentic' and that modernity is 'inauthentic' and lacking in sincerity.

Meethan (2001, p. 90) contends that these assumptions are not tenable and argues that 'authenticity' needs to be seen as a category that is "created and recreated in contingent circumstances, sometimes serving to uphold political or ideological positions as much as catering for the tourist market." Sharpley (1999, p. 201) also argues that not all of society feels alienated or unhappy with their lives and that the consideration of authenticity does not enter any conscious decision when planning a holiday. Thus, authenticity can only be considered from an individual and personal point of view, based on past experiences, home life and expectations, and the interaction with the tourist attraction.

'Authenticity' was originally applied in the museum setting where objects of art were tested to ensure that they were what they appeared to be or claimed to be, and it is this meaning that has generally been extended to tourism (Sharpley, 1999). Sharpley (1999, p. 189) uses the following examples to illustrate this point:

Works of art, festivals, rituals, cuisine, dress, and housing are usually described as 'authentic' or 'inauthentic' in terms of the criterion of whether they are made or enacted by local people according to custom or tradition.

(Sharpley, 1999, p. 189)

Sharpley (1999, p. 190) also points out that authenticity is often used to describe, if not sell, destinations and whole holidays. It is especially used to differentiate between specialist or niche-market holidays and mass tourism products, with "the implication being that mass tourism is, somehow, inauthentic." Sharpley has identified two meanings of authenticity which recognise a deeper complexity of the concept of authenticity when applied to tourism:

... it is a description of the tangible quality of something (for example, an artefact, a meal, a festival, a building) which is associated with production methods or cultural foundations that are perceived to be pre-modern or traditional ...

... it is a socially constructed, intangible perception of destination societies and cultures, of forms of travel, or of overall tourism experiences that appear to be pre-modern or traditional.

(Sharpley, 1999)

Wang (1999, p. 350) differentiates between separate aspects of object-related authenticity, namely 'objective authenticity' and 'constructive authenticity', as well as a third dimension, 'existential authenticity'. Objective authenticity refers to authenticity of an 'original' item, such as a work of art, and constructive authenticity refers to symbolic authenticity conferred onto objects through imagery, expectations and beliefs. This type of authenticity is therefore specific to a group or a culture and may differ depending on who is conferring the authenticity. Thus the same authentic and staged occasion may be experienced by all tourists; however, the response will range from disenchantment based on idealism through to cynical acceptance of the show, and complete lack of concern as to whether it is authentic or not (Lymburn, 2004, p. 30).

'Existential authenticity' or 'activity-related authenticity' relates to individual experiences of the 'self' when the tourist actually 'joins in', often in response to feelings of a 'loss of self' and the "disintegration of sincerity" (Berger, 1973, p.

82). Wang (1999, p. 360) links these feelings with either nostalgia, for a way of life that supposedly existed in the past, or romanticism, because it represents a more 'natural' and free and easy time. Thus, tourism adventures such as camping, walking, mountaineering and wilderness tours, which transcend daily lives, are about the search for the authentic 'self' rather than the search for authentic objects (Taylor, 2001; Yeoman, Brass and McMahon-Beattie, 2006).

Wang (1999, p. 361) then concludes that it does not matter "whether, or how, toured objects are experienced as real" because even if the objects are blatantly inauthentic, such as destinations like Disneyland, tourists may experience existential authenticity, which has little to do with the toured object. Indeed, according to Cohen (2002, p. 267), postmodern tourists are not so bound up with concerns over authenticity for two reasons: they are more concerned with a "playful search for enjoyment" or an "aesthetic enjoyment of surfaces", and they have a greater respect for the impact of tourism upon a host community. For instance, Lymburn (2004) surmises that the new tourist:

... may be happy to accept a commercial hangi as an authentic experience because they understand that there are commercial and practical considerations that make it necessary to re-construct the occasion.

(Lymburn, 2004, p. 28)

Thus 'staged authenticity' is acceptable because it acts as a substitute for the original, which in turn helps to protect and sustain the initial attraction. The better the presentation of the staged authenticity, the more real it will seem. Therefore, concludes Cohen (1995, p. 22), there is justification for 'contrived' attractions in tourism. In the light of this, Daniel (1996, p. 10) argues that "sincerity, effort, involvement, and the quality of the encounter" have become more important than the concept of authenticity.

Taylor (2001), in his study of Maori tourism in New Zealand, concluded that it did not matter whether the performance was staged in the sense of McCannell's original writings on authenticity; instead:

By introducing the notion of 'sincerity', experiences in culture may be stripped of the temporal connotations implied by the concept of authenticity.

(Taylor, 2001, p. 24)

According to Lymburn (2004, p. 30) the notion of 'sincerity' is also more applicable to food in tourism rather than that of authenticity. This is about vested effort and making the most of the experience for all involved. For example, the traditional Maori hangi, which is essentially a meal cooked in a hole in the ground, has evolved to include a much greater variety of foods than was traditionally the case. Therefore, within Taylor's and Lymburn's sense of authenticity, what matters is not whether or not the ingredients of the hangi are traditional, but that the spirit of hospitality and the cultural sense in which the hangi was traditionally steeped remain true (Lymburn, 2004, p. 30). Ultimately, however, it must be said that authenticity, in any form, can be viewed as a commodity and, as such, an integral part of the tourism product. Authenticity is therefore also inextricably linked to the "commoditisation of culture" (Cohen, 1995, p. 16).

When researching changes to Balinese cuisine provided to tourists, Reynolds (1994, p. 192) found that the local food had been altered so much that both locals and tourists rejected it. The tourists wanted more authentic Balinese dishes and a wider range of local dishes and produce. However, many young locals, attracted by advertising to fast and convenience foods, wanted pizza and hamburgers instead of more traditional foods. Traditional foods often take more time to prepare and as countries become more Westernised, ready-prepared foods gain in preference over traditional foods and traditional methods of cooking and presentation. Thus, in the end, income for the local producer was lost, the tourist's desire for authenticity was not met, and the culinary culture was not being preserved.

Debates about the authenticity of cuisine often occur from a static view of culture and diet (Hall and Mitchell, 2001, p. 310) and many would argue that the term should not be applied to culinary experiences at all. With the interplay of globalisation and localisation, regional and local cuisines are changing. Despite the internationalisation of food, Reynolds (1994, p. 191) suggests "food is perhaps one of the last areas of authenticity that is affordable on a regular basis

for the tourist.” Hall and Mitchell (2005, p. 77) recognise that regions may benefit because of “reinforcement of authentic tourism experiences [that] allows visitors to see beyond the ‘shop front’ and establish strong relationships with a destination, often in relation to the heritage dimensions of particular foods.” Hence growing consumer demand for ‘traditional’ and ‘local’ products is an important part of the ‘search for authenticity’.

Farmers’ markets in particular offer the tourist the opportunity to connect “with the real heart, depth and authenticity of a place” (Boniface, 2003, p. 84). Hall, Mitchell, Scott and Sharples (2008, p. 201) write of the “fall and rise” of farmers’ markets that “reflects the broader concerns of consumers and producers that the farmers’ market and its produce be regarded as a space in which consumers can trust the authentic qualities of what is being offered.” An authentic farmers’ market is defined by the Farmers’ Market New Zealand Association (2006) as a market that has at least eighty per cent local produce stalls. ‘Local’ in this instance means food grown or produced within the regional boundaries established by individual farmers’ markets. Contrary to the view that farmers’ markets provide authenticity, McGrath, Sherry and Heisley (1993, cited in Hall et al., 2008, p. 224) suggest that farmers’ markets feign authenticity and are no more than “retail theme parks”, denying the fact that they are vertically integrated retail environments like any other. Regardless of this view, it can be seen that ‘local’ food has many facets that help in meeting the demand for authentic tourist experiences (Sims, 2009).

2.3: Tourism and regional development

Not only does international tourism make a major contribution to the income of destination areas, it also provides employment, supports a large and diverse range of industries, helps to diversify local economies, and both supports existing infrastructure and can help fund the development of new infrastructure (Shone, 2008). Tourism also helps to balance out regional inequalities (Jackson, 2006, p. 695). Thus, tourism has become an integral part of developmental policy and economic strategy in many countries (Sharpley, 1999, p. 224).

The economic benefits of tourism include the generation of income through the multiplier effect as tourist expenditures are recycled through the local economy, the generation of employment, the encouragement of entrepreneurial activity, the stimulation of regional economies, and the mitigation of regional economic disparities (Sharpley, 2002; Vanhove, 2005; Wall and Mathieson, 2006). As development occurs, a cycle of cumulative growth is set in motion providing opportunities for increased investment as well as a network of backward linkages to other sectors of the destination's economy (Telfer and Wall, 1996).

The extent of backward linkages and hence the amount of development and entrepreneurial stimulus that tourism can provide, depends on the diversity and maturity of the local economy. Availability of local funding and investment, and the type and scale of tourist development itself are also critical factors. Tourist development can also bring about improvements to local infrastructure, services and facilities that benefit both tourists and residents (McPherson, 2005). The industry may also stimulate the protection of local natural resources and conservation of biodiversity.

Given the downturn in regional and rural economies it is not surprising that governments have turned to tourism as a means of regional development. However, a word of caution is sounded by Hall, Johnson and Mitchell (2000) in their discussion of wine tourism and regional development. The authors relate problems of overestimates of the contribution that tourism can make in regions leading to overinvestment in infrastructure such as accommodation and over-speculation by locals in the scramble for profits. In some instances this has led to stagnation, and loss of jobs, authenticity and profitability. Regional tourism may also compete with other sectors and place increased pressure on local resources. For example, Coccossis (2006), in his review of tourism and regional development on islands, reports traditional farming activities may be replaced by tourism, causing higher demand for products which cannot be met through local production. This results in an increase in imports and the loss of possible linkages through import substitution.

Wall and Mathieson (2006, p. 84) contend that the ability of destinations to compete globally depends largely upon the mixture, quality and prices of the

facilities and services. The services being offered must also be comparable with other destinations and meet the standards and expectations of the tourists. This includes the availability, for example, of local excursions, shops and restaurants, and the quality of basic amenities such as a clean water supply and good sanitation facilities.

Wall and Mathieson (2006) are also of the opinion that destinations will fare better in the global market if the local tourism industry is coordinated and marketed by a skilled and experienced tourism body such as a government tourism office. A government tourism office may set benchmarks in service quality, conduct research, facilitate training, and provide regulation for the industry. However, this should be a joint effort with the private sector in order to coordinate development and marketing initiatives, and to maximise sector returns. Another condition for successful tourism development is the geographical location of the destination area. The cost of transportation to and from a destination can be a major expense within an overall travel package. Therefore the location of the destination in relation to the major tourist-generating markets is a significant factor. According to Wall and Mathieson (2006, p. 87), destinations closest to these markets will grow most rapidly.

The nature and origin of financial investment are also important factors that affect the ability of destinations to compete globally (Wall and Mathieson, 2006, p. 88). International organisations such as accommodation chains, car-hire firms and food chains may invest directly in overseas nations. Although this allows for the destination to direct funds into other areas, one of the major criticisms of international investment, in particular in developing countries, is the fact that little profit goes to the local community. Referred to as 'economic leakage', most of the benefits leak to shareholders living elsewhere rather than reaching those in the host region. Wall and Mathieson (2006, p. 88) state that it is important that provision is made for local stakeholders to eventually replace the foreign control of the economy, and to benefit through employment and development of local industries such as food supply.

One of the most important aspects of sustained regional development through tourism is planning (Hall, 2008; Mason, 2008; Beeton, 2006). However, Wall and Mathieson (2006) also note:

Tourism should be encouraged more for the fact that it may contribute to the well-being of local people in destination areas (however defined) and less for the reason that it is good for the tourist industry (however defined) per se. Thus, tourism planning should be as much about planning for residents as it is planning for tourists.

(Wall and Mathieson, 2006, p. 288)

Pearce (1989) states that planning for tourism traditionally focused on infrastructure such as accommodation, roads and sewerage, as well as on land use, site development and the presentation of cultural, historical and natural tourism resources. However, this focus has shifted to encompass environmental and socio-cultural concerns and the need to facilitate economic development at local, regional and national levels in a sustainable manner (Gossling, Hall and Weaver, 2009; Hall, 2008; Mason, 2008).

Sustainable development in the context of tourism has been defined by Butler (1993) as:

Tourism which is developed and maintained in an area (community, environment) in such a manner and at such a scale that it remains viable over an indefinite period and does not degrade or alter the environment (human and physical) in which it exists to such a degree that it prohibits the successful development and well-being of other activities and processes.

(Butler, 1993, p. 29)

Central to sustainable regional development is the strength of the linkages to local community and the involvement of local community in the planning of tourism development (Timothy, 2002). In addition there needs to be strong backward economic linkages within the targeted region so that costs and benefits are shared equally (Telfer, 2002). It is also important to strengthen linkages between businesses and to develop highly competitive clusters of stakeholders in order to become a competitive destination (Hall, 2007). Finally, it is vital to establish and market the local or regional 'point of difference', and to

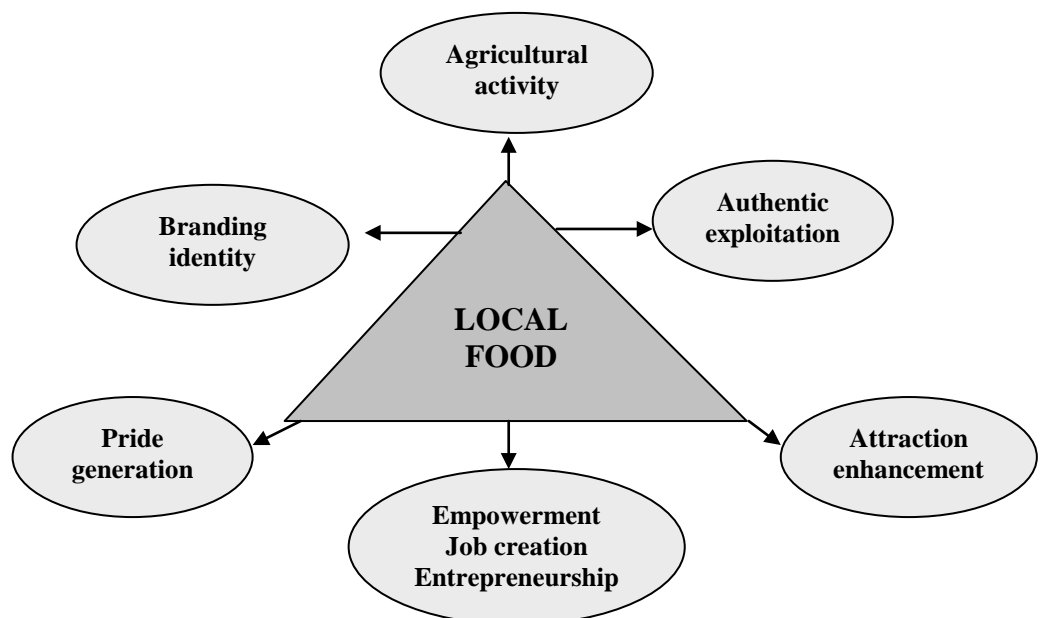
increase visitor yield rather than simply increasing visitor numbers (Howard, 2001).

2.3.1 Food, tourism and regional development

The promotion of food in tourism is seen as one way of developing the distinctiveness and identity of a region while retaining and maximising the benefits of visitor spend to the region's economy and local communities (Hall and Sharples, 2003, p. 6).

Du Rand, Heath and Alberts (2003, p. 100) outline ways in which local food may directly or indirectly contribute to sustainable local development (see Figure 2.1). Contributions include enhancing destination attractiveness, empowerment through local job creation and entrepreneurship (for example, developing artisan food products), regional brand identification, authentic presentation of the local culture, stimulation of agricultural activity, and generation of pride in the region.

Figure 2.1: The contribution of local food to sustainable development within a destination



Source: du Rand, Heath and Alberts (2003, p. 100).

Central to this sustainable development model is the maximisation of linkages to local communities through the integration of local supply networks into the tourism system. For example, the promotion of regional cuisine and local food supports and strengthens the tourism and agricultural sectors of local economies by:

... preserving culinary heritage and adding value to the authenticity of the destination; broadening and enhancing the local and regional tourism resource base; and stimulating agricultural production.

(du Rand and Heath, 2006, p. 211).

Locally produced food provides the connection between tourism and other economic sectors such as fishing, aquaculture, horticulture and agriculture (Santich, 2007; Eastham, 2003). From this it can be seen that linking food and tourism adds to rural diversity. These industries, along with food production and service, are generally labour intensive, and so their enhancement through linkages with the tourism industry will result in increased employment opportunities for local people. They are also sustainable industries and so their use will, in turn, promote sustainable food systems as the demand for imported produce is reduced (Tao and Wall, 2009). The use of local food also encourages entrepreneurship; for example, through the development of artisan food products.

Hall and Mitchell (2002, pp. 83–84) have identified key ways in which food may be integrated into in a regional strategy for local economic development. The authors suggest ‘buy local’ campaigns for goods and services to recycle financial resources. For example, restaurants need to purchase and promote local foods and wine. In this way local food can be used as a tourist attraction and also income generated remains in the local economy rather than being lost to economic leakage, which occurs when produce is purchased from out of region.

However, Eastham (2003, p. 235) notes that sometimes those offering core products such as accommodation with restaurant facilities attached do not source food from local supply. Instead, Eastham (2003) reported significant purchasing from national catering supply companies. Generally, large hotels are

vital to the local economy in terms of employment; however, their lack of 'buy local' policy does little to impact positively on the local multiplier. Purchasing from local food suppliers would add more value within the region. In this case the primary concern of the hotel stakeholders in the provision of food is their cost and profit margins. Given that Rotorua is highly dependent on international hotel chains for local employment, Eastham's research has significant implications for this region and the implementation of sustainable local food systems.

It is also possible to add value to local produce before it is exported by bottling and packaging food locally rather than relying on central distribution centres and standardised packaging. By listing the place of origin on the label, local identity and authenticity are emphasised. Hall and Mitchell (2002) also suggest connecting up local stakeholders to create new linkages and stronger community partnerships. For example, local farmers and producers' cooperatives provide an extra outlet for produce and also enable direct sales and contact with customers. The use of external resources such as the Internet enables contact with customers outside the region.

The relationship between food and tourism presents significant opportunities for sustainable rural development; in particular, linking the two can create jobs and increase sales of local produce, as well as create interrelationships, linkages and networks between stakeholders (Hall, Mitchell and Sharples, 2003, p. 26). A variety of relationships between national, regional and local food, and tourism and regional development strategies is presented by Hall et al., (2003, p. 58). The authors argue that an integrated approach between national, regional and local stakeholders provides the best mechanism for the implementation of tourism strategies that incorporate food in regional development.

At a national level, for example, food export and tourism promotions are seen as ideal partners in joint marketing activities. United under one image and centred on 'place', brands are an important means of differentiation and added value for regions (Hall, 2004). For example, national images are a key feature of national branding strategies. The 'Fern' brand and logo has been registered by New Zealand in forty-four countries around the world. National campaigns

promote broad awareness of product, and although the costs of participating in the promotion campaigns is often prohibitive for most small food producers, the flow-on effect still provides benefits for the smaller food producer.

Food and tourism are differentiated on the basis of regional identity. Associated regional branding provides an important means of product promotion and, as a consequence, economic development. Hall et al. (2003, p. 33) recognise that critical to the success of regional development strategies is the advancement of intangible capital assets such as knowledge, relationships, reputation and people. However, “intangible assets only create value when captured as intellectual property, networks, brand, and talent.” It is then that they “provide the basis for the success of linking food and tourism as a regional development strategy” (Hall et al., 2003, p. 33; Hall, 2004).

There is a growing awareness of the intellectual property aspects of food, wine and tourism on the part of businesses and regional bodies. This not only applies to the individual product but also to its regional characteristics (Hall et al., 2003). Recently, within the processes of globalisation, laws have been written to protect the intellectual property of place and to reinvent or reaffirm regional identities (Hall et al., 2003, p. 33; Bell and Valentine, 1997, p. 15). For example, European wine law stipulates that names of wine such as Champagne can only be used by wine originating from the particular region. Bell and Valentine (1997, p. 17) also describe how ‘Appellations’ function as a perceived guarantee of quality for consumers, allowing the wine producers who satisfy stringent production criteria to associate themselves with a regional identity.

Farmers’ markets, food and drink trails, and events and festivals all help to reinforce local identities. Direct marketing to consumers and restaurants helps to foster long-term customer relationships. Thus, it can be seen that the integration of food and tourism at the national, regional and local levels is an important vehicle for sustainable regional development. Rusher (2003, p. 193), in her research on the Bluff Oyster Festival and regional economic development, reinforces this viewpoint, stating: “Food as a central element of cultural values and regional identity is a popular theme and central focus of New Zealand events and festivals.” Visitors to the festivals not only include local

community; increasingly domestic tourists are attracted from all over New Zealand as well as international visitors. Rusher (2003) points out:

Host communities have leveraged this attention to derive commercial benefits from the media coverage, tourism and economic activity generated by these events. These efforts have been so successful that using festivals and events as instruments of regional development is a strategy now frequently employed by New Zealand's rural and peripheral regions.

(Rusher, 2003, p. 193)

2.3.2 New Zealand food: strengths and opportunities

It can be argued that the infrastructure already exists in New Zealand to make food central to the tourism product. The infrastructure is founded on the nexus between the New Zealand landscape, the rural food-production economy, and the tourism industry. In a report for Tourism New Zealand called *Demand for Cultural Tourism*, the market research consultancy Colmar Brunton highlighted the importance of New Zealand scenery, stating: "New Zealand's landscape is at the heart of people's perceptions" and "it is important to use the clearest perception of New Zealand to the fullest advantage". According to the research, New Zealand is "seen as being a clean, green, beautiful, breathtaking country of scenic wonder with a unique indigenous people" (Colmar Brunton, 2005a, p. 3). Colmar Brunton (2005a, p. 3) also stated: "...it is essential to use the perception of the landscape in order to develop visitors' understanding of the depth and breadth of our cultural tourism offerings." The following example is provided in the report:

... our beautiful, clean, green land produces magnificent wines – this is a logical extension of perceptions that capitalises on the basic understanding of what New Zealand does and without compromising the fundamental belief about New Zealand ...

(Colmar Brunton, 2005a, p. 3).

One has only to substitute the word 'food' for 'wines' to make the connection between food, the landscape and culture. In a direct linkage between food and the landscape, the New Zealand Food and Wine Tourism Network (NZFWTN) (2006, p. 7) stated: "New Zealand's landscape becomes even more remarkable when it's combined with a sublime food and wine experience." The NZFWTN consists of a national body of stakeholders and was established to assist in the

drive for New Zealand food and wine to be a major motivating factor in attracting visitors to New Zealand. Marketing initiatives are aimed at creating an awareness of New Zealand food and wine experiences as well as a demand for New Zealand food and wine products and destinations. A key objective of the NZFWTN is to differentiate and promote regional food and wine tourism experiences, thus contributing to local economies (NZFWTN, 2006). NZFWTN states that:

Our challenge is to develop more reasons to visit more regions, so combining food and wine experiences with other regional icons will result in more compelling offerings for visitors.

(NZFWTN, 2006, p. 7)

New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE) acknowledge that the food and beverage sector, underpinned by the primary food export sector, is “the lynchpin of New Zealand’s prosperity” (NZTE, 2007). One in ten people work in the food industry and it employs twenty per cent of the working population. New Zealand food products are a vital component of New Zealand’s export industry. NZTE (2007) state that New Zealand is responsible for forty per cent of the world’s traded sheep meat and nearly eight per cent of the world’s beef production. The Food and Beverage Task Force (2006), in their report on the resources of the industry, stated the natural environment is highly conducive to pastoral agriculture because of its disease-free status and potential for year-round production. Farmland accounts for fifty-six per cent of land use, and pastoral agriculture has a total export value of \$14.494 million (NZTE, 2007).

New Zealand also has an internationally recognised aquaculture industry. The Food and Beverage Task Force (2006) cite New Zealand’s clean waters and generally healthy aquatic environment, along with the recognised health benefits of seafood, as reasons for growth in this industry. New Zealand’s eco-labelling, environmental certification and track record for innovation have all helped to stimulate the aquaculture industry, which accounts for eight per cent of food and beverage exports (Food and Beverage Task Force, 2006).

New Zealand is diversifying its agricultural and food-production base to include high-value export produce such as avocado and olive oil, olives, chestnuts,

macadamia nuts, wasabi, truffles and saffron. There are 8000 fruit orchards in New Zealand, producing predominantly apples, kiwifruit, grapes and avocados; these account for a combined eleven per cent of food exports with a dollar value of \$1.417 million (Food and Beverage Task Force, 2006). Primary producers, food exporters, and national bodies such as Trade and Enterprise along with Tourism New Zealand, all play a key role in promoting New Zealand food internationally through their products and marketing strategies which focus on clean, green landscapes and quality produce.

It is clear that New Zealand has many gastronomic strengths and opportunities. The 'clean' green image of New Zealand that has dominated New Zealand tourism marketing has been transferred to food produce. The perception is of fresh produce that is grown without chemicals and 'tastes' like it should. This includes 'real' vegetables, lamb and fresh seafood (Lymburn, 2004). Challenges arise in maintaining the clean, green perception of New Zealand and in maintaining sustainable food production. Renowned international chef Peter Gordon, quoted in *Food Service* magazine, is of the opinion that:

It pays to keep in the back of your mind that we are just four million people on the other side of the planet to most of our future visitors, and that what we can show off most of all are our gorgeous country, our warmth and generosity of spirit, and our fantastic produce.

(Gordon, 2008)

2.3.3 Tourism and regional competitiveness

Increased global competition for a share of the tourism market has highlighted for regions and destinations the need to remain competitive. The notion of the competitive destination has evolved from contemporary business studies and is now embedded in many tourism strategies and policies (Hall, 2007, p. 217). Michael Porter, a main proponent of competitiveness, has been influential in transferring a concept that usually applies to organisations to the productivity of a region or place (Ritchie and Crouch, 2003, p. 14). Porter argued that government shapes the market conditions that allow firms to make best use of economic strengths, with productivity being a reflection of how firms choose to deploy their resources. Porter (1990) introduced four determinates to explain competitive advantage: 'factor conditions' are the inputs to an industry such as

human resources, capital resources and infrastructure; 'demand conditions', in particular domestic demand; 'related and supporting industries' are those that complement a given industry; and 'inter-firm rivalry', which creates a competitive environment.

From Porter's perspective, competitiveness equates to productivity. However, many tourism researchers (such as Hall, 2007; Vanhove, 2005; Poon, 1993; and Ritchie and Crouch, 2003) question the validity of competitiveness from a pure productivity perspective and suggest that this oversimplification is more applicable to the goods-producing sector than the service sector or a place. Indeed, where there is a defined unit it is reasonable to apply 'input equals output equals productivity' related indicators; however, a region or destination is not a closed unit with defined borders. Hall (2007, p. 218) refers to the 'hegemonic discourse' of regional competitiveness because of the blithe way in which the concept is bandied about in political spheres and in policy documents, and in the unquestioning acceptance of its practical application to destinations.

The identification of competitiveness as a desired goal for regions can be problematic. Ritchie and Crouch (2003) and Vanhove (2005) point out that there is no one definitive definition of competitiveness. For example, Poon (1993) emphasises innovation and competitiveness through quality, as well as making tourism a lead industry, as central to regional competitiveness. Dwyer and Kim (2003) stress the price component of competitiveness, and Ritchie and Crouch (2003) point to national and regional policy, planning and destination management as important factors in regional or destination competitiveness. Many of the more qualitative aspects of competitiveness, raised by Poon in particular, are hard to measure.

However, Ritchie and Crouch (2003, p. 25) and Vanhove (2005, p. 136), in a comparative analysis of definitions, have isolated key variables and factors that characterise destination and regional competitiveness. The first point that both sets of authors make is that competitiveness of a region is not a matter of just one or two factors. Success of a region or destination is determined by two different kinds of advantage: comparative and competitive. Comparative advantage are the resources of a destination, including natural resources and

the resources that are a product of societies, such as historical, cultural, human and innovation resources and tourism infrastructure. Competitive advantage is gained in the effective deployment of these comparative resources.

Ritchie and Crouch (2003, pp. 25–30) also point out that the competitiveness of a tourist region must be assessed from a long-term perspective. Effectively a region may not be regarded as competitive unless it sustains any advantages it may have. Competitiveness of a region must also clearly reflect overall improved living standards and quality of life for its inhabitants, as well as increased prosperity for the region, and not just the competitiveness of its local firms. As competition between destinations increases, tourism policy focuses on increased competitiveness by creating a framework to monitor, control and enhance quality and efficiency in the industry, and to protect resources (Goeldner, Ritchie and McIntosh, 2000, p. 27).

Walder, Weiermair and Perez (2006) write that tourism destinations seek product differentiation in order to gain competitive advantage. In this context innovation and changes in technology, in particular information and communication technology (ICT), are seen as increasingly decisive factors in the struggle for competitiveness (Walder, Weiermair and Perez, 2006). In contemporary analysis of tourism, innovation has begun to take centre stage in which competition is seen as a driver of innovation (Hall, 2008). Thus competition is particularly strong in tourism because innovation is easily imitated by other firms and in the macro environment.

Innovation is at the centre of Hjalager's (2002) classification of initiatives connecting food and tourism (Table 2.1). This is a hierarchical model, which systematically defines four orders of the use of food in tourism, reflecting increasing sophistication, complexity and innovation. Hjalager (2002, p. 33) makes the assumption that if a region can follow this developmental model then greater 'added value' may be obtained in linking food and tourism. This may be for the benefit of the community, region or the entrepreneur.

Table 2.1: A typology of value-added in linking food and tourism

	<i>First order</i>	<i>Second order</i>	<i>Third order</i>	<i>Fourth order</i>
<i>Main input resource</i>	Food production resources	Resources in the service sector	Entrepreneurial resources	Knowledge
<i>Expected tourist behaviour</i>	Enjoy the food	Understand the food	Experience the food	Exchange knowledge about the food
<i>Principal strategies</i>	Higher revenues through boosted production and marketing	Maintaining revenues through quality and reinvention of traditions	Offering new products and services to tourists	Selling know-how to professionals
<i>Collaborative structures or networks</i>	Unchanged	Enforced cooperation between existing organisations	Creating new structures and service organisations; still localised	Creating new structures in a global context
<i>Examples of initiatives to enhance value-added</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culinary aspects in regional promotion Campaigns for particular products Regional food trademarks Marketing food fairs and food events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality standards Certification and branding. Reinventing and commodification of historical food traditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opening production plants and sites Routes and trails Visitor centres and museums New events based on tourism Cooking classes and holidays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and development Media centres Demonstration projects

Expected tourist behaviour in the first order is simply to enjoy the food; however, by the fourth order tourists are expected to be able to exchange knowledge about the food. The changes are achieved as shareholders move away from the primary production of food into the 'knowledge economy' or realms of intangible capital centred on intellectual property, branding, global networks, innovation and the selling of know-how. Value-added initiatives in the first order may be as simple as marketing regional foods. In the second order this may extend to the branding of products, and in the third order food and wine trails may be set up with local collaboration. In the most advanced order, research and development of new products and demonstration projects, for example, take precedence over the primary product.

The fact that, according to Hjalager, few examples of food and tourism initiatives can be found in the fourth order indicates still unexploited opportunities (2002, p. 34). Different destinations will have different innovation systems, i.e. “the set of economic, political, and institutional relationships occurring in a given geographical area which generates a collective learning process leading to the rapid diffusion of knowledge and best practice” (Nauwelaers and Reid, 1995, cited in Hall, 2009). For tourism destinations to instigate Hjalager’s developmental model, the innovation system must include relevant institutional support such as education and research, financial resources, facilitating policy, the ability of stakeholders to innovate at all levels, and the existence of cluster and network groups (Hall, 2009).

2.3.4 Networks and clusters

The focus on the competitiveness of destinations and regions and its link to innovation and sustainability has led to changes in thinking about how places operate (Gossling, Hall and Weaver, 2009; Hall, 2004). ‘Cluster theory’ has been put forward as a means of achieving local and regional development in the face of the threats from global competition (Svensson, Nordin and Flagestad, 2006). Hall (2004, p. 170) maintains that the development of local networks and cluster relationships is crucial to local economic development and “allows for the pooling of resources between small enterprises” (Hall, Mitchell and Sharples, 2003, p. 58). While there is confusion and contradiction surrounding the semantics of definitions of networks, networking and clusters (Lynch and Morrison, 2007, p. 46), networks are defined as social structures that enable small firms to build the trust necessary for them to work together and share in the development of a local tourism product. Networks have restricted membership and are based on contractual agreements. Networking refers to the processes and the building of cooperative relationships between otherwise competing organisations and between organisations linked through mutual necessity (Lynch and Morrison, 2007). Networks with common business goals are based on inter-firm cooperation that makes it easier for firms to engage in complex business. Networks may be ‘informal’, consisting of relationships with business contacts, family and friends; or they may be ‘formal’, with wider links in the community to, for example, lawyers, banks, regional and national agencies and other formal resource agencies (Lynch and Morrison, 2007).

Clusters build on from networks, leading to a cooperative community approach sharing in the benefits of growth. Fundamental to the concept of clusters is good communications and a collective vision for companies and industries interconnected through similar and related capabilities. Clusters have open 'membership' and emerge where there is a geographic concentration of firms that may benefit from collective branding, supplier and distribution chains, markets and marketing intelligence. According to Hall (2004, p. 171), "clusters form 'value chains' that are the fundamental units of competition in the modern, globalised world economy." This concept is critical in terms of tourism because it is the bringing together of a range of attributes or increasing the breadth of product offerings to enhance visitor satisfaction, and so generate growth and employment opportunities. Member businesses derive benefit through increases in the economies of scale that clustering brings (Michael, 2007, p. 29).

Michael (2007) proposes that micro-clusters offer a framework for regional development and can contribute to the growth of small-scale tourism businesses. According to Michael (2007), micro-clusters provide the opportunity for an alternative means of growth, helping to sustain regional and local values and lifestyles in regions faced with rural decline, lack of economic opportunity and the restructuring of agricultural communities. From this point of view it can be seen that clusters are not simply the outcome of spontaneous business connections, but something that can evolve and be supported through a planned business strategy. What is atypical about clusters is that "much of the individual tourism business potential to achieve growth and success lies outside the power and influence of the individual company" (Svensson et al., 2006, p. 88).

According to New Zealand Trade and Enterprise (NZTE, 2007), a cluster supports the networking of small- to medium-sized enterprises within a region so that they can achieve aims that may not be realised independently and enable them to compete more effectively with other regions. Relationships may form 'horizontally' – for example, inter-organisational relationships between wineries in a region – or 'vertically' with inter-industry relationships, such as

integration between the wine, tourism and food industries (Mitchell and Schreiber, 2007).

Hall (2004) provides evidence of wine, food and tourism networks and clusters in New Zealand. For example, a number of formal and informal networks exist between Central Otago wineries and in the Hawke's Bay and Marlborough wine regions. In the case of Hawke's Bay, the development of network groups was driven by 'local champions' with vision and an understanding of the need to promote Hawke's Bay collectively. It was recognised that individual businesses did not have the pull to attract a critical mass of visitors. The Hawke's Bay Wine and Food Group came together in 2000, and since the inaugural meeting the group has developed a wine- and food-orientated Hawke's Bay regional brand, *Hawke's Bay Wine Country*, as well as food and wine trails, and joint promotion strategies. *The Hawke's Bay Wine Country Tourism Association Inc.* (HBWCTA), the network's formal entity, receives public sector funding and works closely with the local regional tourism organisation which has 'had to respond' to the network's success (HBWCTA, 2009). The bundling together of complementary attributes designed to meet the needs of the consumer has resulted in increased opportunities for those businesses that pooled resources (HBWCTA, 2009). Hall states that:

... critical to the cohesion and development of the Wine and Food Group was the involvement of experts or knowledge brokers at the initial meeting who could provide what was perceived as independent advice to attendees and which helped to create a climate of trust between potential small business members of the cluster and, just as importantly, allowed the work of champions to be perceived as wider than self-interest in the creation of the group.

(Hall, 2004, p. 175)

The New Zealand Food and Wine Tourism Network (NZFWTN) was established in 2004. This network presents under a collective banner at trade and consumer events, provides exemplars of best practice, produces generic marketing information, and develops and delivers training and education. Initial funding to set up the Network came from Tourism New Zealand (NZFWTN, 2006, p. 7; Mitchell and Schreiber, 2007, p. 81). Despite the horizontal and vertical

integration of businesses and industries in this network, Mitchell and Schreiber (2007, p. 81) point out that few local or regional initiatives in New Zealand could be considered as being both vertically and horizontally integrated. For the most part, as demonstrated in the wine industry, the linkages are horizontal (Mitchell and Hall, 2000). Mitchell and Schreiber (2007) identify Wairarapa, Marlborough and Hawke's Bay wine regions as exhibiting the most advanced levels of integration with tourism.

Hall (2004) points out that Australian networks and cluster groups have developed because of government instigation and involvement. However, in New Zealand such initiatives, until recently, have evolved largely from within the private sector and out of the goodwill of individuals. Thus the boundaries of such groups are not beholden to administrative borders and local council jurisdiction. However, this autonomy may pose a challenge in the future when it comes to the private and public interplay, and the role of local councils and tourism departments with their limitations on encroachments into other districts.

Svensson et al. (2006) state that international best practice shows that governmental stakeholders play a vital role in supporting cluster processes; incongruently, however, the traditional dominant role of government declines in importance in the context of cluster-based economies. As Svensson et al. (2006) point out, the formation of a cluster-based economy relies on collaboration and inclusion. In the case of formation of wine and food tourism networks in New Zealand, until recently there has been virtually no national government involvement, with the exception of large producers involved in branding and marketing affiliations (Hall, 2004, p. 169).

Hall (2004, p. 168) cites the Australian Bureau of Industry Economics (ABIE) which has identified four potential roles for government in the development of networks: disseminating information on the opportunities created by networks; encouraging cooperation within industries; improving existing networks between the private and public sector agencies involved in research, development, education and training; and examining the effects of the existing legislative and regulatory framework on the formation, maintenance and breakup of networks, relative to other forms of organisation such as markets and firms.

A feature of the New Zealand tourism industry is the prevalence of small owner-operated businesses (Colmar Brunton, 2005a). Clustering would enable individual operators to become part of an integrated system, which lends itself to a more sustainable tourism industry. It is not just that clustering provides the potential for synergies to develop between co-located firms; clustering also creates a proactive environment and synergies that attract other businesses. Given the right circumstances, the clustering of firms “acts as the catalyst for: new investment; the entry of new firms; and the expansion of production” (Michael, 2007, p. 29).

There are several international case studies where vertical and horizontal (bi-directional) approaches to regional development through food and tourism have generated success. Bi-directional processes describe initiatives that aim to benefit both the tourism industry and the food-production sectors within a local or regional economy. This has been achieved by stimulating the use of locally produced food in tourism-related retail and catering businesses, combined with high-quality tourism and food-related destination imagery (Boyne, Williams and Hall, 2002, p. 92). For example, Telfer and Hashimoto (2003) relate how Niagara is one of the regions leading the way in the linkage of food and tourism in Canada. One of the first hurdles to be overcome was defining ‘Niagara cuisine’, given that the Niagara region is part of the New World where there are fewer easily recognised dishes or food products compared with Old World countries such as France and Italy. It was recognised that the historical introduction of immigrants and products from all over the world has created a rich and diverse fusion cuisine, and from this Niagara is trying to establish new national and regional cuisines.

Success has come from the linkage between Niagara’s food producers, processors, distributors, hotels, restaurants, wineries and chefs in raising the profile of the regional cuisine of Niagara. United under the banner of *Tastes of Niagara*, the partnership approach has improved communications between both producers and consumers and also markedly reduced economic leakage by creating a greater reliance on local food. Barriers to direct marketing have also been overcome for small farm and artisan producers, helping them to remain competitive (Boyne, Hall and Williams, 2003).

In Scotland, Boyne, Williams and Hall (2002) examined the *Isle of Arran Taste Trail*, which aims to promote Arran as a niche destination based on the quality of its local food and produce. The *Taste Trail*, which was created in 1998, features growers and producers and the best island produce. There is cooperation between the sectors which has enhanced the visitor experience and also created backward linkages in the local economy; for example, from the farm gate to the point of sale. Research revealed that visitors to the area who had purchased a local *Trail* guidebook were prepared to spend more money on meals containing local produce, had been encouraged to dine out more often, and were more inclined to purchase locally produced groceries. A survey of businesses involved in the scheme reported increased turnover and profit, increased volume of food prepared and sold, and increased spending per head of customer. Significantly, Boyne et al. (2002, p. 139) write, community inter-linkages provide sustainable strategic alliances and the product itself (food) is a renewable resource.

Hall (2004, 2008) and Cambourne and Macionis (2000) have identified several barriers to effective cooperative links between wine and food producers, and the tourism industry. In the first instance, the wine and food industries are seen as secondary industries to tourism. This has led to a common perception that the only industry to really benefit from food, wine and tourism linkages is the tourism industry. Using winemakers as an example, it was found that they do not see themselves as part of the tourism industry despite the fact that approximately eighty-five per cent of wineries were reported to be open for cellar door sales to visitors (Hall, 2008). There is also a general lack of experience and understanding of the tourism industry on the part of wine and food producers, coupled with a lack of sophistication and entrepreneurial skills with respect to marketing and product development. Hall (2004) and Cambourne and Macionis (2000) also point to a lack of cohesion and cooperation within the food and wine industry sectors and between the wine, food and tourism industries. Hall (2004, p. 174) identified several other barriers which could possibly affect cluster and network development with respect to food and wine tourism in New Zealand. This includes the spatial separation of producers, which may explain poor communication between stakeholders and

difficulty in administration and in hosting meetings, and a lack of information and knowledge about clusters and networks in general.

Another issue which remains unresolved by initiators of and stakeholders in tourism networks and clusters in New Zealand is the role of public agencies in the support of these groups as an integral part of a region's broader economic development strategy (Lynch and Morrison, 2007). Michael (2007, p. 23) draws attention to a possible negative ramification of clustering: increased visitor numbers to a region brings added pressures and impacts on communities, which may not be welcome in all quarters. Michael (2007) points out that the social impacts of clustering is relatively unresearched; however, initial studies indicate the importance of allowing local interests to remain in control of any decisions being made. Hall (2008, p. 212) writes that from the perspective of government, relationships and partnerships through networks are to be encouraged. This is particularly so in rural areas because of networks' potential to enhance tourist spending, and with the flow-on multiplier effect, thereby contribute to the success of regional economic development.

2.4 Marketing of place

There is fierce global competition between nations, regions and communities for market share in tourism (Ritchie and Crouch, 2003; Vanhove, 2005), and tourists are often faced with a plethora of very similar, and essentially substitutable, destination choices. Therefore, presenting a strong identity and positive image has become one of the most important marketing strategies in building competitive advantage (Fields, 2002). According to Fields (2002, p. 43), "If a destination wishes to build a strong identity in the mind of the tourists it must market its differences along with its main motivational attractors". Food with a strong national or regional identity has emerged as a means for achieving this and meets the evolving needs of the contemporary tourist. Correspondingly, a destination promoting unique differences will also directly appeal to tourists seeking unique and authentic elements of culture. Hughes (1995, p. 787) relates how Scotland in the 1990s introduced a food quality mark, primarily to capture a bigger slice of the tourist trade and, in general, the more discerning consumer. However, the campaign was also essentially about promoting

'Scottishness' and authenticity in order to create a 'food heritage' and a 'national larder'.

Tourists travel to destinations. Destinations are places with some form of boundaries, either actual or perceived (Kotler, Bowen and Makens, 2006). 'Place marketing', also known as 'destination marketing', is the practice of applying marketing and branding strategies to regions, states, cities and nations. Integral to this is 'place identity' or how the place wants to be perceived. This is the sum of characteristics that differentiate the place from other places. Place image is the outcome of place marketing (Kotler, Bowen and Makens, 2006). Jenkins (1999), states that pictures are not only central to tourism marketing, but vital if a destination wants to successfully create and communicate a specific destination image. Reflecting the importance of pictures in practice, Jenkins writes that over seventy-five per cent of the content in most tourism brochures is pictorial. Gartner (1993) notes that consumer advertising by destinations has the lowest consumer credibility rating; however, credibility can be increased by the use of a celebrity spokesperson. Tourism New Zealand employs renowned international chef Peter Gordon in this role.

Fields (2002, p. 44) describes destination image as one of the "most important 'pull' factors in attracting tourists to a particular location." Fields takes this point one step further when he considers that it is not the actual qualities of the destination that attracts visitors; rather it is the image of how those qualities meet the needs, expectations and motivations of individual tourists. In explanation Fields states:

By facilitating the building of mental images, we encourage the prospective tourist to mentally experiment with different experiences that may satisfy their wants and/or needs. The hedonistic experience that food can deliver would seem to be the ideal focus for image building.

(Fields, 2002, p. 45)

Boyne, Hall and Williams (2003) and Choi, Lehto and Morrison (2006), state that image and image formation have undergone extensive analysis in tourism literature due to the importance of image in tourist decision-making. However, research on the use of food images on the Internet has undergone little

analysis, despite the Internet having radically altered the distribution and marketing of tourism products and information consumption patterns (Hjalager and Corigliano, 2000; Choi, Lehto and Morrison, 2006, Kim, Yuan, Goh and Antun, 2009).

Echtner and Ritchie (1993, p. 24) state that in tourism “creating and managing an appropriate destination image are critical to effective positioning and marketing.” This is because one of the main elements in choice of destination is image. Hence, the tourist industry spends vast amounts of money attempting to build images of destinations. Crompton (1979, p. 18) defined vacation destination images as “the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person has of a destination.” Hunt (1975, p. 63) made the point “that images of destination may have as much as, or more, to do with tourist perception than the more tangible recreation resources.” For example, Beerli and Martin (2004, p. 677) explain that word of mouth significantly influences cognitive image. Tourists unhappy with a particular experience will in turn have a negative effect on the destination image that they then transmit by word of mouth.

Reynolds (1965) described image formation as a mental construct based on many sources of information. In the case of destination image, sources of information may include travel brochures, posters, television, books, magazines and the opinions of friends and family. This image is then modified and adjusted after first-hand experience of the destination. Contemporary views of destination image suggest that tourist places are not ‘just presented’ or ‘promoted’, but more often than not, the image is manipulated and shaped by marketing people. Pearce (2005) believes that this is more so for tourist destinations than basic consumer products such as household items. Thus, Pearce (2005, p. 87) contends, it is little wonder that tourism marketing attracts frequent criticism “because of suggested distortions in the way communities and settings are presented; the argument being that there is a tendency to emphasise the clichéd past rather than the evolving complexities of the present.” Croy (2001) points out that the image presented must be realistic otherwise it will detract from visitor satisfaction.

Using food in tourism promotions raises expectations, promotes awareness and creates demand for culinary products (Fields, 2002). This in turn has the potential to revive and sustain local foods and the related cultural activities. Tourists then 'consume' the places and people they visit (Urry, 1995, p. 2). In order to make destinations 'palatable for consumption', the places undergo 'transformation' into a tourist destination. According to Papen (2005, p. 79), the form of cultural transformation is dependent on "political, social and cultural factors" which are informed by 'the local' as well as global trends. Tourism promotional materials such as Internet pages and brochures are mediums that may be used in the transformation and construction of the image of 'place'. Indeed, the Internet is seen as an "unparalleled" information resource that greatly influences consumer choice and knowledge (Milne and Ateljevic, 2001, p. 384).

According to Papen (2005, p. 79), "food images may convey multiple messages in the marketing of a destination, such as lifestyle, authenticity, cultural identity, status, and regional differences." Thus, food has become an important element in the marketing of tourist destinations (Telfer and Wall, 1996). Hjalager and Corigliano (2000, p. 282) identify that food images are used in marketing in the following ways:

- "Complementary – Food is used as appealing eye-catchers in brochures, videos and television programmes"
- "Inventory – 'An intensive effort is being put into creating new tourist products and experiences. The inventory regions may create a special atmosphere that appeals to guests whose main interest is the culture of food and eating"
- "Superficial – Where food is used as a side 'prop' but is not considered the focus of the images portrayed"
- "Disconnected – The food images displayed bear no relation to the message given. For example, "...the emerging fast-food sector does little to connect local cultures and images with the act of eating."

In order to increase the attractiveness of a place or country, places may also be branded in a similar way to goods. Often the brand name is the actual place

name. For example, *100% Pure New Zealand* is both a branding and positioning campaign of the national tourism organisation Tourism New Zealand. It makes people aware of both the place and the destination's attendant attractions, adding to the competitive advantage of place. Hall and Mitchell (2002, pp. 187–285) describe the growing practice of 'place branding' in conjunction with food exports in order to create a demand for product both locally and internationally. Building a strong destination brand requires a clear and unique brand identity which must be applied consistently over a period of time (Kotler, Bowen and Makens, 2006). Most place brands are stereotypical and often not necessarily accurate, but are none-the-less persuasive. Integral to the place brand is the customer perception of quality. This hinges on the choice of core values and core identity (Hall, 2004, p. 167).

Ravenscroft and Westering (2002, p. 161), in their discussion of gastronomy and intellectual property, point out branding foods with the country of origin may conflict with marketing regional food. The food of a region is one of the main distinguishing factors in tourism that is marketable and sells destinations. A product that has a regional brand is often perceived by the consumer to be of a superior quality than that of the same product in a generic label. Cheese, hams and certain drinks are such products (Bell and Valentine, 1997). By branding a dish according to nationality, it is argued that regional identity may be lost in the process. Conversely, Bell and Valentine (1997, p. 178) argue that one can find many examples from around the world where local cuisine and certain products are embedded in the national and regional culture, and where geographical branding of provenance and 'intellectual property of place' provides leverage for added value to a product.

When considering the way in which visitor information is provided, Boyne, Hall and Williams (2003, p. 148) have constructed a theoretical taxonomy of consumers from an Internet-user perspective. This taxonomy classifies consumers according to the level of importance of food and gastronomy in their destination decision-making processes. For *Type 1* consumers, food is an important aspect of the holiday experience and these consumers will actively seek out gastronomic information about locally produced food and culinary heritage. In contrast, although food is important to *Type 2* consumers, they will

not actively seek out food-related tourism information; instead they must be exposed to it. However, once exposed to the information, Type 2 consumers will more than likely act upon it.

To *Type 3* consumers, food-related tourism experiences do not hold much importance, but may do in the future if they have an enjoyable food tourism experience. Finally, there are *Type 4* consumers, who have no interest in accessing food-related tourism material, regardless of the quality or how conspicuously presented and promoted. Using the taxonomy described as a framework for critical evaluation of tourism websites, it is clear that the sites must cater to the lowest common denominator. As Type 4 consumers cannot be influenced, then at the very least, information must be suited to Type 3 consumers:

Specifically, as these consumers will not actively search for gastronomy-related information on tourism web sites, such information must therefore be provided in a conspicuous manner.

(Boyne, Hall and Williams, 2003, p. 149)

It is apparent that not only is this consumer taxonomy useful as a means of critical evaluation of websites, the taxonomy could equally be applied to other forms of marketing material, such as tourism brochures.

Okumus, Okumus and McKercher (2007, p. 254) maintain that “tourists’ buying behaviour can be influenced positively towards consuming local food through active marketing.” However, not all global destinations exploit the potential opportunities that food presents, and many of those that do use food in their marketing campaigns do not do so effectively (Okumus et al., 2007, p. 253). Habdszuh (2000) suggests that the reality regarding food in tourism globally is that local food is rarely promoted as an important resource in tourism promotional campaigns.

Du Rand, Heath and Alberts (2003, p. 101) have studied the way in which food is used as a key or supportive attraction by destination marketing organisations in South Africa. They conducted research to determine the “current status of food as an attraction in destinations and the current role of food in destination

marketing strategies.” Du Rand et al. (2003, p. 101) found the following gaps and constraints in the promotion of food in South African destination marketing:

- The funds available are insufficient to develop and promote the food experience.
- No special food events are organised.
- In spite of potential, food is not promoted as a special tourist attraction.
- Food is not included in any media coverage of the destination.
- Food does not feature in any of the brochures or pamphlets of the destination.
- There are no speciality restaurants or eating places that offer local or regional foods.
- There is no regional branding of locally produced food products.
- No locally produced food products are exported.

Insufficient funding appears to be the major constraint in the promotion of food in South Africa. Du Rand et al. (2003, p. 107) suggest that this is because, with tight budgets, marketing food is not seen as a priority because food will be consumed regardless of whether or not it is promoted. This point has implications for many destinations beyond South Africa where promotional funds for tourism are limited. The remainder of the gaps and constraints present more of an issue because they involve a ‘mind-set’ and require a change of attitude on behalf of the marketers regarding the importance of local food, rather than being a physical constraint in the promotion of local food in destination marketing. Often the mind-set stems from a lack of knowledge or ignorance about local foods.

2.4.1 Target marketing

Tourism impacts on culture are often seen in a negative light (Brown, 1998; Mowforth and Munt, 1998; Wall and Mathieson, 2006). Indeed, McKercher and du Cros (2002, p. 13) state that in recent times, with the unprecedented growth and interest in cultural tourism in particular, tourism has been ‘allowed’ to become the dominant stakeholder. This has resulted in a trade-off in cultural values in order to maximise tourism returns. According to McKercher and du Cros:

... the tourism industry in general and destination marketers in particular, who are primarily interested in maximising visitation numbers, often have little knowledge of or regard for the impacts of tourism activities on the cultural assets they are promoting.

(McKercher and du Cros, 2002, p. 14)

Ultimately marketing communities for tourism is not simply about whether to encourage visitors or not, it is also about what type of visitors to target. This is dependent on the type of tourism the community decides it is able to offer, and indeed, would like to offer (Beeton, 2006, p. 2). One of the main tasks for Tourism New Zealand is the marketing of New Zealand internationally. Key marketing campaigns revolve around the identification of an ideal tourist and target market. In New Zealand, the ideal tourist has been labelled the *'Interactive Traveller'*. Tourism New Zealand's chief aim is to motivate New Zealand's ideal international visitor not only to come to New Zealand, but also to spend more and participate in as many activities as possible during their stay (Tourism New Zealand, 2006b).

Tourism New Zealand (2001) state several reasons for focusing on a defined target market. First, because New Zealand is a small country, it has a limited tourism budget. Working closely with industry and pooling limited resources through targeted marketing is viewed as a cost-effective way of growing the tourism industry. Secondly, simply increasing the volume of tourists is viewed as detrimental to a high-quality visitor experience. Thirdly, it is also seen as preferable to focus on visitors who are more likely to appreciate what New Zealand has to offer. This market is more likely to be satisfied with the experience, and return home and tell their friends.

Tourism New Zealand has a clearly defined long-term strategy that provides a framework for cultural and environmental sustainability and a sustained economic return from tourism. By focusing on a particular target market, it is considered that the aims and goals of New Zealand's tourism strategy are more likely to be achieved. It is also recognised that when defining the ideal visitor, priority must be given to developing a unique and distinguishing brand as well as converting 'interest' in travelling to New Zealand into actual visitation.

'Interactive Travellers' are people who are regular international travellers seeking out new experiences that involve interacting with nature, social and cultural environments. They prefer authentic products and experiences, are health conscious, like to 'connect' with others, and have high levels of disposable income (Tourism New Zealand, 2006b). From this it is possible to conclude that those with a deep interest in food as part of the tourist experience share many of the same attributes and interests with the Interactive Traveller.

The 'needs' of the Interactive Traveller are ascertained by comparing tourism in New Zealand, including the needs of the tourism industry, with what tourists want and with their level of satisfaction with their tourism experiences in New Zealand (Tourism New Zealand, 2003). Ultimately, when visitors come to New Zealand they need to feel a sense of belonging or a bond with New Zealand. According to the Colmar Brunton report *Demand for Cultural Tourism*, feeling "energised and alive, personally satisfied, mentally stimulated, safe, comfortable and relaxed as well as feeling social and carefree" are also important aspects of travel for the visitor to New Zealand (Colmar Brunton, 2005a). This report also states that "around eighty per cent of visitors who are driven strongly by these 'need states', fit the description of an Interactive Traveller" (Colmar Brunton, 2005a).

Tourism New Zealand (2003) has identified that ninety-four per cent of Interactive Travellers visit New Zealand primarily for the outstanding natural environment. Unique cultural and historical attractions such as visiting a marae or learning about traditional Maori life are also important. Seventy-three per cent of Interactive Travellers also rate experiencing local cuisine as a significant activity to pursue. "When experiencing new local cuisines, we are also experiencing a new culture" (Fields, 2002). Sampling the local cuisine is experiential and provides for lasting memories long after the tourist has returned home. According to the Ministry of Tourism (2007b), Interactive Travellers prefer to explore New Zealand at a relaxed pace, often exploring two or three regions in depth, and on average they participate in thirty per cent more activities than other travellers.

2.5 New Zealand government policy, yield and regional development

Since 2001, with the growing size and importance of the tourism industry, which generates 9.2 per cent of New Zealand's GDP (Tourism Resource Consultants, 2009), central government has taken a more active role in the growth and management of the industry as a whole (Ministry of Tourism, 2007b). This includes the establishment of the Ministry of Tourism, strategic national marketing through Tourism New Zealand, and provision of core tourism data and support for research. In 2001 The New Zealand Tourism Strategy 2010 was released, outlining the future direction of tourism in New Zealand. This has since been updated to reflect changes in the macro- and micro-operating environment to 2015. The government also supports major regional events with tourism spin-off, and business-assistance programmes have been implemented. Central government has also been proactive in the development of tourism planning tools for local government and provides grant assistance to rural communities faced with infrastructure pressures due to burgeoning tourism (Ministry of Tourism, 2007b).

In the past decade there have been strategic changes in national tourism policy. These include a shift in focus from the number of tourists to today's focus on the value of the tourist. Increased yield per visitor has become a central issue in tourism development with the realisation that:

... maximising volume is not necessarily maximising value – and nor does it necessarily lead to sustainable businesses. For that reason, discussions about yield are now encompassing the concepts of value-added, net benefit and measures of sustainability.

(Yield Research Programme, 2007)

Yield is defined by Tourism Resource Consultants (2009, p. 3) as “what remains after we reconcile the benefits from visitors with the cost of hosting these visitors in the local community.” The Yield Research Programme (2007) considers yield from a number of different perspectives:

- yield in the private and public sectors
- yield and central and local government

- yield from a social and environmental perspective
- yield generated by different tourist types, and
- value-added spending.

By understanding the different aspects of yield, central and local government are better able to determine the cost and benefits of tourism and the flow-on effects that occur. The 2015 Tourism Strategy actively encourages and supports an increased role for food in tourism as food is ideally suited to increase the value of visitor spend and encourage higher levels of spend. With regard to private-sector yield, bars, cafes and restaurants have a relatively high financial yield that is reflective of the low asset base required for their set-up (Yield Research Programme, 2007). While food businesses can be risky investments, as evidenced by the frequent failure of food businesses, it is nevertheless an attractive business sector given the potential high rewards for operators (Yield Research Programme, 2007).

An integral part of the policy for increased yield has centred on the identification of New Zealand's ideal tourist: the Interactive Traveller (IT). However, research conducted by the Yield Research Programme (2007, p. 4) as to the economic value generated by the different visitor types to New Zealand has concluded that the Interactive Traveller strategy has in fact "not been effective at delivering higher expenditure from visitors." While the Interactive Traveller strategy does deliver on key attributes such as appreciation of what New Zealand has to offer, the assumption was made that those with a higher disposable income would lead to higher expenditure when travelling. This has not been the case, with Interactive Travellers appearing to spend no more than non-Interactive Travellers (Yield Research Programme, 2007). The Yield Research Programme (2007) concludes that there is no single ideal traveller type for New Zealand tourism in terms of yield contribution. Each type of traveller has its own merits against the different yield indicators outlined earlier.

More recent research conducted by Tourism Resource Consultants (2009) indicates that the economic value of visitors is contingent on a range of variables, such as visitor volume, purpose of visit, country of origin, areas visited and distances travelled in New Zealand, length of stay and seasonality

of visit, exchange rates, and degree of participation in commercial activities. Tourism Resource Consultants (2009, p. 9) write: "... not having an ideal traveller type for yield is actually a good thing." What is important is "improving the understanding of the ideal mix of visitor types" in order to improve the understanding of long-term economic benefits to New Zealand.

Further to strategic changes in New Zealand national tourism policy, recent public policy initiatives since 2000 indicate an ideological shift by central government with regard to regional development and tourism (Shone, 2008). This shift recognises the importance of public and private sector partnerships, and greater collaboration and planning in the management of tourism (Shone, 2008). This involves devolving tourism management to the regions in order to foster the development of more sustainable local communities (Schöllmann and Dalziel, 2002, p. 7). The 'shift' in policy is emphasised in the 2015 Tourism Strategy which calls upon active private–public sector collaboration as well as clustering and collaborative ventures at industry level. Public policy initiatives in conjunction with the 2015 Tourism Strategy actively pave the way for greater collaboration between the food and tourism industries.

Shone (2008) refers to this change in policy as a shift from 'government' to 'governance'. Entitled 'New Regionalism' by some academics (MacLeod, 2001; Schöllmann and Nischalke, 2005), regions are viewed as autonomous economic units with localised networks and cluster groups focusing on local strengths and opportunities for more independent and sustainable regional development (Schöllmann and Dalziel, 2002, p. 7). 'Innovation' is important to the success of regions, rather than a purely market-driven approach to economic returns (Shone, 2008). The role of central government is to facilitate and support regional initiatives and the development of regional infrastructure, help build capability, and coordinate policy across tourism agencies (Schöllmann and Dalziel, 2002, p. 4).

This change in policy has been significant for local government. Responsibilities have grown from the management of local operations such as waste disposal and road maintenance, to include investment in the social and economic viability of communities (Bush 1995). The Resource Management Act 1991

(RMA) is central to local government planning and regulation for tourism (Kearsley, 1997). The intent of the legislation is the sustainable management of physical and natural resources. The RMA constitutes a move away from “prescriptive criteria for allocation of resources” to a process concerned with the environmental effects of activities (Kearsley, 1997, p. 57).

In order to facilitate the new regional development strategy the former Ministry of Commerce was replaced by the Ministry of Economic Development. The overarching aim of the policy centred on “the application of sustainable development at a regional scale, in order to assist individuals, business and communities within regions to identify local opportunities, develop capability to respond to opportunities, and exploit those opportunities” (Schöllmann and Dalziel, 2002, p 4). One of the key initiatives of the policy has been the introduction of the Regional Partnerships Programme (RPP). The programme set out to encourage cooperation and collaboration through clusters and networks amongst local and regional stakeholders with “an increased focus on strategic thinking and greater knowledge of regional strengths and advantages” (Ministry of Economic Development, 2005, p. 15). The programme provided up to NZ\$2 million in funding for regional initiatives. The RPP was disestablished in 2007 and replaced with facility for contestable government funds, such as the Regional Strategy Fund, for projects that fit the parameters of central government policy more closely (Shone, 2008).

This shift in policy with its focus on ‘New Regionalism’ has not been universally popular. Critics consider the practicalities of administering a potentially complex and unwieldy tourism planning strategy based on collaboration between tourism rivals: in the pursuit of collectivism, inherent tensions may be brought to the fore between those with vested interests (Schöllmann and Nischalke, 2005). Concern has also been expressed over the dominance of those with vested interests which may outweigh the visions of others (Milne and Ateljevic, 2001). Challenges also arise when trying to unite a region under a single common goal that aligns with central government objectives (Shone, 2008).

To summarise: the relationship between food and tourism has until recently been relatively overlooked by academics, policy-makers and communities alike.

However, food is now recognised as one of the fastest growing aspects of tourism today. Studies reveal the role of food as both a lifestyle marker and a means of cultural identification. When consuming food of 'others', tourists can become 'part' of that culture, however briefly. Food also provides 'authentic' representation of the culture for the tourist. Tourism literature reveals the potential role for food in tourism in sustaining regional identity and contributing to regional development, as well as being a key element in competitive destination marketing. According to Hall and Mitchell:

The promotion of the interrelationships between food and tourism should continue to be an essential component of the 'place marketing and development mix' if rural places in Australia and New Zealand are to thrive in the global food environment of the twenty-first century.

(Hall and Mitchell, 2002, p. 204)

In addition, New Zealand public policy with its focus on collaboration and partnerships, along with the overarching framework of the Tourism Strategy 2015, actively supports increased relations between the food and tourism industries.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides an in-depth discussion of the research design and methodology adopted in the thesis. A clear case for a qualitative approach became apparent after reviewing the literature and formulating the research questions. This necessitated a triangulation of research methods in order to ensure greater reliability and validity of the study. The research for this thesis is grounded in the real-world setting of social action, encompassing an interpretive social sciences paradigm.

3.1 Methodological approach

Bryman (2001) identifies two opposing paradigms that have informed research in the social sciences: a positivist tradition of research, and an interpretive or constructivist tradition of research. The paradigms can be differentiated by answering three interconnected questions (Guba and Lincoln, 1998, p. 201):

- What is the ontological basis for the research?
- What is the epistemology basis?
- What methodology will be applied to gather data?

Bryman (2001) points out that each of the paradigms will determine the way a researcher views a research subject and designs the methods for data collection. The research purpose, methodology and methods of data collection need to be complementary to that view.

Ontology is the nature of organisational phenomena; epistemology is the nature of the knowledge about phenomena; and methodology is the nature of the ways of studying the phenomena. Ontology asks the basic question about the nature of reality; epistemology asks about the relationship between the inquirer and the known; and methodology focuses on how to gain knowledge about the world (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998, p. 99). The ontological basis for this research is that of multiple realities, i.e. those of the researcher, of the interviewees, and of the audience reading the study. As in this research, the role of the researcher in qualitative studies requires extensive use of quotes, presentation of themes, and interpretive representation of informants' perspectives. The epistemological

basis for this research is that of an 'insider'. The researcher has standing within both the tourism and food industries in Rotorua, and as such has personal ties with many of the informants.

The ontological view of interpretive paradigms is grounded in multiple, divergent and interrelated social realities. Unlike in the positivist paradigm, the research is not restricted to one reality (Finn, Elliot-White and Walton, 2000). Multiple realities provide different perspectives on a theme (Creswell, 1998, p. 76), and the interpretation regarding the phenomenon studied is determined by the mixed-method research process. From these distinctions can be drawn the methodological approach, i.e. how one conceptualises the entire research process.

A positivist research paradigm explains behaviour on the premise of facts and observations based on theories and models. Research that takes place within this framework considers phenomena from the 'outside', independent of context (Finn et al, 2000, p. 4). Data is gathered in a deductive manner and is predominantly based on quantitative outcomes. The significance of this is that researchers are supposedly value-free, completely neutral, and therefore, interchangeable. As Goodson and Phillimore (2004, p. 35) verify, it does not matter which researcher conducts the inquiry, as it will not affect the findings.

However, this research employed an interpretive approach to gathering and understanding data. Interpretive traditions seek to understand reality from an insider's or emic perspective. This involves an inductive approach to research using principally qualitative methods of investigation. Findings are an outcome of a value-laden, collaborative approach between the researcher and those being researched (Veal, 2006, p. 37). Goodson and Phillimore (2004, p. 36) state that this means undertaking research in a reflexive way, taking into consideration both values and the context of the findings as an integral part of the knowledge production. Therefore, the goal of theory building in the interpretive paradigm is to generate descriptions, insights and explanations.

According to Walle (1997), Jennings (2001) and Veal (2006), most tourism research is a reflection of a positivist scientific approach to gathering and

interpreting data and is essentially descriptive in seeking to understand and describe 'what is'. Prior to the 1980s much of the research in tourism was based on quantitative analysis and gathering of facts, primarily because tourism was (and still is) viewed as an economic development tool, both nationally and internationally. Quantitative research was therefore particularly necessary in the provision of statistical information such as visitor arrivals, income generation and trends (Goodson and Phillimore, 2004, p. 32).

3.1.1 Quantitative and qualitative approaches

As attention has turned to the 'nature' of the tourist, the tourist experience, and the social, environmental and economic impacts of tourism, qualitative methodological approaches to research have become more appropriate in some instances than traditional quantification measures (Jennings, 2001, p. 2). According to Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 10) a major feature of qualitative data is the focus on "naturally occurring, ordinary events in natural settings, so that we have a strong handle on what real life is like." Influences on the local context are taken into account and data is collected within the proximity of the case in hand. Qualitative research methods can also provide rich and holistic data with the potential for revealing hidden or complex issues. In other words qualitative research methods can go beyond discovering 'what' or 'how many' to understanding 'how' and 'why' things happen (Neuman, 2006, p. 13).

Quantitative research typically begins with a theory or hypothesis about a particular tourism issue or trend. A deductive approach to the study, based on statistical analysis, is then used to either prove or disprove the theory (Jennings, 2001, p. 22, Neuman, 2006, p. 13). Quantitative research methods such as surveys or questionnaires are used to collect data. The reliability of the results is generally based on large sample groups and results may be held up as representative of a population (Seale, 2004, p. 294). Walle (1997, p. 527) refers to quantitative research as involving rigorous scientific method which deals with verifiable 'facts'.

Qualitative research by contrast is often viewed as less scientifically rigorous but can examine the reality of a situation with a greater depth of understanding. Phillimore and Goodson (2004, p. 5) and Denzin and Lincoln (1998, p. 5) argue

that qualitative research methods are not so much a distinct set of methods for doing research, but rather a new way of conceptualising and approaching social studies; in particular, in taking an emic perspective to inquiry. Methods used to gather qualitative information include informal and in-depth interviewing, participant observation and focus groups. Generally, the data gathered applies to specific or small tourism groups and results are not intended to represent the wider population (Neuman, 2006, p. 13).

One of the major concerns with quantitative research methods is the “appropriateness of generalising data from one context, for example a laboratory or sample, and extending the generalisation across the entire social world” (Goodson and Phillimore, 2004, p. 32). Another issue that some researchers consider problematic in the positivist stance is that there is one ‘true’ reality. For example, in theorising across populations, often little attention is paid to gender, ethnicity, class, age or the differences that exist between communities, despite the fact that these variations are crucial to the understanding of the social life under review (Goodson and Phillimore, 2004, p. 32).

Social scientists are also concerned with what can be achieved using quantitative research methods. Quantitative approaches emphasise predicting outcomes rather than understanding and explaining behaviour, and the value and contribution of this methodology to the social sciences has been questioned (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998, p. 6). Guba and Lincoln (1998, p. 18) also debate the notion that research is a one-way, objective and value-free process. They argue that every researcher impacts upon research in many ways by bringing different attitudes, values and perceptions to the data gathering and reporting process. Whilst qualitative research has been criticised as being a collection of methods with a non-scientific and inferior approach – ‘soft’ research – qualitative approaches in tourism have gained in acceptance (Finn et al., 2000, p. 9; Riley and Love, 2000, p. 164; Silverman, 2000).

To overcome the shortcomings and maximise the strengths of each approach, researchers (Finn et al, 2000, p. 9; Jennings, 2001, p. 22; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003; Richards, 2005; Hall and Valentin, 2005) propose combining the

two approaches in a mixed-method analysis, thus improving the validity of the research. For example, both quantitative and qualitative data might be sought during an interview: the quantitative data gives information about the respondent, and the qualitative data is sought to understand the respondent's views of issues. However, Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003, p. 6) note that 'paradigm purists' regard this as impossible due to the wide gulf in the paradigms underlying the approaches. Flyvberg (2006, p. 241), on the other hand, states that the separation in the literature of quantitative and qualitative methods is a spurious one based on the "artefact of power relations and time constraints in graduate training."

Even so, issues of validity and reliability are more problematic in qualitative research than in quantitative research (Holloway, 1997). Guba (1990, p. 10) refers to 'trustworthiness' and 'authenticity' instead of validity and reliability: "a study is 'authentic' when the strategies used are appropriate for the true reporting of the participants' ideas" and trustworthiness is the 'truth value' of a piece of research. Authenticity also refers to 'fairness' in the research in that all views are represented.

Decrop (2004, p. 159) revisits the work of Lincoln and Guba (1985) that identified four criteria for assessing qualitative and quantitative research. These are: (1) How truthful are the research findings? (2) How transferable are the results to other settings or populations? (3) Are the results dependable, i.e. are they consistent and can they be replicated? (4) Can the results be confirmed? Or, put another way, what part did the researchers own biases play and how neutral are the research findings?

Decrop (2004, p. 162) advocates 'triangulation' as a means of contributing to the trustworthiness of qualitative research findings and the credibility of the researcher. Triangulation refers to the use of multiple methods of analysis to address the same question in order to gain a broader understanding of an issue or situation (Veal 2006, p. 107). Decrop (2004, p. 162) states that by combining a variety of data sources, methods, investigators and theories in triangulation, this will "limit personal and methodological biases and enhance a study's trustworthiness." The upshot of this approach is that if you consciously "set

about collecting and double checking findings using multiple sources and modes of evidence, the verification process will largely be built into data collection as you go” (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 267).

3.1.2 Overview of the research methodology and process

The research for this thesis is grounded in the real-world setting of social action and encompasses an interpretive social sciences paradigm. This entails adapting a predominantly qualitative triangulation approach to the collection of data and analysis. A strong rationale exists for choosing a qualitative methodological approach to this research. First, the nature of the research questions in asking ‘What?’ or ‘How?’ necessitates a qualitative enquiry to describe ‘what is going on’. This is in contrast to quantitative questions which ask ‘Why?’ and then look to comparisons of groups or to cause and effect and statistical analysis.

Second, a detailed view of the situation was required and the topic also needed to be explored. For example, the literature search revealed a strong case for establishing a farmers’ market in Rotorua. The literature also focused on the importance of authenticity in linking food and tourism. Networks and local food systems also appear to be fundamental to this linkage and, most importantly, in maintaining sustainable competitiveness. Quantitative methods alone do not generate the type of data needed to meet the research objectives or provide a detailed view and explanation of the situation in Rotorua. The study hinged on the opinions and views of the experts in the field; therefore a qualitative approach was needed to tease out their valuable insights and experienced opinions. This is in contrast to the more dominant consumer/survey-focused approach, as indicated in the literature, geared towards understanding the niche market for food tourism. The final compelling reason for the qualitative approach relates to the researcher’s own role as an *active learner* rather than as an ‘expert’ proving a theory (Richards, 2005, p. 17).

The researcher wanted to explore and build a ‘picture’ of the situation, rather than test a hypothesis. This was because many points of discussion needed to be defined by working inductively, rather than them being provided by the researcher in advance. Working inductively enables a full and rounded

humanistic understanding of a situation rather than a purely objective scientific quantification of a current situation. It also presents the opportunity to develop and build on grounded theory when there is a low theoretical base. Grounded theory refers to theory that is generated from data that is systematically gathered and analysed through the research process (Corbin and Strauss, 2008).

The researcher was able to collect and interpret information from a variety of data sources with different biases and different strengths; for example, information was gathered directly from interviewees, from the content analysis of promotional material, and from data in secondary materials. Triangulation facilitates the collection of information when using a variety of research methods that complement one another by compensating for the weaknesses in one method of data collection by the strengths of another. For example, the weaknesses of content analysis in terms of reliability and validity may be off-set by the strengths of reliability and validity presented by the case study (Hall and Valentin, 2005).

Triangulation also provides a means of cross-checking: by bracketing findings, data derived from primary and secondary sources can be converged, and so the reliability and validity of information collected is increased (Richards, 2005). For example, the process of the research included conducting an interview and researching relevant policy. Additionally, triangulation permits the exploration of large-scale research findings from secondary material within the context of small-scale aspects of the project (Richards, 2005). The intention was to build on secondary data as well as to make a contribution to the tourism knowledge base with new primary data generated through, for example, the interview process.

3.2 The case study

Yin defines a case study as:

... an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.

(Yin, 1994, p. 13)

In 2009 Yin added:

The case study enquiry copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, results rely on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, results benefit from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis.

(Yin, 2009, p. 18)

This two-fold definition shows how case-study research may be considered as an all-encompassing method. The first part of the definition begins with the scope of a case study; the second part of the definition encompasses data collection and data analysis strategies. Thus it can be seen that the case study is not limited to a type of data collection, nor is it simply a means of analysing results.

Critics of case studies question the validity of this method in 'serious' research. Issues surround the validity of generalising from a single case and many critics view theoretical knowledge as more valuable than the practical knowledge generated by case studies. Critics also hold the view that the case study is most useful for generating hypotheses, whereas other methods are more suitable for hypothesis testing and theory building. In fact, as Flyvberg (2006, p. 219) and Veal (2006, p. 111) point out, case studies are particularly good for understanding people, events, experiences and organisations in their social and historical context. There is also no particular need to generalise results to a defined wider population. Moreover, triangulation is implicit in case-study method and seen as a strength, providing sound data for theory building. As Yin (2009, p. 3) states, "case studies are far from being only an exploratory strategy" – they can provide exploratory and evaluative findings in their own right, and are considered a comprehensive research strategy.

Creswell (1998, p. 36) maintains that a case study is useful in research in the following circumstance: in theory building and analysis; when a phenomenon is broad and complex; when the existing body of knowledge is thin; when a phenomenon cannot be studied outside its natural context; in new topic areas; and when complex social systems are studied. In addition, much of the research into the links between food and tourism has been based on case studies providing insight into countries or regions that have successfully

implemented food tourism strategies. For example, Sharples (2003, p. 206) considered the ways in which food tourism initiatives are used as a means of regional development within the Peak District National Park in England, Cambourne and Macionis (2003, p. 268) considered the linkage of food, wine and tourism in the Australian capital region, Meyer-Czech (2003, p. 149), reviewed food trails in Austria, and Selwood (2003, p. 178) reported on food as an attraction in destination marketing in Manitoba, Canada. Food tourism case studies with a New Zealand focus include a study of the Bluff Oyster Festival and its contribution to regional economic development in Southland (Rusher 2003, p. 192), a consideration of the demand for halal food among Muslim travellers in New Zealand (Hassan and Hall, 2003, p. 81), and a consideration of authenticity and sincerity in Maori Tourism with reference to hangi and concert (Taylor 2001).

The decision was made to pursue a case-study approach for this research. This was because of two fundamental characteristics of case studies (Gillham, 2000, p. 3). First, they rely on multiple data sources and the research does not start with a hypothesis: “The case study researcher, working inductively from what’s there in the research setting develops grounded theory” (Gillham, 2000, p. 12). A case study was also preferred because it enabled a holistic view of food in tourism, and because it allowed the researcher to look for the roots of issues and to conceptualise and seek the underlying reality (Richards, 2005).

Rotorua was chosen as the case for this research for the following reasons. Rotorua has a long history as a significant tourism destination in New Zealand, attracting large numbers of both domestic and international visitors each year (Tourism Rotorua, 2007b). Despite the significant range of natural and cultural tourist attractions available in Rotorua, the role of food in the tourism product, with the exception of hangi and concert, is minimal (Rotorua Tourism Advisory Board, 2007, p. 12). Rotorua is not known for food but does have much to gain from strengthening ties between the food and tourism sectors. Rotorua has a low socio-economic standing when compared with most regions in New Zealand (Business and Economic Research Limited (BERL) 2007). The rationale was to explore the potential for local produce to provide a vehicle for enriching the tourism experience as well as bringing not only economic and

competitive sustainability but also more social equity to the Bay of Plenty region, to benefit both the local population and the food and agricultural industries.

The researcher also had the additional incentive and double advantage of being a resident, a chef and a tourism lecturer in Rotorua, which added to the understanding of 'place'. While the case study included elements of a deductive approach in the gathering and analysis of secondary data such as statistical and historical data, the flexibility of the case-study tool itself also allowed for qualitative methods of information gathering. In this case, semi-structured in-depth interviews and content analysis were also utilised in an inductive approach to gather data. Specifically, the case study allowed the contextual nature of tourism in Rotorua to shine through, and then mixed methods of data collection enabled a convergence of results from which to evaluate findings and build on empirical knowledge.

3.3 Secondary data

Data from secondary sources such as books and journal articles played a major part in this investigation, either for corroboration or as a point of reference for the study. Secondary resources included census information, tourism surveys and economic surveys conducted by local and central government departments such as Tourism New Zealand and the Rotorua District Council. The Internet also provided a valuable source of secondary data; however, the most important role of the Internet was in providing 'leads' to 'original' sources of information through online journal searches. Secondary sources also included documentary resources and historical records necessary when preparing the case study.

One of the main issues with using secondary data is that information has often been collected for a specific purpose and therefore may not be 'neutral', having been 'massaged' to meet an organisation's needs (Jennings, 2001, p. 70). Jennings (2001, p. 70) also points out that there is always a question of reliability with secondary documents. It is not always clear how and why original documents were produced or the cultural setting from which they were derived.

Definitions used in tourism research may also be problematic in that a 'definition' may be subject to different interpretation and meaning.

Some of the secondary documents for the case study were also difficult to access. For example, Froud's original writings on Rotorua tourism in the 1880s are stored in a secure section of the Rotorua Library and restricted to use in the library only. It was also important to take into consideration the temporal constraints of secondary data. Much of the available information on Rotorua was dated, particularly statistics on its socio-economic status.

3.4 Content analysis

Literature reviewed for this thesis revealed the importance attached to place marketing in building awareness of regional diversity and point of difference in relation to food and tourism. Given the highly competitive environment that is a feature of tourism today, it is important that New Zealand capitalises on the food and tourism potential to promote each local region in an enhanced and authentic way. Content analysis provided the means to evaluate visual and documentary information used to represent food in the marketing of New Zealand as a potential tourist destination.

Content analysis is defined by Neuman (2006, p. 19) as a "technique for gathering and analysing the content of text. The 'text content' refers to words, meanings, pictures, symbols, ideas, themes or any message that can be communicated." Bryman (2001) writes that in a sense content analysis is not a research method; rather, it is an approach to analysing text and images, and not a means of generating data. The content analysis 'approach' can be applied very effectively to any promotional material that provides an accessible and rich source of textual and imagery data. This might include brochures, magazines, web pages, photographs and advertisements. In the context of this thesis, this method of data consolidation and analysis was crucial in understanding how the food image is used in place promotion in New Zealand.

Finn, Elliot-White and Walton (2000, p. 134) state that content analysis enables the study of non-statistical material in a systematic way. As such, "content analysis is thus a quantitative means of analysing qualitative data." Neuman

(2006, p. 13) points out that both quantitative and qualitative forms of content analysis may be applied, depending on the purpose of the study. This enables data to be processed and presented in either an interpretive or a statistical form. Qualitative content analysis, according to Dey (1993, p. 100), consists of finding a focus for the analysis, reading and annotating the data, and creating a set of categories. Mayring (1983, cited in Jennings, 2001, p. 203) refers to this as the 'summation' approach, which reduces the data being analysed into categories that integrate and generalise the major themes of the documents. The importance of these categories is then assessed and evaluated, resulting in key concepts through which to understand the data.

Choi, Lehto and Morrison (2006, p. 120) suggest that the use of qualitative approaches in the content analysis of destination image have gained favour because such an approach "reveals holistic and psychological impressions" integral to a destination that are not readily apparent with quantitative research methods. Jenkins (1999, p. 8) also recognises the usefulness of this research tool, stating "content analysis of written information, such as guidebooks or visual information including photographs in travel brochures, can provide a great deal of information about the images projected of tourist destinations." Inferences gained from the data can be about the message itself, the sender of the message, or the targeted audience for the message (Weber, 1990, p. 26).

In qualitative content analysis, Jennings (2001, p. 202) states that the researcher is free to evaluate texts without having to prove or disprove a theory. This means that the researcher is more 'open' to a variety of results. However, the onus is placed squarely with the researcher to explain and interpret results within the originating 'real-world context'. Other advantages of content analysis, as outlined by Finn, Elliot-White and Walton (2000, p. 160) and Neuendorf (2002), are that it costs very little to assemble material for analysis and, because data collection does not impact on the situation being investigated, it is an unobtrusive method of research and, moreover, data is not contaminated. Findings produced through content analysis may also be compared with results generated by different research methods (Hall and Valentin, 2004). This is of particular importance in this case, as triangulation is viewed as an important means of establishing the validity of the research findings.

This research is informed by a number of previous content analysis studies of tourism websites and brochures (Choi, Lehto and Morrison, 2007; Dann, 1996; and O’Leary and Deegan, 2005) and more specific to this thesis, content analysis of websites and brochures with a focus on food tourism (Frochot, 2003; and Okumus, Okumus and McKercher, 2007). For example, Okumus et al. (2007, p. 256) used content analysis in order to compare the food tourism marketing approach of two different destinations. This entailed a detailed analysis of brochures, booklets and websites. The research findings were presented in qualitative form in order to provide insights into an area of little previous research. Frochot (2003, p. 77) uses food themes to investigate how different food images can be used for specific destinations’ positioning strategies in France. This involved a content analysis of food images presented in tourism brochures.

Okumus et al. (2007, p. 256) employed a five-stage content-analysis model, based on procedures developed by Finn et al. (2000, p. 135) and Neumann (2006, p. 15), in order to facilitate their research. The model was also applied in the case of this research and involves the following steps:

1. Identification of aims and objectives
2. Sample selection
3. Development of coding scheme and defining categories for investigation
4. Data consolidation and reduction
5. Interpretation of data.

(Finn et al., 2000, p. 135)

Stage one of the content analysis entailed the identification of the aims and objectives of the research. In this case the aim of the content analysis was to ascertain how food is used in tourism place promotions in Rotorua and in New Zealand. The second stage involved the selection of the sample to be used in the research. The non-probability sample for this study consisted of ‘official’ Tourism New Zealand and Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) web pages, accessed between July and September 2007, and 2007 RTO destination brochures. Only official publications were included in the sample, as stipulated in the aims and objectives of the research, because official publications

represent the 'essence' of that which Tourism New Zealand and the regional tourism organisations wish to portray to potential tourists. These promotional materials also represent, for the most part, the 'first port of call' for tourists seeking visitor information about New Zealand. The promotional materials used for the content analysis consisted of the following:

- Tourism New Zealand's *Taste New Zealand Food and Wine* home page
- Eight Tourism New Zealand *Taste* web links featuring regional food and wine
- Twelve Tourism New Zealand '*The Gourmet's Garden*' web links
- Sixteen Regional Tourism websites produced by official Regional Tourism Organisations
- Seventeen New Zealand regional tourism brochures.

The size and content of the sample was dictated by the geographical division of New Zealand into eight representative regions for food and wine and twelve '*Gourmet's Garden*' food and wine regions, as indicated by Tourism New Zealand. These particular food-related web links (rather than the entire website) were specifically chosen as indicative of the food focus and the types of foods being promoted by Tourism New Zealand. Sixteen RTO destination websites and seventeen regional tourism brochures were also identified for analysis. In the case of the RTO promotional material, this was analysed in its entirety in order to determine regional coverage of food in tourism. The selection of the RTO websites was based on the most frequently occurring destinations featured on the '*Gourmet's Garden*' websites. In determining the sample for the regional tourism brochures, the same sixteen destinations identified above were reviewed, along with the addition of one other regional tourism brochure. The additional regional brochure was randomly selected.

Central to the aim and objectives of the content analysis is the identification of the variables to be measured (see Table 3.1). "A 'variable' is a definable and measurable concept that varies" (Neuendorf, 2002, p. 95). The variable may be 'latent' or 'manifest'. Manifest variables focus on words or sentences that are observable from a text and that are countable, whereas the latent content is the hidden meanings and messages that can be deciphered from a document

(Neuendorf, 2002, p. 23). For example, manifest content includes coverage, type of food and adjectives used to describe the food, whereas latent content applies to thematic and geographic-focus variables. The variables were ascertained using two recognised techniques for selecting variables: theory and past research, and a grounded or “emergent” process of variable identification. In both techniques the variables stemmed from the literature search (Neuendorf, 2002).

Table 3.1: Content analysis variables

Variable	Reason
Coverage	To ascertain importance attached to food in the regions
Presentation	To illustrate the format in which information is presented, e.g. text, image, special feature
Geographical focus	To determine geographical focus of food promotion, e.g. local, regional, national or international
Type	To determine types of food promoted nationally and in the regions
Adjectives	To illustrate how food is described, e.g. gourmet, fresh, artisan, traditional
Theme	To analyse the context in which food image is presented

The third phase of the content analysis involved capturing manifest data based on frequency and type, and latent data defining themes and geographic focus. It also involved developing coding schemes. Based on frequency of occurrence, key adjectives used to describe New Zealand cuisine were identified. A manual search of the brochures resulted in a list of forty adjectives. Word-processing software was used to conduct basic textual analysis of the web pages by using the ‘Find’ option to conduct keyword searches and word counts. This method was considered appropriate because the context of the words for the frequency count was not viewed as important to the understanding of the study, yet the process still provides narrative information as to the image of food presented in web pages and brochures (Choi, Lehto and Morrison, 2007, p. 121).

It was also seen as important to identify key types of foods presented in the marketing materials (Okumus et al., 2007, p. 257). This was aimed at providing an insight into the target market for the promotion and the market positioning of food in tourism. For example, gourmet foods may indicate a direct appeal to up-market, sophisticated tourists whereas foods unique to New Zealand may appeal to the food tourist. This was also a manual exercise. Every food item was listed and then frequency tested.

The last part of the analysis concerned the identification of visual themes or context in which food is presented (Frochot, 2003). Frochot (2003, p. 78), in her analysis of food images in French tourism regional brochures, identified multiple uses for food themes in advertising. Not only do the images provide “a strong symbol of quality of life and authenticity”, but they also provide a means of “cultural identification, communication, and status”. Frochot’s (2003, p. 78) research aims were two-fold: to identify “the different food images that are used by different tourism advertisers in their promotional material” and to investigate “how different food images could be used for specific destinations’ positioning strategies”, i.e. how food images could be more closely linked with the general image that regions wish to portray of themselves.

For the purposes of this thesis themes were identified through an evaluation of food images presented both on the websites and in the brochures (see Table 3.2). The categories identified generalise the major foci of the documents (Neuendorf, 2002). This then provides a basis for understanding how food is presented in New Zealand and Rotorua destination marketing. The themes then become part of the *coding manual dimensions* in preparation for adding data to the *coding schedule*. The coding manual is a statement of instructions to coders that also includes all the possible categories for each dimension being coded. In precisely defining the categories of each dimension, the validity and reliability of the data is increased (Hall and Valentin, 2005). Each category within the list of dimensions is allocated a number (i.e. a code; see numbers allocated to themes above). Other dimensions described in the manual for this part of the research included:

- identification of the region
- type of media, e.g. brochure, RTO website

- geographic focus
- photographs.

The coding schedule is the form onto which all the data relating to the marketing material being coded is entered.

Table 3.2: Food themes

Food Theme	Description
Food tourism (1)	<p>The marketing and promotion of food in the context of tourism, applicable only to those regions that actively promoted food in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'taste the region' campaigns • food trails in the district • cooking schools • presented food tourism opportunities as 'stand alone' experiences, e.g. cheese tasting • speciality restaurants offering local cuisine.
Food in Hospitality (2)	<p>Applicable to all regional tourism promotions that included any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identified 'dining out' opportunities • provided a list of restaurants and cafes in the district • had images of people and food (with no specific reference to a food tourism experience) • emphasised international cuisine.
Food and wine (3)	<p>Applicable to regional tourism destinations partnering food and wine (for example, food and wine trails).</p>
Local/regional food (4)	<p>Applicable to regions featuring promotions of local foods and ingredients.</p>
Food and festivals (5)	<p>Food festivals or food and wine festivals constitute part of the tourism experience in the region.</p>
Farmers' Markets (6)	<p>Promotion of farmers' markets in the region.</p>
Food and Culture (7)	<p>Cultural representation of food (for example, hangi).</p>

Stage four of the content analysis involved data consolidation and reduction. The list of forty adjectives was reduced to the top twenty key adjectives. Nine themes had been identified under food 'categories'; these were then refined to seven. For example, images of raw food, a category exemplified by Frochot (2003), had been isolated in a separate context; however, after review, it was decided to incorporate images of raw food within the context of 'regional foods'. Another example would be the theme of 'food and people': this had emerged in the initial analysis, mostly driven by images of people dining in restaurants and cafes, but upon reflection, it was decided to merge this theme under 'food and hospitality' – unless specific reference was made to a cultural or food tourism event, for example, in which case the data was incorporated into another relevant theme. Food and wine was included in the list of themes due to the fact that in some geographical regions in New Zealand wine is seen as integral to food promotions and food and wine tours may be a major tourism draw for some destinations.

The actual analysis, conducted in stage five of the process, focused on tabulation, frequency and coding. Regions with a strong culinary tourism focus and emphasis on local cuisine and food events suggest that food is seen as both a key attraction and regional identity marker by destination marketing organisations, and also as an important resource for the economy of the region (du Rand, Heath and Alberts, 2003, Okumus et al., 2007). The analysis was conducted manually as the volume of information for analysis did not require the use of computer software packages. Results are presented in both quantitative and qualitative form as this was perceived by the author as the best way of presenting information at both the denotative level and the connotative level (Choi et al., 2007).

Whilst qualitative content analysis as a method of research is gaining in popularity, Weber (1990, p. 69) writes that it is not an easy form of analysis, being "difficult and time consuming to do well". According to Finn et al. (2000, p. 160), reliability is a key concern for content analysis research because analysis is impressionistic; therefore it was important to ensure that categorisation procedures were reliable and consistent.

Krippendorff (1980, p. 130) discusses three types of reliability that are relevant to content analysis: stability, reproducibility and accuracy. In this instance, retesting of the same material is possible because the analysis is based on secondary data, although consideration must be given to the temporal nature of website promotions and the regular updating of information on the Internet, and the updating and republication of brochures from one year to the next. Although reproducibility may be problematic when using different coders, only one coder was used in this analysis. However, greater inter-coder reliability could have been achieved with the use of two researchers or more.

Accuracy can also not be claimed for two reasons: (1) classifications for analysis are not standard groupings, and (2) because the analysis was based on one person's interpretation at the connotative level, claims of accuracy are difficult to establish. Problems of accurateness could be mitigated by the utilisation of categories from previous tourism content analysis of promotional material with a focus on the same theme. However, this would not contribute to the overall increased understanding of the situation.

In content analysis, establishing validity is also important. Face validity has been assured as the content analysis measured exactly what was required in terms of ascertaining how food is portrayed in tourism marketing materials. The issue of representativeness has been addressed by evaluating all of the Tourism New Zealand web pages and Regional Tourism portals with a focus on food in New Zealand, as well as a sample of over half of the official regional tourism brochures published in 2007.

3.5 Informant interviews

"Interviewing is the systematic collection of data through asking questions, then carefully listening to and recording or noting the responses concerning the research topic" (Altinay and Paraskevas, 2008, p. 107). Jennings (2001, p. 163) identifies three types of interviews based on the ontology, epistemology and methodology inherent in the respective inductive or deductive paradigm used. The structured interview can be reflective of a restricted world view. The process is objective and the methodology used is quantitative. Structured interviews are usually of short duration, and examples include surveys, opinion

polls and standardised interviews. In a structured interview the question schedule is fixed and short responses are required. The advantages of this method are that interviewer bias is reduced and data is easily analysed using statistical techniques. The main disadvantage of the method is the inflexibility in being able to further probe responses (Finn et al., 2000, p. 75).

Semi-structured interviews, however, reflect multiple realities and subjective research. Qualitative data collection methods such as in-depth interviews and group interviews are used. Questions are generally open-ended and the semi-structured interview may last one hour or more (Jennings, 2000, p. 165). The advantage of this type of interview is that it combines the flexibility of the unstructured interview with the comparability obtained from using key questions. One of the main disadvantages of this method is the increased likelihood of bias as the interviewer selects questions to probe and has greater interaction with the interviewee (Finn et al., 2000, p. 75). Semi-structured interviews were used in the collection of data for this research. In contrast, unstructured interviews reflect a subjective gathering of data based on methodology such as in-depth interviews and focus groups. The format is much like a conversation, although the interviewer's role is minimal, allowing the respondent a free-flow of ideas and words; it may take up to two hours or longer to complete. Life histories are often gathered using unstructured interviews (Jennings, 2001, p. 163). The main disadvantage with this method is that comparability is reduced, data analysis is more difficult, and the data quality depends greatly on the listening and communicating skills of the interviewer (Finn et al., 2000, p. 75).

Gillham (2000b, p. 6) differentiates research interviews based on a continuum from structured to unstructured. According to Gillham (2000b, p. 6), the unstructured interview is essentially listening to other peoples' conversation as a kind of verbal observation. In comparison, the structured questionnaire at the other end of the continuum is conducted using simple, specific, closed questions. The semi-structured interview sits in the middle of this continuum, enabling the advantages of both extremes to be incorporated in the one interview process.

Although there is a range of both data-collection methods and interview types that could have been used to achieve the aims and objectives of this study, the researcher found that semi-structured in-depth interviews were the most appropriate for the research. The primary reason for this was because the semi-structured in-depth interview could generate information based on insider experience and privileged insights and experience. Qualitative interviewing is also particularly useful as a research method for accessing individuals' attitudes and opinions – things that cannot necessarily be observed or divulged in a formal questionnaire (Byrne, 2004, p. 186). Open-ended and flexible questions are more likely to get a considered response than closed questions and therefore provide a greater understanding of the issues, and of the experiences and views of the interviewees. From an ontological perspective, a range of realities could be investigated to describe phenomenon. Both food and tourism industry experts were interviewed to ensure access to a range of experiences, situations and knowledge. It was also the intention of the researcher to develop rather than to test theoretical propositions.

The specific advantages and disadvantages for the use of this research instrument are summarised in Table 3.3. Johnson and Turner (2003, p. 308) point out that semi-structured interviews are useful for in-depth exploration of topics in a face-to-face situation. The researcher is able to probe answers deeply by asking further questions, or by asking for clarification of an answer. This was the main advantage in choosing the semi-structured interview over a questionnaire, survey or more structured interviewing. Although the interview topics were pre-specified, the questions were open-ended, and could be reworded and covered by the researcher in any sequence of order. The researcher was also able to prompt and probe for greater response, which is generally not the case when an interviewer is operating from an objective epistemological perspective. According to Johnson and Turner (2003, p. 308), face-to-face interviews also have the added advantage of a greater response rate than questionnaires.

Table 3.3: Advantages and disadvantages of the in-depth interview within the context of this study

Advantages	Disadvantages
Allowed for multiple realities	Time consuming (for interviewer and interviewee)
Flexibility in probing responses	Pressured for the interviewee – questions, momentum, listening, responding, and recording
Questions and answers could be repeated if not clearly understood	Needed to build rapport with those not known to the interviewer
Allowed for a free flow of ideas	
Allowed for in-depth exploration of phenomena	
Allowed for high response rate	
Further interviews could be conducted	

Successful interviewing requires the researcher to approach the research from an emic perspective (Jennings, 2001, p. 162). Many of those interviewed were known socially and professionally to the researcher in her capacity as a trained chef and tourism professional. It is acknowledged that this professional and social standing on the part of the researcher could equally have worked against her. Interviewees may have been reluctant to talk openly as the researcher might have been seen as the future competition, interested in learning trade secrets. However, in this instance there was a trusting relationship and an easy rapport which was evident from the outset of the interview process. This ‘insider’s’ perspective also enabled a much greater understanding of interview data. The method also allowed for a relatively small representative range of expert respondents to be selected.

Fifty respondents were contacted by telephone or email and all agreed to be interviewed (see Table 3.4). At this stage the purpose and the subject of the interview was outlined. Thirty-five of the respondents were from Rotorua, three from Christchurch, seven from Auckland, and five from Wellington.

Table 3.4: Respondents in interview process

Position	Number of interviewees	Gender	Range of years of experience	Average years of experience
Executive chefs	10	M	12–35	20
Tourism business owners	7	M	8–20	15
Restaurant owners	12	9M 3F	12–25	20
Cultural food tourism representatives	6	4 M 2 F	4–12	10
Local food suppliers and producers	4	1 F 3 M	10–14	12
Food television media	2	M	6–10	8
Lodge owners	2	1 F 1 M	5–9	7
Food/travel writers	2	F	8–12	10
Regional tourism organisations representatives	2	1 F 1 M	6–8	7
Tourism New Zealand representatives	2	M	8–10	9
Chamber of Commerce CEO	1	M	–	5

The time involved with qualitative interviewing limits the number that can be interviewed; therefore it was important to carefully select the interviewees for the study. The experts listed above represent a cross-section of the tourism and food industries. Specifically, they were selected because of their experience, expertise and in-depth knowledge of the industries: all of the experts chosen for the research have achieved a measure of success in their field, holding senior positions within organisations or managing successful businesses. It was important that those asked to be interviewed were experts who both had keen insight on factors impacting business operations and were in a position to influence decisions, strategies and operations within their sphere.

The experts were also selected on the basis of how likely it is that their interview will contribute to the thesis questions and to emerging theory. In their diverse and various capacities, all of the interviewees have liaison between local food

producers, suppliers and the visiting tourists. This ensures that they are well aware of local conditions and issues, and their opinions lend credibility to the research findings.

An interview time, date and venue was then arranged. It was explained that the interview would take about an hour to complete. An information sheet was then sent to all respondents outlining the aims and objectives of the research, what use the information was going to be put to, researcher affiliation, how the interview material would be stored, and assurance of confidentiality for the respondent (see Appendix 2). The respondents were also required to sign a *Consent to Participation in Research* form before the interview commenced (see Appendix 3).

Forty-five of the interviews took place at the interviewees' workplaces; the remaining interviews were conducted at venues convenient for the interviewees. Ideally the researcher would have preferred to conduct interviews away from the workplace because throughout twelve of the interviews there was constant interruption from employees, service delivery people and customers. Apart from being distracting, in some cases this also extended the agreed interview time. Neuman (2006, p. 301) highlights that the main consideration with face-to-face interviewing is the high cost involved in personnel time and travel. The majority of the interviews were conducted in Rotorua and took place over a period of six months from December 2005 to May 2006. Some of the respondents were contacted again on two further occasions in 2007. This was in order to clarify responses from the first set of interviews, and to ask two further questions of those respondents specifically responsible for restaurant menus and ordering of food.

Gillham (2000b, p. 8) points out that "there is a common assumption that people will talk more freely in their own environment." This was a key consideration for the researcher because it was important that the interviewees were at ease, able to talk and not feel intimidated. On a practical note, the researcher was also conscious of causing the least possible disruption to the interviewee's working schedule, to make attending the interview as effortless as possible on the part of the interviewee.

3.5.1 The questions

The overarching aim of the research was to understand the extent to which food, through the medium of tourism, may strengthen a tourism destination and provide a useful tool in contributing to regional development in Rotorua, currently a non-‘food tourism’ region. With regard to this a range of questions were asked in order to ascertain:

1. The background, number of years’ experience and professional capacity of each interviewee
2. To what extent local food is used in tourism in Rotorua
3. Attitudes towards the authenticity of hangi
4. What are some of the perceived barriers to establishing food and tourism linkages
5. What potential new products could be developed involving food and tourism
6. What are the industries’ perceptions with regard to public versus private responsibilities for tourism marketing and promotion
7. Whether food could be used to create a point of difference for the region
8. Whether the region’s little developed wine industry is a perceived barrier in linking food and tourism
9. Stakeholders’ willingness to work together to promote local food
10. What is the potential for establishing a farmers’ market in the district of Rotorua.

The interview schedule is attached in Appendix 1.

Prior to conducting the interviews, the questions were trialled by two tourism industry educators for meaning and applicability, and then piloted on one executive chef and one tourism industry representative. This process helped to prioritise topics, and indicate those questions that were redundant and those that needed rethinking or rewording (Gillham, 2000b, p. 22). Piloting the interview also indicated how long it would take to conduct.

3.5.2 Analysing the data generated from the interviews

Data was collected and coded according to qualitative research guidelines located in grounded theory; specifically, it was generated and scrutinised in

parallel through an inductive process designed to generate substantive categories that can then be interpreted by the researcher (Altinay and Paraskevas, 2008, p. 170). The tools of grounded theory utilised in this research included *coding*, whereby data is broken down into component parts or categories as it is collected; *theoretical saturation*, which is defining the point where new data gathered is repetitive and no longer contributes to the understanding of the topic; and *constant comparison*, a part of the process which requires the researcher to continually compare data being coded so that they are aware of emergent categories (Bryman, 2001, p. 391). The process of 'cutting and pasting' data was greatly helped by word-processing mechanisms.

The stages of the data analysis were based on the following guidelines for an inductive approach to qualitative data analysis, as outlined by Corbin and Strauss (2008) and Bryman (2001, p. 393):

1. *Collection* of relevant data
2. *Familiarisation* with data, i.e. re-reading interview transcripts in order to identify emergent themes
3. *Coding, conceptualisation and ordering*. Coding is a mechanism for thinking about the meaning of the data collected and for reducing the data into manageable chunks (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996, p. 30). Open coding is "the process of breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualising, and categorising data" (Strauss and Corbin 1990, p. 61). Selecting and naming themes for the data was the first stage in this process. This included breaking data down into descriptive data, such as interviewee job titles and topics like 'farmers' market', and analytical data, such as describing regional cuisine as a 'marketing ploy'. In practice this meant (1) going through each transcript and highlighting substantive statements; (2) constructing a list of category headings and then entering categories along the top of a grid, with names of respondents down the side margin; and (3) assigning each substantive statement to a category. The writer 'copied and pasted' the relevant quote into the category on the grid. A note was also recorded on the transcript as to the category number to which it was assigned. Interviewees were also approached in person and by email a second time in order to clarify whether or not the local tourism industry should drive linkages with other sectors or should

the initiative stem from the local/regional tourism organisations. Further interviews were conducted with twelve respondents as the need for more information and clarification of points became obvious. Categories reached saturation point as data from later interviews were incorporated in the results. This led to a number of finalised and saturated categories from which to understand the data. The final categories were national and regional cuisine and culinary heritage, budget target markets, links with wine tourism, sourcing local foods, cultural aspects, food events, networks and food promotions.

4. *Enfolding the literature*, by comparing the analysis with similar and conflicting literature.

There are criticisms of the inductive analysis approach of grounded theory. One is that the analysis does not originate from a theory-neutral awareness, i.e. research is 'conditioned' by what is already known (Burns, 2000). Richards (2008) is matter-of-fact about this, stating that it is difficult for data analysis not to be impacted upon by the researcher. Bryman (2001, p. 396) writes that there are also practical difficulties with the process; for example, the length of time involved in the analysis. This researcher agrees, having found the time taken to transcribe the interviews and then the need to constantly review the data within the grounded theory processes extremely time-consuming. Bryman (2001, p. 396) also questions whether grounded theory actually generates new *theory*. Bryman argues that most of the information generated is substantive by nature rather than leading to creation of theory. The outcome of this research is a case in point.

There is a variety of different terminology used in grounded theory to describe processes in data analysis; for example, Charmaz (2003, p. 258) refers to *categories* whereas Strauss and Corbin (1990) talk about *concepts*. Charmaz (2003) also refers to a 'constructivist' approach where categories develop from the researcher's interaction with the data. In this, Charmaz is critical of Strauss and Corbin's approach to grounded theory, suggesting that it is 'objectivist', i.e. that it does not take into account the role of the researcher, and implies that categories are inherent within the data, just waiting to be discovered. Coffey and Atkinson (1996) criticise grounded theory on the basis that it fragments the

data which then results in a loss of a sense of context. This concern was not noticeable in the current study; however, it certainly may be an issue in a far larger sample.

Gillham (2000b, p. 1) describes the interview process as a 'managed' conversation where "you start off with a question, the opening shot; where it goes from there may be unpredictable but you have to follow, controlling the direction." According to Oppenheim (1996, p. 65), the interview, more than any other method of data gathering, requires excellent interpersonal skills in the process of "putting the respondent at ease, asking questions in an interested manner, noting down the responses without upsetting the conversational flow and giving support without introducing bias."

Neuman (2006, p. 307) points out interview respondents may interpret questions in a different manner than that intended by the researcher. The possibility of distortion and misunderstanding has been reduced in this instance with the selection of the semi-structured in-depth interview as a method of data gathering. This is because the researcher was able to rephrase questions and guide the respondent to the intended meaning of the question. Although this may raise concerns about interviewer bias in pushing the respondent to answer in one direction, semi-structured interviews can increase the reliability of the data gathered "by increasing the consistency in how respondents interpret meaning" (Neuman, 2006, p. 307).

Holstein and Gubrium (2004, p. 157) refer to the 'active interview' which casts interview bias in a new light. They maintain that all participants in the interview process unavoidably contribute to the *construction* of meaning, rather than the *contamination* of meaning. Holstein and Gubrium (2004, p. 157) state that the question should not be "whether or not interview procedures contaminate data, but how the interview generates useful information" about the topic of interest. Therefore, they contend, it is no longer enough to record what is said in an interview; rather, much greater consideration must be given to "how, when, and by whom experiential information is conveyed, and to what end."

Thus, when constructing categories for the interpretation of interview data, due consideration was given to the fact that the categories were not objectively constructed but subject to personal judgment. The category headings in themselves were not important; however, it was important to present the actual category content statements comprehensively and authentically and to scan the selected and non-selected quotations to check justification for their inclusion in the analysis in order to lessen the degree of selective bias and present a balanced representation of information.

In conducting the interviews it was also recognised that the reliability and validity of the data collected is in many ways contingent on the variability in epistemological interactions. Jennings (2001, p. 167) writes that “age, educational qualifications and profession can be associated with power positions in interviews.” In some instances the researcher was aware that she herself could be a source of intimidation for many of the male experts interviewed, being as well qualified (if not more qualified) both professionally and academically in the same field.

Neuman (2006, p. 310) states that gender also affects interviews in terms of “both obvious issues such as sexual behaviour and gender equality”. In this, the interviewer was very aware that her gender could be an ‘issue’ for many of the chefs interviewed. This is because all the chefs interviewed are male and come from a male-dominated profession. It is not often that the executive chefs interviewed would have interaction with a female chef on equal footing with themselves. Overall, out of the fifty people interviewed, only nine were female. In most instances the relationship between the researcher and the interviewee was of a positive, consultative nature rather than of one person being in greater command. Upon reflection, the researcher’s professional status, as both a tourism professional and professional chef, may have ‘cut’ two ways: although it raises questions of bias, it also enabled a fuller appreciation of the situations described and provided the basis for informed interpretation of data.

CHAPTER FOUR

FOOD AND PLACE: THE CASE OF ROTORUA

According to the Ministry of Tourism (2007b), while growth in visitor numbers is important, increased returns on investment and protection and enhancement of the environment are fundamental to the industry's future success. The Ministry of Tourism (2007b) emphasise that it is vital that New Zealand tourism continues to grow in a way that is sustainable environmentally, culturally, socially and economically. It is also vital to increase visitor expenditure through yield-driven strategies. Part of this is to encourage year-round travel with the development of new products and by giving visitors a reason to travel in the 'off' season. The previous chapters indicate that tourism development initiatives utilising food have the potential to meet all of the above challenges.

This chapter provides an overview of the tourism industry in Rotorua. It also investigates inter-sectoral relations between food and tourism in Rotorua – acknowledging the success of hangi and concert in the district, but also recognising the current limited integration of local food in tourism. However, the chapter does highlight a potential role for food in maximising economic linkages between local producers and tourism operators. Rotorua is located in a fertile, food-producing region with significant opportunities to increase visitor expenditure and contribute to regional development through the promotion of food in tourism.

4.1 Context

Rotorua is a key tourism destination in New Zealand, attracting domestic and international visitors alike. The majority of visitors to Rotorua are domestic, with the most originating from the North Island regions of Waikato, Bay of Plenty and Auckland. These regions provide Rotorua with a strong day visit and weekend market. Domestic day travellers accounted for 43.5 per cent of visits in comparison with international day travellers at 5.2 per cent (Ministry of Tourism, 2007a, p. 5). Auckland is Rotorua's single largest source market, accounting for approximately

eighteen per cent of all visitor expenditure, eighteen per cent of visitor arrivals, and twenty-six per cent of visitor nights (Tourism Rotorua, 2008).

The major international markets are Australia, UK and Ireland, Korea, USA, Japan and China. Travellers from Australia made up the largest share of the international visits to Rotorua in 2008, accounting for eleven per cent of visitor expenditure, seven per cent of visitor arrivals, and ten per cent of visitor nights (Tourism Rotorua, 2008). This is understandable given the proximity of Australia to New Zealand. It is of note that China is an emerging market, showing the greatest growth – set to increase from 9.2 per cent of international share in 2008 to thirteen per cent in 2015. This is comparable with the forecast thirteen per cent in 2015 for the traditional market of the United Kingdom (see Table 4.1) (Ministry of Tourism, 2009). The peak months for visitor nights are December and January, and the lowest months for visitor nights are May and June (Ministry of Tourism, 2008). This indicates that Rotorua is a seasonal destination with the majority of visitors arriving in the summer months.

Table 4.1: Domestic and international visits to Rotorua by origin of traveller

Origin of Traveller	% share of visits (2008)	% forecast shares of visits (2015)
Domestic		
Auckland	28.8	28.4
Waikato	30.4	30.5
Bay of Plenty	26.5	26.1
International		
Australia	23.6	25.1
United Kingdom	15.7	13.0
USA	9.5	8.5
China	9.2	13.0

Source: Adapted from Ministry of Tourism (2009).

APR Consultants (2004, p. 4) report an increasing trend in Rotorua towards international tourism and a tourism market no longer dominated by domestic visitors. In 2008 international and domestic travellers made a total of 3.04 million visits to Rotorua. Domestic overnight travellers accounted for the highest

percentage of visits at twenty-nine per cent. This is in comparison with 22.3 per cent of international overnight travellers. By 2015 total visits to Rotorua are forecast to increase by nine per cent to 3.31 million (Ministry of Tourism 2009). In 2008 the main reason for visiting Rotorua was for a holiday; this applied to both international and domestic visitors. In addition, statistics also show that visiting friends and relatives (VFR) is an important reason for visiting Rotorua, particularly for the domestic market. No significant change in the purpose composition is expected between 2008 and 2015 (Ministry of Tourism, 2009).

Tourism visitor expenditure in Rotorua is estimated at about \$440 million annually. This is equivalent to twelve per cent of Rotorua's \$2.1 billion GDP, making tourism the third largest industry in Rotorua by contribution to GDP after forestry (16%) and manufacturing (14%), and ahead of agriculture (10%) (APR Consultants, 2004, p. 19). APR Consultants provided the following survey expenditure data (Table 4.2) for visitors to Rotorua in 2003:

Table 4.2: Spending pattern of a Rotorua visitor in 2003

Expenditure	Percentage
Accommodation	40
Activities, attractions, shopping	36
Food and Drink	24

Source: APR Consultants (2004, p. 40).

The 'multiplier' effect of the overall expenditure is compounded to approximately \$655 million as visitor dollars are spent by tourism businesses in the local community on supplies and on wages to local employees, who then use their wages to purchase personal and household items (APR Consultants, 2004). According to the Tourism Research Council (2006, p. 3), by 2012 total Rotorua visitor expenditure is forecast to increase by 44.6 per cent to \$623.6 million.

Tourism development is often characterised by the predominance of small- to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). In New Zealand there are 17,000 private enterprises supplying tourist services, and eighty per cent of these employ fewer

than five staff (Ministry of Tourism, 2007b). The tourism industry is the largest employer in the district of Rotorua, with approximately seven thousand of Rotorua's almost thirty thousand jobs dependent on the industry. This equates to approximately twenty-five per cent employment in tourism overall. Of this, twenty per cent of all employment in Rotorua is directly in the tourism industry and a further five per cent of jobs are in roles that service the industry (APR Consultants, 2004, p. 44). However, in spite of tourism being the main source of employment in the Rotorua District, these percentages indicate that Rotorua is less vulnerable to tourism volatility than many other more tourism-dependent destinations because of the diversity of the local economy. Nevertheless, jobs in the tourism sector are often low paying and seasonal (Butcher, Fairweather and Simmons, 2000).

Currently there are over four hundred tourism-specific businesses in the region (Rotorua District Council, 2004, p. 138). This includes approximately one hundred and twenty attractions and activity operators, two hundred accommodation providers, eighty restaurants and cafes, thirty transport operators, twenty souvenir shops and twenty other tourism-specific businesses. The major tourism attractions in the district include the Agrodome Farm Show, Te Puia (Maori Arts and Crafts), Polynesian Spa, Rainbow Springs Ltd, Skyline Skyrides (luge, gondola and restaurant), The Buried Village, Waimangu Volcanic Valley Ltd, Wai-o-Tapu Thermal Wonderland, Hell's Gate Volcanic Park, and Whakarewarewa Thermal Village (APR Consultants, 2004, p. 26).

4.2 Tourism development in Rotorua

The history of Rotorua can be traced back to the arrival in 1340 of the Arawa people to Maketu Estuary in the Bay of Plenty. According to tradition, Ihenga is credited with discovering and naming Lakes Rotoiti and Rotorua. In 1450 the majority of the Arawa people moved from Maketu and settled in the Rotorua lakes district (Stafford, 1999, p. 9).

Maori legend recounts that New Zealand food was a gift from the gods. From Tane came forest game birds; from Tangaroa, seafood and fish; from Haumia, wild

plants; and from Rongo, cultivated vegetables (Burton, 1982, p. 1). According to Burton (1982, p. 4), when Maori first arrived in New Zealand they lost many of the cultivated plants that had been used in their native homeland and came to depend on a whole range of new wild foods such as berries, fungi, seaweed, insects, earth worms, lizards, fern roots and shoots, the pith of tree ferns, birds such as the wood pigeon, and fish. Kumara (sweet potato) was the most successful 'imported' crop as it "matured in the shortest time and thrived in light sandy soils which the Maori were able to work with their digging sticks" (Burton, 1982, p. 3). Burton (1982, p. 4) relates that crops of kumara were especially successful in the Rotorua–Taupo area.

In the 1820s, with the decline of intertribal warfare between Te Arawa and other Maori tribes of the Rotorua region, the way was paved for missionaries and settlers to the district. The Reverend Thomas Chapman was the first missionary to live among the Te Arawa people, locating the first mission site at Koutu in 1831 (Stafford, 1986, p. 26). In 1839 the first 'tourist' arrived in Rotorua. John Bidwill, naturalist and explorer, wrote of his experiences in his book '*Rambles in New Zealand*', which was first published in 1841 (Stafford, 1976, p. 9). Stafford (1976, p. 9) attributes this work as the inspiration for many travellers to visit New Zealand at this time. Visitors to the district largely relied on their own resources and that of the resident missionaries to make travel and accommodation arrangements and were often provided for as guests rather than as paying customers (Stafford, 1986, p. 26). Charles Heaphy wrote of explorers at that time:

True, they must occasionally content themselves with a slender meal ... but more frequently they dine off pigeon, off grey and blue duck, off eel and crayfish, or queen of wild fowl, woodhen. And weka, uncared for in the settlements? Catch it, as Mrs Glass would say, at Rotoiti; stuff it with sage and onion (for even these condiments accompany the epicurean explorer) roast it on a stick, watch it for half an hour at daybreak, spattering and hissing between you as you make damper or pancake ... and then serve it upon the saucepan lid ...

(Heaphy, cited in Burton, 1982, p. 19)

A visit by the HRH the Duke of Edinburgh in 1870 was also an impetus for tourism to the district (Bremner, 2004, p. 45). According to Stafford (1986), the decade of the 1870s marked the beginning of commerce and the tourist industry. This was despite the Land Wars between Maori and Pakeha, during which local Rotorua tribes largely supported the government of Queen Victoria (Bremner, 2004, p. 43). At this time the Maori people themselves transacted tourism business, with the village at Te Wairoa providing the gateway to the Pink and White Terraces (Bremner, 2004). The Pink and White Terraces were regarded as the highlight of the attractions in what was “now being described as *The Thermal Wonderland*” (Stafford, 1986). Levies charged for guiding tourists to the natural wonders were determined by Maori, although settlers established accommodation houses at strategic points such as Ohinemutu.

Maori were particularly hospitable to visitors, regardless of their origin or reason for their visit (Stafford, 1986, p. 32). Tourists were taken by canoe to the Terraces and in the evenings guests enjoyed a Maori feast and the ‘haka’, a traditional form of Maori dance, was performed (McClure, 2004, p. 11). The haka is performed for a variety of reasons including amusement and to welcome guests. Actions employed in the course of the haka performance include poking out the tongue, showing the whites of the eyes and slapping the hands and stamping the feet (McLean, 1996, p. 46).

Burton (1982, p. 1) relates that Maori employed three ways of cooking food: the hangi which involved steaming food in an earth oven, grilling food over glowing embers, and boiling food. For day-to-day cooking Rotorua Maori boiled their food in hot pools. Dr John Johnson, New Zealand’s first colonial surgeon and tourist to the region of Rotorua, commented on the practice:

The inhabitants of the pa cook their food by immersing it in the boiling springs, which are so numerous by the lake that almost every house possesses a natural kitchen. But as all the waters are slightly acidulous, food cooked in this way corrodes the teeth, and gives them a blackened decayed look, so the natives of Rotorua are recognized everywhere by that disfigurement; nor does it seem

to agree with Europeans, being apt to produce indigestion and irregularities of the bowels.

(Johnson, cited in Stafford, 1986, p. 32)

Anthropologist Raymond Firth commented on the key significance of food and the hangi, or feast (see Figure 4.1), in Maori society:

... it [food] was always an affair of excitement and pleasure, it represented the pinnacle of satisfaction in community life. The focus of interest for months ahead, it gave scope for generous display both of provisions and of the personal accomplishments of those who attended. The feast also played a valuable social role in providing the occasion for the meeting of different groups and promoting harmonious relationships between them.

(Firth, cited in Simpson, 1999, p. 89)

Visitors were mostly privileged, wealthy individuals from Britain, Australia and the United States. Many came for the health-giving properties of the hot springs and natural pools. Disputes, however, arose over the levies Maori extracted for guiding, entry to sights and entertainment. Visitors who came with “idealised preconceptions of an indigenous people who were bound to nature and an integral part of an exotic landscape, were disconcerted to find that Te Arawa were entrepreneurial providers of tourist experiences” (McClure, 2004, p. 12).

Travel at this time in New Zealand was arduous and difficult, with very primitive conditions prevailing. In 1872 one traveller, Ernest Tinne, wrote: “... the stores are nearly always empty, and beyond the mere necessities of life, such as potatoes and bacon, literal starvation threatens the traveller in these parts” (cited in Andrews, 1995, p. 15). Conversely Burton writes:

The main feature of food in the 1870s was its plenitude and incredible cheapness. This was because there was no overseas market for meat and dairy produce, and only a limited one for grains, hops, jams, etc. In 20 years the flocks of sheep had increased from half a million to twenty million head, but only the wool could be exported, surplus sheep in the 1870s were sold at a shilling a head, to be boiled down for tallow, sometimes fed to pigs, or even driven over the cliffs into the sea.

Burton (1982, p. 25)

Figure 4.1: Early photograph preparing the hangi



Source: Rotorua Museum of Art and History (OP2975).

In 1882 Adela Stewart, a guest at one of the local hotels, complained that only condensed milk was available for her tea “as the natives would not allow for a cow to be kept” (cited in Andrews, 1995, p. 21). At the White Terrace, Andrews describes the lunch available to tourists as:

... koura and potatoes cooked then and there in a boiling spring, supplemented by tinned meat, bread and jam, lemonade and ginger beer, all supplied by the local hotel.

(Andrews, 1995, p. 22)

McClure (2004) identifies a local politician by the name of William Fox as one of the first people to consider the impacts of tourism on the district. In 1874 Fox completed an exploration of the region and according to McClure (2004, p. 13), “saw a role for the Government to act as both benefactor – protecting the natural thermal wonders – and entrepreneur – guaranteeing the investment of private capital in the area to serve the needs of visitors.” Fox wrote to the then-Premier, Julius Vogel, arguing that it was vital for the New Zealand government to take

control of the district just as soon as the 'question' of native title could be negotiated. "Fox's assumption that the land could be purchased from Maori to be used for the nation and for the world was soon to become the basis of government policy" (McClure, 2004, p. 14).

In 1886 the government's vision of substantial rewards for investment in the thermal district appeared to be over with the violent volcanic eruption of Mt Tarawera and the destruction of the Pink and White Terraces (Conly, 1985, p. 9). Lakeside villages and the tourist settlement at Te Wairoa were also buried under mud and hot ash (Conly, 1985, p. 36). Although the region did initially record a slump in visitor numbers, the Tarawera eruption actually contributed to the appeal of the district with stories of buried villages and disaster (Bremner, 2004, p. 129). Today, "the burial of the Maori Village at Te Wairoa has provided a significant heritage site" (Stafford, 1986, p. 12). Correspondingly, interest now grew in the hot springs situated in the village of Whakarewarewa, owned by the Ngati Whakaue, and in Waiotapu, described as the 'new wonderland' (Stafford, 1986).

The town site of Rotorua was fully purchased in 1890, despite some of the local tribes being reluctant to sell. However, the village of Whakarewarewa remained independent. The government now owned New Zealand's chief tourist destination and set about the nationalisation and development of thermal tourism and spas (Bremner, 2004, p. 136). In 1901 the state's involvement in tourism was further extended when the Minister of Railways, Joseph Ward, opened a Tourist Branch of the Railways. Ward's vision for tourism in New Zealand also culminated in the opening of the first government tourist department in the world. The role of the department was the commercial development and the international marketing of resorts (McClure, 2004, p. 26).

Rotorua was the gem in New Zealand's tourism crown, as Stafford notes:

Tourism based on thermal activity, spas, and Maori culture was adopted as a New Zealand icon, putting Rotorua into a central position in the marketing of the country as a tourist destination.

(Stafford, 1986, p. 15)

The author also points out that further development of thermal sites at Waimangu and Hell's Gate at Tikitere, as well as the development of natural attractions such as Rainbow Fairy Springs and the close proximity to lakes such as Rotoiti, has contributed to growth of a regional tourism product rather than one specific destination product.

During the 1950s Rotorua experienced rapid growth in tourism; this was followed by a period of consolidation in the 1960s. At this time the motorcar became widely available throughout New Zealand and roads into Rotorua improved dramatically, leading to a large growth in visitor numbers (Stafford, 1999). This was followed by a period of stagnation in the 1970s, and in the 1980s tourism in Rotorua went into decline (Pike, 2007). This was attributable to state-sector reforms and an economic downturn which resulted in the contraction of the local economy, high unemployment and a decline in the central business district. Further challenges to Rotorua as a tourist destination included environmental mismanagement of geothermal resources and high levels of pollution in Lake Rotorua. Consequently visitor numbers declined and Rotorua gained a reputation as a rough, scruffy and depressing place (Pike, 2007).

In response, the Rotorua District Council (RDC) implemented a ban on geothermal bores within 1.5 km of the Whakarewarewa field. Residential rates were increased and the money was used to upgrade infrastructure such as the sewerage system. The city was also 'beautified' with gardens and cobblestones. By 1992 geothermal activity had returned to levels not seen in decades (Rockel, Stafford, Steele and Boyd, 1980). The District Council encouraged investment, particularly in tourism, which was seen as the key to district growth. This led to the development of the Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) 'Tourism Rotorua', a branch of Council with

a specific goal to promote and market tourism in Rotorua. Main attractions were upgraded, new accommodation was built, and there were renewed marketing efforts. The city was rebranded as a destination 'Full of Surprises'. The Council also fostered partnership with the private sector (Horn, Fairweather and Simmons, 2000, p. 28). Today, Tourism Rotorua is recognised as one of New Zealand's most effective RTOs, enjoying both community and council support (Simmons and Fairweather, 2000, p. 5).

Decision-making with regard to tourism development in the district, marketing direction, information and advice to tourism operators is provided by the Rotorua Tourism Advisory Board (RTAB). As an early initiative, Tourism Rotorua produced a *Rotorua Tourism Strategic Plan 1995–2005* with the following objectives:

- 1 Provide a framework for the tourism industry and community activities;
- 2 Raise the profile of tourism in Rotorua;
- 3 Provide a structure and steps to plan for the future, and initiate programmes for improving the industry.

(Simmons and Fairweather, 2000, p. 5)

"The plan set out 11 'strategic steps' and 61 'action steps', which were directed at management of the functional tourism environment" (Simmons and Fairweather, 2000, p. 5). As well as providing for traditional marketing and product development actions, goals for environmental management, community and Maori linkages, transport, training and public infrastructure were also included. The 'plan' has since been refocused into five core areas:

- 1 Finance and resources
- 2 Marketing
- 3 Events and incentives
- 4 Maori, and
- 5 A special projects group with a wide brief, which includes the development of environmental best practice standards for broad application.

(Simmons and Fairweather, 2000, p. 6)

Rotorua District Council also recognised the need for an overarching brand which summed up the attributes of Rotorua as a desirable place to live, work and visit. The inspiration for the brand 'Destination Rotorua' recognises:

... the economic, social, environmental and cultural importance of all sectors of the local community. The brand is intended to capture the essence of a community's shared vision of where it is going – its destination.

(Rotorua District Council, 2004, p. 24)

The concept of the brand 'Destination Rotorua' evolved from Tourism Rotorua's main visitor industry brand: 'Rotorua – feel the spirit! *Manaakitanga*'. *Manaakitanga* is a Maori word which encapsulates the spirit of hospitality (Rotorua District Council, 2004, p. 24). Thus, Rotorua strongly associates itself with Maori traditions of hospitality and being hospitable towards tourists (Ryan and Pike, 2003, p. 310). This marketing approach is used for both the domestic and international markets with positive results; for example, attractions such as Te Puia (The Maori Arts and Crafts Institute) and Tamaki Maori Village are among the most visited locations in New Zealand (Ryan and Pike, 2003, p. 310). However, Ryan and Pike (2003, p. 310) also point out that Maori-related activities do not feature strongly in domestic tourism activities in the Bay of Plenty region, including Rotorua. Ryan and Pike (2003, p. 313) state "that there exist low levels of interest among European New Zealanders in Maori cultural product as a holiday attraction."

Groups and agencies directly involved in the development and management of tourism in Rotorua include the Department of Conservation (DOC), Rotorua District Council, Tourism Rotorua, Environment Bay of Plenty (the Bay of Plenty Regional Council) and Te Arawa (Rotorua District Council, 2004). Under the Conservation Act 1987, DOC manages and administers many of the natural areas that attract tourists (Department of Conservation, 2007, p. 3). Environment Bay of Plenty and the District Council also play major roles in the regulation and environmental management of tourism (Rotorua District Council, 2004).

Tourism Rotorua promotes 'sustainable' tourism management. This incorporates:

... providing a satisfying and distinctive experience for visitors, and at the same time preserving and protecting environmental qualities through a level of tourism development that is acceptable to the host community.

(Rotorua District Council, 2004, p. 133)

Tourism Rotorua is also charged with maintaining links within the tourism industry in Rotorua. This is achieved through the role of the Rotorua Tourism Advisory Board (RTAB), a representative council for the tourism industry that forms a direct method of contact between local industry and the Rotorua District Council (Rotorua District Council, 2004, p. 133). This linkage with the tourism private sector is critical to the industry's ability to adapt to the changing global tourism environment and to meet the needs of the local community in areas such as employment and job creation (Horn, Fairweather and Simmons, 2000, p. 29). Tourism Rotorua and the RTAB also retain links with other tourism bodies in New Zealand such as Tourism New Zealand, Tourism Industry Association (TIANZ) and the Inbound Tourism Operators Council (ITOC) (Horn, Fairweather and Simmons, 2000, p. 29).

Although Tourism Rotorua operates with autonomy under the RDC umbrella, it is still partially funded by the Rotorua District Council and it is this funding which has enabled the setting up of a visitor information centre, a booking centre, and a marketing and management unit in Rotorua. The council has extensively upgraded the city and the lakefront, which has led to an improved visitor perception of the city and wide-ranging development of the retail sector. This includes the closing off to cars of one end of the main retail street where a cluster of restaurants is located – the section of road is now known as 'Eat Street'. In addition, Rotorua Airport has been developed and extended to accommodate trans-Tasman flights to the district (Rotorua Tourism Advisory Board, 2007). There is ongoing development of accommodation (both upgrading and expansion) in Rotorua; for example, the Ibis Hotel opened in 2005 and the Heritage, Novotel, Sudima and Millennium hotels have all been recently upgraded. Thus, the District Council, in conjunction with Tourism Rotorua, are key agents and facilitators in shaping the direction of tourism in Rotorua (Horn, Fairweather and Simmons, 2000, p. 29).

4.3 Social and environmental impacts of tourism

Rotorua district has had a long association with tourism. In 2000 Horn, Fairweather and Simmons (2000) suggested that the local community did not think that tourism affected them negatively. Horn et al. (2000, p. 79) attributed the negligible social impact to low tourist density relative to the size of the Rotorua population, and the presence of other large sectors in the Rotorua economy such as forestry and agriculture. Spatial arrangements of tourism businesses also help to offset potential irritation with tourism. In Rotorua, clusters of tourism businesses largely fall into zones; for example, the cluster of motels on Fenton Street, the grouping of restaurants and cafes on the lake end of Tutanakei Street, and the cluster of tourism activities in the Mt Ngongotaha area. Visitors are also widely dispersed around the area, as many of the activities and attractions are spread across the region (George, 2007).

The negligible social impact of tourism in Rotorua also stems from the fact that most local people feel that there is local 'ownership' of tourism in the district. According to research conducted by Horn et al. (2000, p. 81), a number of the important attractions in Rotorua are locally owned or managed by long-term residents, "many of whom have had family in the industry for more than one generation". Examples of this would be the Polynesian Spa and the Agrodome. The high profile of the Rotorua District Council in tourism also contributes to the sense of local control, ownership, and planned management of tourism in the district.

According to the Rotorua District Council (2006), increasing tourism development in Rotorua has impacted on local resources and the natural environment by increasing pressure on resources such as water quality and supply, infrastructure services, energy sources, sensitive environments, waste-disposal sites and land use. Rotorua District Council (2006) seeks to reduce the impacts of tourism on the physical and social environment by incorporating sustainable practices. This is in the hope of achieving long-term tourism viability and continued economic prosperity for the region. Rotorua came to the forefront of this area in New Zealand

with the launch of the Rotorua Sustainable Tourism Charter in 2001. There are now more than 50 Rotorua tourism businesses that are members of the Charter, representing all types of tourism business from accommodation and activities to transport and services. Charter members pledge to undertake continual improvement in the areas of community, natural and human environment protection, efficient use of natural and human resources, and compliance with legislation. The Charter is not only about operators making a more sustainable destination, but also about encouraging visitors to take an active role in engaging in a more sustainable visit (Rotorua District Council, 2006, p. 2).

4.4 Food and tourism: inter-sector relationships

The following are the key attributes which attract domestic and international visitors to the Rotorua district: range and availability of accommodation; good air access; natural attractions (the lakes, geothermal attractions and the Redwood Forest); eco-tourism activities; adventure tourism heritage; and Maori tourism. Attributes which primarily attract the domestic market include family-orientated activities; spa, indulgence and relaxation; adventure and fun attractions; eco-tourism activities; and Maori tourism (for the visiting friends and relatives) (Destination Rotorua Strategy Group (DRSG), 2004).

Food is not considered to be a major attribute in attracting either domestic or international tourists to Rotorua (DRSG, 2004, p. 12). According to the Tourism New Zealand Visitor Experience Monitor 2008/09, there has been an increase in participation in food and wine events or shows, and high levels of interest show there is room to further convert this interest into participation. Overall, visitors to New Zealand rated their satisfaction with food and wine events as 8.0 out of a possible 10. This satisfaction is driven largely by the quality of the activity. However, when compared with other cultural activities such as theatre and performing arts (8.7) or Maori cultural performances (8.4), or with general sightseeing (8.9) or visits to farms/farm shows (8.4), the satisfaction rating for food and wine events is relatively lower.

In order to build on tourism capabilities a new strategy for tourism management in Rotorua has recently been developed by the Rotorua Tourism Advisory Board (RTAB, 2007). This is a Rotorua District Council initiative in conjunction with the tourism industry. The *Rotorua Visitor Industry Strategic Plan 2007–2015* recognises an increasingly competitive tourism environment and provides a framework for decision-making and sustainable tourism growth (RTAB, 2007).

The vision for Destination Rotorua focuses on three key areas: to identify and develop new tourism products, to increase international market share, and to build community awareness of the need for sustainable tourism development and practices. According to the RTAB (2007, p. 2), the new strategy is set to make a significant contribution as part of the Rotorua District Council Strategy for Growth. As Rotorua is primarily a seasonal destination, it has been the policy of Tourism Rotorua to develop product that will ensure visitors to Rotorua year-round. Tourism Rotorua has, for example, invested heavily in conference marketing and promotion. The Australian and domestic short-break holiday market is also targeted (Destination Rotorua Strategy Group, 2004, pp. 40–44). Part of the tourism marketing vision is to strengthen the domestic positioning of Rotorua as the ‘leisure and lifestyle’ capital of New Zealand, as well as to encourage an integrated tourism sector working together in a common direction. Local food is not specifically mentioned in the strategy; however, the fact that food is viewed as a key lifestyle commodity (Sharples, 2003, p. 113; and Mitchell and Hall, 2003, p. 60) suggests that food should have a strong role to play in the ‘lifestyle capital’ of New Zealand.

Currently a large selection of coffee shops, cafes and restaurants provide the main dining experiences for visitors to Rotorua (Tourism Rotorua, 2007a). As can be seen in Table 4.3, the vast majority of the restaurants provide ethnic and international cuisine with few restaurants offering contemporary New Zealand cuisine. In fact, no restaurants are specifically listed as offering local or regional cuisine. Although this could be because they have been combined in the contemporary New Zealand category, an alternative explanation is that there is no listing because local cuisine does not exist. A large proportion of the eating options include family and fast-food outlets. The Tourism New Zealand Visitor Satisfaction

Monitor (2008/09) indicates that satisfaction with fast-food outlets is well behind other food and beverage establishments, with a low score of 7.3 out of a possible 10. This includes experience ratings for quality of food, service and value for money. This is in comparison with restaurants, cafes, bars and supermarkets, which score 8.0 out of 10.

Table 4.3: Dining in Rotorua by restaurant type

Restaurant type	Number	Percentage
Ethnic	29	34.9%
International	9	10.8%
Family including fast food	15	18.0%
Contemporary New Zealand	9	10.8%
Cafes and coffee houses	21	25.3%
Total	83	

Source: Jasons Travel Media, (2009).

Rotoura also has a range of traditional and contemporary Maori food tourism experiences available for the visitor (Tourism Rotorua, 2007a). The hangi involves steaming food in a subterranean steel or specially constructed concrete oven (Figure 4.2), with a gas heat source. This is in comparison with the traditional method of pre-heating stones in a wood fire, then placing the stones with the food on top to steam in an earth oven. In Rotorua, local Maori also used geothermal steam and hot pools (see Figure 4.3), rather than fire and stones to cook food. Along with the staple hangi items such as chicken, lamb, pork, potatoes, pumpkin and kumara, hotels may add to the dishes available items such as rice, salads, sushi, mint sauce and stir-fried food. This has brought the authenticity of the hangi experience into question. Hall (2007) contests the notion of authenticity as conferred on things and places, and instead argues that authenticity in tourism is really about individual 'connectedness' with the everyday life of communities visited. From this it can be said that the novel and authentic aspects of hangi

resides in the specialised cooking method, unique earthy flavour imparted during the cooking process, and cultural traditions surrounding the sharing of food, rather than the food itself. Hangi and concert experiences for tourists at local maraes in particular can be seen to provide this 'connectedness' for tourists, although for many tourists, especially members of large tour groups on tight schedules, this is not a realistic option.

Figure 4.2: Hangi experience, Mitai, Rotorua



Source: Author (2007).

Tahana et al. (2000, p. xvi) concluded that the presentation of Maori culture has changed over time to meet the needs and expectations of tourists and that “the presentation of Maori culture is seen by a majority of respondents as a misrepresentation. There are concerns about relevance, consultation, control and authenticity.” For example, Caspari (2006, p. 1) writes: “Kai and concert tourism (is) stale.” According to Caspari (2006, p. 1), in order for Rotorua to hold its title of indigenous capital of New Zealand, Rotorua must diversify and improve the cultural

tourism experience for visitors. Hickton (cited in *Tourism News*, May 2005, p. 10) states: "... all visitors, especially our target market, want to get a sense of the way people from different cultures live." Visitor satisfaction research concerning New Zealand's heritage and cultural tourism products confirms the need to improve visitors' experiences in this sector (Colmar Brunton, 2005a).

The negative perception of the hangi and concert outlined by Caspari is countered with the claim "hangi and concert entertainment is alive and thriving in Rotorua and looks set to remain a vibrant component of the tourism scene" (Earle, 2006). Each year approximately 200,000 visitors experience hangi and concert at Rotorua's tourist hotels. Earle (2006, p. 13) argues that for many the hangi and concert "is the main reason for including Rotorua on their itineraries". In reality, it is in the interests of Rotorua's local community to ensure that the hangi and concert remain a key attraction as the cultural experience provides an extra, very important, source of revenue for the hotels apart from accommodation, and provides employment and wages for many in the district.

Other integrated cultural food and tourism experiences in Rotorua include Kinaki Wild Herbs and Indigenous Food Tours. Visitors to Rotorua can spend a day out with a local Maori chef learning about the sustainable harvesting of indigenous foods such as pikopiko (fern fronds), horopito (an indigenous pepper tree) and kawakawa berries, in season, from the forest. A meal is prepared from the bush ingredients at the end of the tour (Tourism Rotorua, 2007a). This attraction caters for small groups of tourists seeking a more personalised and unique Maori experience.

At Whakarewarewa Thermal Village, guides are available to explain about life in the village, including cooking meals in the thermal waters. Steam-cooked hangi meals are available from the cafe, as is corn cooked in the boiling cooking pool (see Figure 4.3) (Tourism Rotorua, 2007a). In another food experience, Tribal Lights Cultural Theatre and Dinner provides an interactive theatre which gives visitors the opportunity to be a part of the show, giving them first-hand experience of Maori culture. Visitors are asked to perform in a Maori concert, are recruited into

a war battle, learn a stick game, and swing a poi. Dinner is a roast buffet that is described as “a traditional meal in New Zealand since colonization” (Tribal Lights, 2007).

Figure 4.3: Cooking pool, Hell’s Gate



Source: Author (2008).

While the hangi has a long tradition in tourism in the district, there has been limited specific focus by Tourism Rotorua, or indeed the tourism or food industries, on regionally produced food, and tourism linkages and opportunities. The economy of the Rotorua district is based on four broad activity groupings: tourism; pastoral agriculture, which includes the production of venison, sheep and beef; forestry, logging and wood processing; and other service industries, such as retail trade, and financial and professional services (APR Consultants, 2005, p. 4). APR Consultants note:

... that although horticulture production remains a relatively minor industry in the Rotorua District (with approximately 500 hectares in production) there may be scope for introducing new crops based on specific soils and microclimates. There are also opportunities for the increased development of smaller lifestyle-type blocks involved in intensive horticulture and hydroponics.

(APR Consultants, 2005, p. 15)

Food crops currently commercially grown in the district include feijoas and blueberries. Although the blueberry farms export much of their produce, at one of the sites some of the berries are processed into blueberry wine and the *in situ* cafe produces a range of blueberry-based dishes. The owners of the blueberry winery actively encourage visitors to their shop and plant. This example represents the only attraction in the Rotorua district linking locally grown food and tourism. While food is produced in the district, it appears that the links between producer and local consumer are tenuous at best; for example, little of the meat is available for local purchase. Produce from the 'lifestyle' farming community is currently also only available through ad hoc, informal channels or from gate sales. The above statement by APR consultants also recognises the potential for new and possibly specialised niche food crops that could be grown in the district. Trout from the region's lakes may also be enjoyed: although it is illegal to sell trout and hence trout does not appear on local menus, some up-market lodges will prepare and cook trout caught by guests, free of charge. It is also pertinent to note that there is no farmers' market in the district of Rotorua, although both Tauranga and Te Puke, located in Western Bay of Plenty, hold regular farmers' markets.

At this juncture it is important to point out that the Bay of Plenty region, in which Rotorua is located, is so named for its abundantly fertile soil and fish-filled ocean and lakes. The region enjoys a warm climate and reliable rainfall, ideal for growing fruit and vegetables. "In the Bay of Plenty, the food and beverage industry is the second largest in the region in terms of total output and the largest in terms of total international exports from the region" (Bay of Connections, 2009). Currently in the wider Bay of Plenty region, 11,500 hectares are now dedicated to fruit and vegetable growing. This includes a thriving kiwifruit industry, avocados and the production of avocado oil, tamarillos, feijoas, asparagus, citrus fruit, olives, apples,

melons and blueberries, with most of the large-scale commercial crops grown in the Western Bay of Plenty (APR Consultants, 2005, p. 15). Truffles and the largest plantings of ginseng in the southern hemisphere have been established, which offer further diversification of produce in the region (Bay of Connections, 2009). From this it can be seen that the produce is high value. It is also acknowledged that the superior quality, nutritional value and health-care benefits inherent in Bay of Plenty produce such as kiwifruit, honey and avocados, means there is excellent potential to add value to these products (Bay of Connections, 2009).

The horticulture industry in the region is generally characterised by small owner-operated enterprises (APR Consultants, 2005, p. 15). Of note is the fact that 80 per cent of New Zealand's kiwifruit crop and 70 per cent of its avocado crop is grown in the Western Bay of Plenty (Bay of Connections, 2009). There are also three vineyards in the region (Business and Economic Research Limited (BERL), 2007). The fact that regional food and wine trails have become successful attractions in some regions of New Zealand – for example, Hawke's Bay has an established wine and food trail for visitors – indicates that the Bay of Plenty region could also emulate this type of enterprise. Based on experience of food trails in Austria, Meyer-Czech (2003, p. 155) writes that it is the "personal relationships underlying the organisation of food trails that are the crucial factor in a trail's success or failure." Myer-Czech goes on to state that many food trails start at an informal level, set up by friends and acquaintances with entrepreneurial passion and drive.

Fifty per cent of the region's apple, kiwifruit and avocado crops are exported to Australia and Asia (BERL, 2007). Some produce is sold locally; this includes produce sold at the farm gate as well as at the farmers' market in Tauranga and in local supermarkets and stores. The remainder of the produce is transported to Auckland for national distribution (BERL, 2007) where it may re-appear for sale in Rotorua supermarkets, although produce is not labelled with specific regional origin. The implications of this is that while restaurants in Tauranga have access to these crops and food products, restaurants in other parts of the region do not have direct or consistent access to this produce. Identifying locally grown produce on

restaurant menus is a key backward link between tourism and local growers when seeking to utilise food in tourism (Hall, 2002).

Hall and Jenkins (1998) also report that a major problem for initiatives which set out to support regional development is the failure of the initiators to set up workable networks that encourage collaboration between stakeholders and working towards common goals. The Food Bay of Plenty cluster group was set up in 1998 to represent the interests of the region's food-processing sector. It provides opportunities for members to share information and technical expertise, and to work together on research-based projects, with an aim to maximise industry 'best practice' and assist members to grow their businesses. Currently the group has 55 members. The overarching focus of the group is to ensure the Bay of Plenty food sector remains an economically sustainable contributor within the community. However, inter-sector cluster groups that link primary food producers and tourism have yet to eventuate.

Destination Rotorua has been involved with a number of tourism clusters over the past five years:

- Rotorua Luxury Cluster
- Maori Tourism Rotorua
- Rotorua Backpacker Adventure Network (currently disbanded but RTO-coordinated backpacker marketing activity continues on a project-by-project basis)
- Rotorua Cruise Cluster, which loosely comes together in the lead up to and during the cruise season
- Rotorua Spa and Wellness Cluster, which has come and gone over the years and currently is not in existence, although there is sentiment from some operators to regroup
- Rotorua Sustainable Tourism Charter Group, and
- Rotorua Education Network.

(George, personal communication, December, 2009)

There are also a number of marketing collectives currently in existence. These are independent groups that have made themselves known to Destination Rotorua and requested assistance in creating awareness through inclusion in newsletters and publications. They are:

- Five Star Attractions: Te Puia; Polynesian Spa; Skyline Skyrides
- Tarawera Legacy: Rotorua Musuem; Whakarewarewa Thermal Village; The Buried Village
- Unforgettable Rotorua: Off Road NZ; Helipro; Clearwater Charters
- Agroventures: Rotorua Bungy/Swoop; Agrojet; Shweeb; Freefall Xtreme
- Rotorua Combos: Agrojet; Swoop; Kaitiaki; NZONE; Zorb; Helipro; Kaituna Jet; Off Road NZ; Skyline Skyrides; Multi-Day Adventures, and
- Wairoto Rotorua Lakefront Experience: Volcanic Air; Kjet; Mana Adventures; Lakeland Queen.

(George, personal communication, December, 2009)

Currently there are no marketing collectives or cluster groups promoting linkages between food and tourism in Rotorua (George, personal communication, 2009).

These tourism clusters and marketing collectives represent the manifestation of a collaborative approach to regional tourism development as advocated by the principles of the 'New Regionalism' discussed in Chapter 2. This includes changing emphasis in governance of regional development from a primarily sector-based approach to a territorially based one.

This chapter confirms the view of the previous chapter that New Zealand and, more specifically, Rotorua have many potential strengths and opportunities for the integration of food in tourism. There is a wide range of food production throughout the Bay of Plenty region that could be used to enhance Rotorua's array of tourism attractions and add to regional diversity. Tourism in Rotorua also holds potential for food producers to market their products and build closer links directly with the consumer. However, this chapter also indicates that at present there is limited linkage between local food and tourism, and indeed, little in the way of close links

between producer and consumer in Rotorua. There is some evidence of food producer collaboration and networking in the wider Bay of Plenty. The conclusion is that food is an under-used resource in the district, with great potential to help realise some of the goals of the Rotorua and national tourism strategies. The next chapter seeks to contextualise and underpin arguments for a greater role for food in tourism in Rotorua as a means of regional development.

CHAPTER FIVE

FOOD IN TOURISM PROMOTIONS IN ROTORUA AND IN NEW ZEALAND

This chapter presents data depicting the role that food currently plays in tourism place promotion in New Zealand and, in particular, Rotorua. The data was collected through a content analysis of national and regional tourism promotional material. The chapter is based on the premise identified in the literature review that the promotional relationship and linkage between food and tourism can be of potential benefit to not only the food and tourism industries but also the region: place can be used to promote local food and the associated food industry, while food can be used to enhance the local tourism industry. The research indicates that there are some regions in New Zealand with strong food and tourism links and other regions where food plays a minimal role in tourism.

In conducting the research, the marketing materials analysed were 'Taste New Zealand' web pages; Tourism New Zealand's *The Gourmet's Garden* web links; Regional Tourism Organisations' websites; and Regional Tourism Organisations' brochures (Table 5.1). *The Gourmet's Garden* web links are part of a Tourism New Zealand features promotion incorporating three interrelated subject areas: food, wine, and flora and fauna. As the interest in the food of destinations has grown, food has begun to be recognised as having significant impact on the tourist decision-making process, and its consumption an important aspect of visitor satisfaction (Hall, Mitchell and Sharples, 2003). These particular web pages and brochures were selected for analysis because 'official' destination promotional materials have become an important resource for consumers to gain information and are proving to be an effective marketing tool for suppliers (Kim, Yuan, Goh and Antun, 2009).

Table 5.1: Brochures and websites used in the content analysis of marketing material

The food and wine regions as defined by Taste New Zealand's web pages	RTO web pages	RTO brochures	<i>The Gourmet's Garden</i> web links
<u>Auckland–Northland</u> Auckland Bay of Islands Kerikeri and Whangarei	Northland 'food and wine' Auckland 'food and wine'	Auckland Northland	Auckland
<u>Central North Island</u> Hawke's Bay Gisborne Rotorua and Taupo	Taupo 'cuisine', Rotorua 'dining and entertainment' Bay of Plenty 'Taste the Bay' Hawke's Bay food and wine	Rotorua Bay of Plenty Hawke's Bay Gisborne Taupo	Rotorua Bay of Plenty Gisborne Hawke's Bay
<u>Western North Island</u> Taranaki Wanganui Palmerston North	Taranaki 'food and wine' Wanganui	Taranaki Wanganui	Taranaki.
<u>Wellington–Wairarapa</u> Wellington, Kapiti Coast Martinborough Featherston	Wairarapa 'food and wine' Wellington	Wairarapa Wellington	Wairarapa,
<u>Nelson–Marlborough</u> Marlborough Nelson and Motueka, Golden Bay	Nelson 'food and wine' Marlborough 'wine and food'	Marlborough Nelson	Marlborough
<u>Canterbury–West Coast</u> Waipara and Kaikoura Hanmer Springs Christchurch Mackenzie Country Hokitika Greymouth	Christchurch and Canterbury 'winning and dining'	Canterbury	Canterbury West Coast
<u>Dunedin, Coastal Otago and Southland</u> Dunedin Oamaru Southland	Dunedin 'dining and restaurants'	Dunedin Southland	Southland
<u>Southern Lakes</u> Queenstown Wanaka Cromwell	Queenstown 'food and wine'	Queenstown	Central Otago

By examining these resources it was possible to ascertain the importance placed on food by Tourism New Zealand and the RTOs, in particular Tourism Rotorua. A study of the food themes and the types of foods displayed in the promotional materials also made it possible to investigate how different food images are used in specific destinations' positioning strategies. The web pages were accessed during the period of July to September 2007. In addition, the official regional tourism brochures for 2007 were also reviewed. In total, thirty-six Internet sites and seventeen brochures were surveyed for food promotions.

5.1 Food and tourism in place promotion of New Zealand

The home page of the Tourism New Zealand (2007a) website, newzealand.com, provided a direct link to New Zealand's food and wine. When following this link, the slogan *Taste New Zealand Food and Wine* appeared. The food and wine web page began with the following introduction, which immediately positioned food as a key tourist attraction:

When you reflect on what attracts you to New Zealand, it's likely that astounding landscapes and energising outdoor activities are high on the list. But feedback from travellers puts our food and wine experiences up there with the scenery ...

(Tourism New Zealand, 2007b).

The main body of the text provided a general overview of regional food in New Zealand; for example:

When it comes to food, every region of New Zealand has its specialities. Northland has award-winning cheeses and subtropical fruit. Rotorua is the place for a hangi – a traditional Maori feast cooked in an underground oven. Marlborough is the place for scallops and green lipped mussels. Canterbury serves up the very best rack of lamb. And in Bluff a foodie's world revolves around the biggest, fattest oysters you've ever seen ...

(Tourism New Zealand, 2007b).

Links to 'New Zealand Dining', featuring some of the "outstanding eating establishments", and food and wine sightseeing tours were available, as well as a slide show providing a "visual feast of New Zealand food, wine and scenery" (Tourism New Zealand, 2007b). In exploring the hyperlink 'New Zealand Dining', the site offered seven commercial listings pertaining to specific

restaurants, food tours, and boutique lodges offering luxury accommodation and food. The slide show predominantly featured wineries, although reference was also made to “local delicacies”; for example:

There are certain foods that you simply have to try while you're travelling around New Zealand. Smoked eel is tender and delicious. Other local specialities include whitebait (usually served as fritters), paua (abalone), green-lipped mussels and South Island smoked salmon. Give your tastebuds the trip of a lifetime!

(Tourism New Zealand, 2007b).

These opening web pages, therefore, directly linked food and tourism and through the text emphasised national, regional and local foods as a main attraction. This is a significant observation for this study because it is an indication of the importance that Tourism New Zealand attaches to food in tourism. Conspicuously featured links, listed at the top of the *Taste New Zealand* home page, provided access to eight *Taste New Zealand Food and Wine* regions (see Table 5.1). These web pages also provided regional maps and photographic inserts for enlargement, with a variety of themes such as scenery and culture. There were ‘feature activities’ such as visiting National Parks and scenic driving tours, as well as food and wine tours. Links were also provided to regional websites produced by Regional Tourism Organisations (RTOs).

The information provided on the *Taste* web pages in 2007 was specifically designed to emphasise regional food specialities on offer and “things to see and do”. For example, the Central North Island web page, which encompasses Rotorua, referred to two touring routes, both ending in the Hawke’s Bay. The significance of Hawke’s Bay (as explained on the web page) is that it is a premier food and wine destination. The *Thermal Explorer Highway* (which includes Rotorua) leads to geothermally farmed prawns and traditional hangi food, and the *Pacific Explorer Highway*, a coastal route, features seafood and fruit. When in Rotorua the reader is invited to:

Arrange an indigenous food tour with an innovative Maori chef who uses his knowledge of traditional cooking methods and native herbs to keep you entertained and well fed. Or, for an

authentic historic experience, book a tour at the Tamaki Maori Village. A hangi feast, cooked in an earth oven, is part of the entertainment.

(Tourism New Zealand, 2007d).

From the words used in this excerpt, such as 'authentic', 'traditional', 'native' and 'historic', it can be inferred that Rotorua is being projected as a destination that offers unique Maori cultural food experiences rather than a place that offers locally grown foods. The Rotorua example can be contrasted with the *Taste New Zealand Food and Wine* Internet site pertaining to the district of Canterbury, which states that Canterbury offers "a veritable feast of fresh food and wine experiences for the adventurous gastro-tourist." Mention was made of a local food and wine tour operator offering "a tantalizing journey to boutique producers of wine, beer, olives, cheese, eel, salmon, ostrich, lamb, beef, berries, herbs, hazelnuts, honey and chocolate" (Tourism New Zealand, 2007h).

Despite its opening web page positioning food as central to the tourism experience, *Taste New Zealand's* regional web pages suggest that food provides support and 'value-added' to other attractions rather than being the main attraction itself. This is because food and wine are integrated with other tourism experiences, such as heritage tourism, local scenery (see Figure 5.1 and Table 5.2), and events. The low frequency of food images in comparison with 'other' images (see Table 5.2) confirms this observation. For example, across all the regions there were only three actual pictures of food. The remaining six images in the 'frequency of food and food-related images' category (see Table 5.2) were of restaurant or cafe scenes.

Figure 5.1: Scenery and food, Queenstown



Source: Tourism New Zealand (2007j).

Table 5.2: Frequency of images, *Taste New Zealand's* regional web materials

Taste New Zealand wine and food regions	Frequency of food and food-related images	Frequency of wine images	Frequency of 'other'
Auckland to Northland	2	2	0
Central North Island, including Rotorua	2	1	1
Western North Island	1	0	2
Wellington to Wairapa	1	1	0
Nelson – Marlborough	1	2	0
Canterbury–West Coast	2	1	3
Dunedin, Coastal Otago and Southland	1	0	3
Southern Lakes	0	2	2
Total	11	9	11

A further link to *The Gourmet's Garden* feature activity is also provided on the *Taste New Zealand Food and Wine* home page. This portal invited the reader to take a gourmet's tour of the regions. The web pages for each of the gourmet regions provided a personal touch in the linking of food and tourism, with a 'guided tour' and 'stories' from a world-renowned New Zealand 'food expert'. For example,

... paua was a real treat as a kid. My Dad and stepmother would make minced paua fritters or simply fry them whole, once you remove the beak, on a makeshift barbecue at the beach. I've also eaten spankingly fresh paua as sashimi.

(Tourism New Zealand 2007I).

Information about ingredients such as whitebait and how to cook it was provided, along with suggestions for local restaurants to visit and food events to attend. The following is an excerpt from the West Coast *Gourmet's Garden*:

One food event that's top of my list of must-sees is the Wild Foods Festival which attracts thousands of visitors to Hokitika each year. Here the emphasis is on quirky, tasty or healthy wild foods, from possum to snails to the local huhu grub. People dress up in costume, there's loads of entertainment and a real West Coast party atmosphere.

(Tourism New Zealand 2005c).

The use of a 'food expert' was designed to add a sense of authenticity and authority to the food as well as emphasise the quality and the variety of the food available in the regions. *The Gourmet's Garden* web pages also incorporated a travel planner, which enabled viewers to bookmark destinations of interest and to organise and map 'collected' items. Two of *The Gourmet's Garden* web pages, Canterbury and Taranaki, provided a link to recipe sites. For example, the Taranaki *Gourmet's Garden* page made reference to a recipe using tamarillo fruit, a New Zealand speciality. Brooker (2001, p. 5), in her guide to New Zealand food, points out that there is no point knowing where to source local speciality ingredients if the visitor does not know how to use them. This is a particularly important point given the number of independent, self-catering tourists travelling in New Zealand.

The Gourmet's Garden web pages also signposted regional delicacies and food events such as food festivals in the regions. For example, *The Gourmet's Garden* Southland regional web pages made reference to muttonbird as a delicacy from the region. Maori cultural aspects of this food was emphasised and a sense of uniqueness and of a very special experience is generated through the text. The muttonbird hunting grounds were described as “the preserve of the Rakiura Maori and forbidden to visitors” and the muttonbird itself as a traditional Maori food source (Tourism New Zealand, 2005a).

5.2 Regional Tourism Organisations: promotion of food

The RTOs' website information about available food experiences and regional specialities was not as comprehensive as the Tourism New Zealand web pages. In most cases an overview of the region was provided with emphasis on sights and sightseeing. Regional branding was also emphasised with slogans such as “you're going to love Marlborough” (Destination Marlborough, 2007a) and “Lake Taupo think fresh” (Destination Lake Taupo, 2007a) as well as regional logos. Christchurch and Canterbury marketed themselves as destinations “where gourmands and gourmets, gastronomes and gluttons gather” (Tourism Christchurch and Canterbury, 2007b); yet, even so, food was not presented as a special feature in the Christchurch and Canterbury marketing material that was reviewed (see Table 5.3).

Of note was that six (including Rotorua) of the sixteen destinations provided no images of food on the regional websites (see Table 5.3), while only five destinations (none of them Rotorua) mentioned food in the text on the home page. Of the sixteen regional websites analysed, six destinations provided special food features — but not Rotorua. This indicates that Tourism Rotorua chose not to focus on food and had not embraced the potentialities of linking food and tourism in the promotion of place.

Table 5.3: Food promotion RTO websites

RTO Website	Frequency of food images	Food mentioned in home page text	Special food feature	Restaurant/ Dining list
Northland	3	No	Yes	Yes
Auckland	2	No	No	No
Rotorua	0	No	No	Yes
Bay of Plenty	1	No	Yes	Yes
Hawke's Bay	2	Yes	Yes	Yes
Taupo	0	No	No	Yes
Taranaki	0	No	No	No
Wanganui	0	No	No	Yes
Wairarapa	2	No	Yes	Yes
Wellington	3	No	No	Yes
Marlborough	1	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nelson	2	Yes	Yes	Yes
Canterbury	3	No	No	Yes
Dunedin	2	No	No	Yes
Southland	0	Yes	No	No
Queenstown	0	Yes	No	Yes

A destination that heavily promoted food and wine in tourism was Hawke's Bay: they have their "Wine Country" branding and the website provided an Internet portal dedicated to *Discover Hawke's Bay Food*. This portal afforded an overview of the *Wine Country Food Trail* which featured "eighty-five stops and provides food-lovers with a complete gourmet experience". This is a direct appeal to 'special interest' food tourists with the possibility of making Hawke's Bay a stand-alone destination for this type of visitor. The portal also introduced the Hawke's Bay Food Group – a group of local producers that have joined forces "to raise the profile of Hawke's Bay produce through activities within the region and around the country" (Hawke's Bay Tourism, 2007a). The value of networks and cluster groups and the importance of a local food champion in the New Zealand context have been highlighted in the literature review.

According to Internet text in the food feature:

... the two main cities in the region, Napier and Hastings, both feature busy weekend farmers' markets selling seasonal local produce, including strawberries and asparagus in spring, berries and stone-fruit in summer, avocados and olive oil in autumn and citrus fruit in winter.

(Tourism New Zealand, 2007d).

The text also stated that "some of the best places to buy Hawke's Bay produce are at its markets." This suggests the opportunity for tourists to meet with local producers, enhancing the authenticity of the visit. The literature review for this thesis emphasises farmers' markets as integral to place marketing and establishing regional identity. The Tourism Northland website also provided comprehensive information about food in the region as well as acknowledgement of local "food heroes", including named photographs of individuals and their contribution to food in the region. There was also a feature on farmers' markets and a food and wine trail and map. This contributes to a sense of 'real people and real food'.

In another example linking food and place, Southland RTO Internet marketing invited the reader to "savour the best that New Zealand has to offer by eating one of the world's great delicacies at its source": the Bluff Oyster (see Figure 5.2). Rusher (2003, 193) reports that the audience for the Bluff Oyster Festival has grown to include international visitors as well as attracting visitors from other parts of New Zealand. The Bluff Oyster, as the regional food product of Southland, is the symbol of the values of the Invercargill and Bluff communities. Rusher (2003, 199) maintains that festival attendees are fulfilling self-actualisation and authenticity needs, and at the same time are also "endorsing the cultural values of the community by purchasing food (and wine) products symbolic of the region." The visual aspect created by the image in Figure 5.2 presents food within the tourism context as a means of personal indulgence, and appeals as a symbol of social status.

Figure 5.2: Enjoying a Bluff Oyster



Source: Tourism New Zealand (2005a).

The Tourism New Zealand and Regional Tourism Organisations' websites provided easy access to comprehensive food information. Hyperlinks were conspicuous, covering visitor food experiences available both in New Zealand generally and in the regions. In comparison, when researching food tourism information provision on the web in general, Boyne, Hall and Williams (2003, p. 143) found that in many cases, navigating national or regional tourist websites with existing food-related tourism initiatives, food information or hyperlinks to the food tourism websites proved "difficult or at worst impossible" to find.

Overall images of cuisine were vibrant and colourful in both the brochures and on the Internet (see Figure 5.3). This is in contrast with some of the images on *The Gourmet's Garden* web pages which, although relevant to the text, appeared 'detached' or 'stuck on'; for example, oysters were presented on a blank background where it would be usual for shellfish to be pictured on a plate, in a restaurant setting or in a natural context. Also, three of the images presented on *The Gourmet's Garden* portals were repeated on the *Taste New Zealand* regional web pages.

Given that food and images of food “may be used as a potential vehicle to sharpen destination image and ascertain their uniqueness in comparison to other countries” (Frochot, 2003, p. 94), it is important to portray food as attractively as possible and present as great a variety of images as possible. Reilly (1998) recommends that if the photographic images used in brochures and any other promotional material are not good, it is better not to use the images at all because they may contribute to a negative perception of the destination rather than a positive outcome.

Figure 5.3: Nelson scallops



Source: Latitude Nelson (2007a).

5.2.1 Regional tourism brochures

Of the 17 regional tourism brochures that were analysed, all included a wining and dining section; however, nine (including Rotorua) did not have a specific food feature (see Table 5.4). In the brochures that did have a specific food feature, food was highlighted as a major attraction of the district. This positioning suggests that food is clearly linked with the destination's place identity and is a key part of the tourism experience. Hawke's Bay RTO provided the most food coverage at 20%, having clearly identified local food as an important attraction in the region. Mention was made of the fact that Hawke's Bay is home to food producer Watties, as well as the region's "rich and proud agricultural heritage" (Hawke's Bay Tourism, 2007b). Emphasis was placed on regional and local produce, and included wineries, orchards and artisan food producers. Apart from proclaiming "this region is truly a gourmet paradise", note was also made of "renowned local chefs creating fresh seasonal dishes using

high quality local produce". (See Table 5.5 for the geographic focus of food promotions).

Place marketing for Marlborough and Nelson also conspicuously featured local food. The region was depicted as a gourmet food tourism destination where visitors may sample healthy, quality regional produce. Abundance of produce was emphasised, with nine images of fresh ingredients such as apples, berries and fresh vegetables featuring in the Nelson brochure. The culinary approach throughout the Nelson region is described as "slow food". i.e. the food experience is about "creating rather than producing, and savouring rather than consuming" (Latitude Nelson, 2007a). The Latitude Nelson brochure invited the reader to "revel in our culture and cuisine" and emphasised creative cuisine "with quality, fresh ingredients on hand and endless inspiration – the region's chefs, winemakers, gourmet food producers and bakers create heavenly offerings for you to enjoy" (Latitude Nelson, 2007a). The prospect of meeting with producers and local people was also emphasised with images of locals and tourists enjoying food in various settings. People visiting this region could thus expect a warm welcome and the opportunity to meet like-minded New Zealanders who are passionate about quality food, further enhancing the authenticity of the visit.

The Tourism Northland (2007b) brochure emphasised "an abundance of fresh local produce and seafood and world-class cuisine". There were two images of local produce and one image of people enjoying food in a hospitality setting. The scenery was also described as "simply out of this world, with waterside locations, coastal views and distinctive architecture that are as mouth-watering as any meal". Food obviously plays a central role in the marketing positioning of Northland as a tourism destination. Images conveyed a message of authenticity, cultural traditions, and abundance of fresh, locally grown, quality ingredients.

The above examples provide a direct contrast to Rotorua which, at 3%, had the least food coverage of all the 2007 brochures (see Table 5.4). From this it can be inferred that food is not an important attraction in Rotorua. Although the Rotorua district brochure included a wining and dining list, local food was not

featured in a separate section; instead, food was included in the ‘dining, transport and services’ section of the brochure. This further reinforces the notion that Tourism Rotorua did not view food as an attraction, but rather as part of the service infrastructure for tourists.

Table 5.4: Food coverage in RTO brochures

RTO brochure	Total pages of brochures	Percentage and number of food pages including wining and dining	Specific food feature
Northland	97	4% (4)	Yes
Auckland	102	4.9% (5)	Yes
Rotorua	61	3% (2)	No
Bay of Plenty	79	8.8% (7)	No
Hawke’s Bay	69	20% (14)	Yes
Gisborne	63	7.9% (5)	No
Taupo	48	4% (2)	No
Taranaki	49	6% (2)	Yes
Wanganui	41	4.8% (2)	No
Wairarapa	87	6% (5.5)	Yes
Wellington	71	4% (3)	No
Marlborough	65	15% (10)	Yes
Nelson	57	14% (8)	Yes
Canterbury	95	17% (16)	No
Dunedin	54	7% (4)	No
Southland	103	4% (4)	No
Queenstown	18	5.5% (1)	Yes

Where food was not promoted as a feature (see Table 5.4), on average one paragraph of textual information about available food on offer was supplied; the remainder of the brochure featured food as part of the shopping, entertainment, and wining and dining guide, with lists of restaurants and a variety of available cuisines. Wellington rated itself as “rivalling the world’s top culinary destinations for flavour and variety” and as “New Zealand’s ultimate urban destination and New Zealand’s culinary capital and a food lover’s paradise” (Positively Wellington, 2007); however, it did not back this claim up in the brochures or in the RTO website material on food in the region. For example, Table 5.4 shows

that only four per cent of the images and text in the Wellington regional brochure were dedicated to food, nor was food presented as a specific feature in the Wellington brochure.

An overview of the geographic focus of food promotions is provided in Table 5.5. Food promotions generally had a national focus as well as a regional and local focus; six out of the sixteen destinations also promoted an international food orientation. Food was certainly not indicative of place in the promotion of Rotorua. For example, the following excerpt was the only mention made of food and dining in Rotorua, apart from the restaurant list:

With more than 50 restaurants to choose from, Rotorua offers a wide range of casual and fine dining options. Chinese, Japanese, Italian, Korean, Mexican, Indian, Mediterranean and European restaurants abound. Visitors to the city should also try a traditional Maori hangi.

(Tourism Rotorua (2007a).

It can be seen from this excerpt and in Table 5.5 that food in Rotorua has a predominantly international focus. Queenstown food promotions also focus on international foods. One interpretation for this finding could be attributed to the large numbers of international tourists visiting the two destinations and the need to provide familiar foods for these tourists. International foods may also cater to the needs of domestic visitors looking for something new and different. Nevertheless, for these destinations, little attempt was made to associate food with 'place'.

Table 5.5: RTO brochures: geographic focus of food promotion

Region	Local	Regional	National	International
Northland	√	√	X	X
Auckland	X	√	√	√
Rotorua	X	X	√	√
Bay of Plenty	X	√	√	X
Hawke's Bay	√	√	X	X
Taupo	X	X	√	X
Taranaki	√	X	X	√
Wanganui	X	X	√	X
Wairarapa	√	√	X	X
Wellington	X	√	X	X
Marlborough	√	√	X	X
Nelson	√	√	X	X
Canterbury	√	X	√	√
Dunedin	X	X	√	√
Southland	√	X	√	X
Queenstown	X	X	√	√
Total	8	8	9	6

The brochures predominantly featured images of people and food, conveying the message of a relaxed, outdoor lifestyle in New Zealand. An example of this is the front page of Tourism Marlborough's brochure which featured alfresco dining in a vineyard (see Figure 5.4):

Figure 5.4: Alfresco dining, Marlborough



Source: Destination Marlborough (2007a).

5.3 Range and types of food promoted

Content analysis reveals the range and types of food that were promoted by both Tourism New Zealand and Regional Tourism Organisations on their websites and in their brochures (see Table 5.6). The list offers a large array of locally grown and produced, top-end products. Seafood was the most heavily promoted of all the foods in both the web pages and in the regional brochures. For example, 'Food expert' Peter Gordon provided the following narrative on *The Gourmet's Garden* Marlborough web page:

You just can't go past the local products here, especially New Zealand salmon. I love hot smoked salmon, which is produced by smoking whole fillets at very high heat. When freshly done it is delicious flaked into a salad served simply with some coriander, basil, a little chilli and watercress. The large native green shell mussels are exquisite and I like to serve them in huge bowls, steamed in their shells with a splash of local sauvignon blanc and olive oil, some fresh tomatoes and basil.

(Tourism New Zealand, 2007k).

Table 5.6: Key foods, in order of importance, used to promote New Zealand cuisine

Foods
1. Fish and seafood, e.g. salmon, eel, snapper, crayfish, scallops, oysters, paua, whitebait
2. Beef
3. Lamb
4. Cheese
5. Oils, e.g. avocado, olive, hazelnut, walnut
6. Fruit including exotic fruits, e.g. red pineapple, kiwifruit, feijoa
7. Vegetables, e.g. kumara
8. Nuts
9. Venison
10. Honey products
11. Indigenous herbs
12. Chocolates
13. Game and small goods such as salami
14. Artisan breads
15. Artisan preserves and chutneys
16. Hot and cold smoked seafood and meats
17. Speciality ice cream

Lamb was only very briefly mentioned in both website and brochure text, although one image of a lamb dish (see Figure 5.5) was provided on the Canterbury RTO website. This is despite the fact that Canterbury lamb has a national reputation for quality.

Figure 5.5: Canterbury lamb



Source: Tourism Christchurch and Canterbury (2007a).

Emphasis was also placed on home-grown and handmade artisan foods such as oils, cheeses, chocolates and speciality breads. For example, in an excerpt by Tourism New Zealand on Nelson–Marlborough, the following description was provided:

If you're driving around the region, keep your eye out for eating opportunities. A variety of artisan food producers will tempt you with breads, chocolates, pesto, chutneys, honeys and jams, fine meats and salami. At Mapua there's a smokehouse with an adjacent café – the menu includes fish, mussels and vegetables delicately hot smoked on site. In Motueka you'll find superb organic café food ...

Tourism New Zealand (2007g)

Typical also of the *Taste New Zealand* pages was the following food write-up for Cromwell in the South Island, highlighting the variety of ingredients:

The nearby Cromwell basin is home to acclaimed vineyards and producers of fine foods. Wild thyme honey, saffron, blueberries, stone fruit, olives, walnuts, and fresh vegetables are just some of the ingredients local chefs have available. Most producers welcome visitors and many offer informed tours...

(Tourism New Zealand, 2007j)

These foods are generally top-quality, gourmet foods that would appeal to and perhaps be more affordable for wealthier tourists and New Zealand's target market, the Interactive Traveller. The list indicated in Table 5.6 was then compared with key foods used to promote food in Rotorua (see Table 5.7). From this comparison it can be clearly seen that some of the produce used to promote Rotorua cuisine – for example, pork bones – is less likely to be considered gourmet ingredients by visiting wealthy tourists.

Table 5.7: Key foods used to promote Rotorua cuisine

Puha
Pork bones
Vegetables
Meat
Fish
Shellfish
Trout

A content analysis of adjectives used to describe New Zealand cuisine on the web pages and brochures surveyed is provided in Table 5.8. The table

compares the twenty most frequently used adjectives across the different marketing promotions, and gives a combined total of frequency. 'Fresh', 'local', and 'quality' were the most often repeated adjectives, strengthening the perception that New Zealand produces top-quality food. Words such as 'boutique', 'gourmet', and 'speciality', indicating artisan, high-end produce, also reinforce this message. In addition, food was described as 'organic', 'home-grown' and 'seasonal', emphasising healthy eating in New Zealand (see Figure 5.6) and making the association with New Zealand's 'clean, green image'. Overall a greater number of food adjectives were used to describe food in the RTO brochures than in the websites. One possible reason for this is that brochures need to be more highly descriptive to hold consumer attention compared with websites, which are generally more interactive, animated and visually appealing.

The text was 'up-beat' and descriptive, with culinary dishes often expressed as 'brilliant', 'fantastic', 'tasty' and 'succulent'. The word 'traditional' was most often used in conjunction with hangi food and Maori cooking, implying authentic food. People who may have a focal interest in food were referred to as connoisseurs, gastro-tourists, foodies, gourmets and food-lovers, further enhancing New Zealand's image as a culinary destination and appealing to more status-orientated, wealthy visitors with sophisticated tastes in food.

Figure 5.6: Fresh and healthy



Source: Tourism Auckland (2007a).

Table 5.8: Key adjectives used to describe New Zealand cuisine

Ranked key adjectives	Frequency of use				
	<i>Taste NZ</i> regional web pages	<i>The Gourmet'sGarden</i>	RTO websites	RTO brochures	Total
1. Fresh	12	18	13	20	63
2. Local	10	16	11	19	56
3. Quality	9	10	9	16	44
4. Gourmet	8	8	9	12	37
5. Organic	8	9	7	9	33
6. Artisan	6	7	7	8	28
7. Boutique	5	6	5	10	26
8. Delicious	4	6	5	8	23
9. Speciality	4	5	5	8	22
10. Seasonal	3	4	3	5	15
11. Traditional	3	4	2	4	13
12. Abundant	3	3	2	3	11
13. Brilliant	4	3	1	2	10
14. Excellent	2	3	2	3	10
15. Tasty	1	3	3	2	9
16. Succulent	2	3	1	3	9
17. Special	2	3	2	2	9
18. Home-grown	1	2	3	2	8
19. Fantastic	1	1	2	4	8
20. Indigenous	2	1	1	2	6
Total	91	114	93	142	440

Adjectives used to describe New Zealand cuisine were then compared with the key adjectives used to describe Rotorua cuisine (see Table 5.9). The adjectives were ranked across the spectrum of promotional materials analysed in the research. This outcome indicated a low-key focus on food in Rotorua, the adjectives used to describe the food being straightforward rather than highly descriptive. 'Fresh', 'local' and 'quality' did not appear in the list at all; however, 'traditional' is emphasised along with aspects of Maori cuisine. From this list (in particular, words such as 'casual', 'entertainment' and 'delicious') it can be inferred that the food in Rotorua is authentic and wholesome with general

appeal for all visitors. The international nature of food in Rotorua was once again emphasised.

Table 5.9: Key adjectives used to describe Rotorua cuisine

Ranked Key Adjectives	Frequency of use				
	<i>Taste NZ</i> regional web pagesb pages	<i>The Gourmet's Garden</i>	RTOweb sites	RTO brochures	Total
Traditional	1	3	2	1	7
Hangi food	1	1	1	1	4
Cafes	1	1	1	1	4
Restaurants	1	1	1	1	4
Food	1	1	1	1	4
International			1	2	3
Fine dining	1		1	1	3
Maori feast	1	1	1		3
Casual	1		1	1	3
Boiled food		2			2
Delicious		1			1
Succulent		1			1
Flavoursome		1			1
Authentic	1				1
Entertainment	1				1
Total	10	13	10	9	44

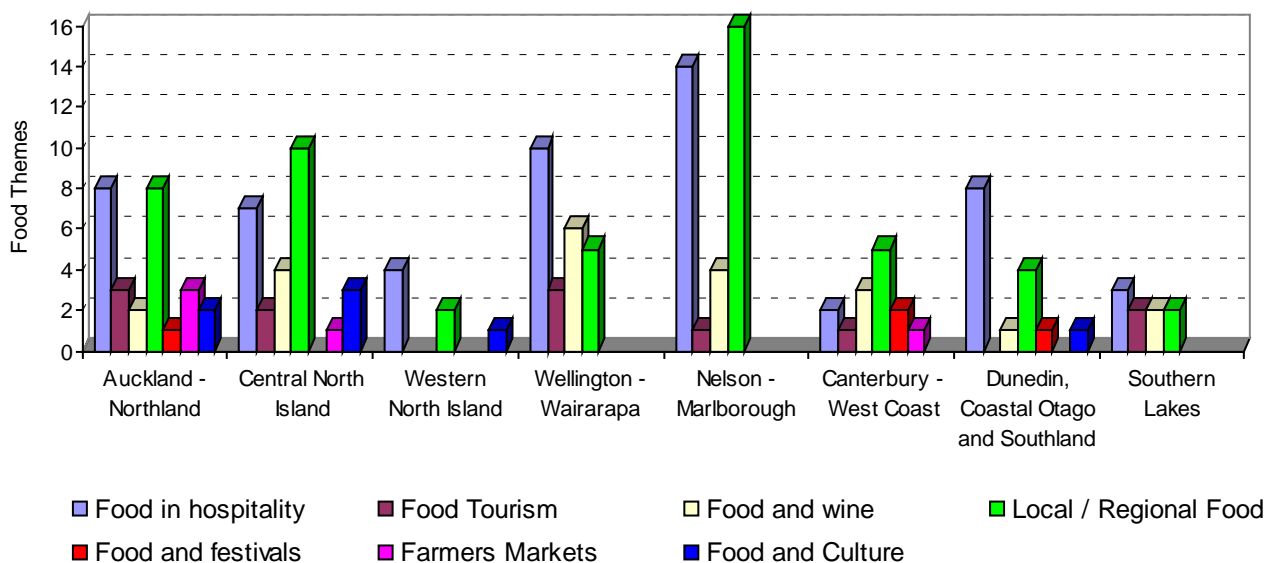
5.4 Food themes

Frochot (2003, p. 94) in her analysis of food images in French regional tourism brochures concluded that food images portrayed represent rural, country and authentic themes. Status, lifestyle and sharing food images were rare in French regional brochures. In addition, few RTOs used culinary or gastronomic images as identity markers, or to highlight regional cuisines and dishes. As a result, few of the food images reflected regional tourism destination positioning strategies.

Analysis of promotional material by du Rand and Heath (2006, p. 216) in South Africa also indicated very little use of food within the context of tourism, although there was a predominant focus on the promotion of restaurants. As explained in the methods section of this thesis, to understand the projected image of food in the marketing of the regions, pictorial images and text from the websites and brochures were categorised into seven themes. These themes and their frequency of use were compared across New Zealand regions – including Rotorua, in the Central North Island grouping (see Figure 5.7). The comparison revealed that food featured strongly within the context of hospitality in all of the regions studied; however, this is mainly in terms of commercial listings of restaurants, such as seen in the Rotorua material, with little information about the food itself.

However, unlike the findings of Frochot (2003) and du Rand (2006), Figure 5.7 also clearly indicates that food was used to market New Zealand as a tourism destination. Six of the eight regions analysed actively promoted food experiences. For example, visitors to the Central North Island could stay on a marae in Rotorua and experience traditional Maori hangi food. Other examples include Hawke's Bay offering a gourmet food trail including producers of cheese, honey, chocolates and olives, and Wellington, a 'walking gourmet' tour of the city; Wairarapa tourism suggesting a gourmet cycle tour; and in Marlborough, a winery and restaurant presenting their 'kitchen confidential' experience where guests are able to mingle with the chefs in the kitchen. Other food experiences in the regions indicate the wide variety available in New Zealand, such as a haggis ceremony at Larnach Castle, Dunedin; cooking lessons at the Auckland Fish Market; geothermal prawn farm visit, Taupo; and hunting for food by helicopter on the West Coast of the South Island.

Figure 5.7: Food themes in tourism marketing



Local food was strongly featured in all regions; for example:

Tiny native whitebait are caught in their thousands along West Coast river mouths. Combined with egg and a little flour, they make amazing fritters.

(Tourism New Zealand, 2005c)

Central Otago's special Mediterranean climate is perfect for growing juicy stone fruit bursting with flavour. The farming town of Alexandra is home of the golden apricot, and roadside stalls all over the region sell apricots, cherries, berries, apples and other seasonal fruit.

(Tourism New Zealand, 2005b)

The Bay of Plenty (2007b) regional visitor guide emphasises “waterfront dining, seafood cafes, award-winning wineries and top-end restaurants”. Mention was also made of “the abundance of vine-ripened fruit, fresh seafood and farm-fresh vegetables and meat” and the exceptional quality of natural ingredients. The visitor guide also promoted food tourism experiences; for example:

The Bay of Plenty is a huge bay with plenty of wonderful food experiences. If you want to see where kiwi fruit come from, Te Puke should be on your agenda. Hundreds of local growers produce millions of trays of green and luscious gold kiwifruit that are shipped worldwide. At Kiwi 360, you can have a kiwifruit theme park experience, complete with orchard tour and kiwi cuisine.

(Tourism Bay of Plenty, 2007b)

Four of the eight regions promoted food with regional brands: Canterbury lamb, Bluff oysters, Akaroa salmon, and Golden Bay scallops. Hall, Mitchell and Sharples (2003, p. 47) concluded that branding and marketing locally produced food products, particularly by using restaurants to present the local food to tourists, can have a substantial impact on local produce. Restaurants provide a guaranteed sales outlet for produce. In the Marlborough region of New Zealand this has assisted in the development and promotion of quality produce, and increased the diversity of artisan product available (Hall, Mitchell and Sharples, 2003, p. 47).

Several regions actively promoted food festivals such as the Taste Bay of Islands Food Festival, held in Paihia once a year; Whangarei's annual Taste Northland; the Hokitika Wild Foods Festival and the Bluff Oyster and Southland Seafood Festival. Hokitika Wild Foods Festival offers "extreme eating challenges, such as huhu grubs and fish eyes alongside more traditional delicacies of wild pork, venison and whitebait ... where the food is as wild as the landscape and often as pioneering as the people" (Tourism New Zealand, 2007h). The Hokitika Wild Foods Festival also provided a point of difference for New Zealand in terms of tourism marketing (see Figure 5.8).

Whilst Western visitors to New Zealand will generally be familiar with most of the cuisine on offer, Cohen and Avieli (2004, p. 760) point out that "tourists on a trip are often eager for new experiences and willing to take greater risks than in ordinary life". As indicated in the literature review, Hokitika Wild Foods Festival may stimulate visitors' neophylic tendencies, motivating them to try novel and strange foods. One of the impediments to new culinary experiences, according to Cohen and Avieli (2004, p. 760), is often revulsion with the local culinary 'situation', particularly in developing countries where there may be concern over associated health risks. This impediment does not apply in the case of Hokitika because Western standards of food preparation pertain; thus, tourists may indulge neophylic tendencies in a 'reduced-risk' environment. Clearly the Hokitika Wild Foods Festival represents fun and a chance to absorb local culture.

Figure 5.8: Wild Foods, Hokitika



Source: Tourism New Zealand (2007h).

Farmers' markets were also actively promoted in three destinations: Auckland–Northland, the Central North Island (although not in Rotorua), and Canterbury–West Coast. Copely and Robbison (1996) stress that local cultural experiences such as farmers' markets and local food festivals provide an opportunity for destinations to showcase and capitalise on rich cultural diversity and intangible heritage (see Figure 5.9).

Mathias writes in her *A Cook's Tour of New Zealand* :

New Zealand farmers' markets each have their own flavour and emphasis, and are strictly seasonal and strictly owner-operated. The person who grows the asparagus is the person behind the trestle; the eggs belong to the chook that belongs to the farmer you are in congress with, thus cutting out the middle man and keeping prices down. The simple fact is everyone likes farmers' markets – farmers, consumers, environmental groups and even the local councils, because they revitalise small towns.

Mathias (2005, p. 82)

Figure 5.9: Bay of Islands farmers' market, Kerikeri



Source: Destination Northland (2007a).

Maori and Pacific Island cultural food images were presented by four destinations: Auckland, Southland, Taranaki and the Waikato. Text in the Auckland brochure emphasised food within the context of culture. A photograph of taro (Figure 5.10) is provided, representative of food at the Otara Market. No information is given about what taro is or the cooking and eating of taro.

Figure 5.10: Taro, Otara Market, Auckland



Source: Tourism Auckland (2007b).

5.5 Summary

Rotorua is a destination endowed with both natural and cultural attractions. Content analysis of Tourism Rotorua marketing materials revealed food was not being used effectively to help fulfil the vision of Destination Rotorua (as outlined in Chapter Four), or to provide a unique selling point for the region. The Rotorua RTO website spanned all areas of tourism marketing, from leisure to business through to niche markets (Rotorua Tourism Advisory Board, 2007). A link from the home page to *Rotorua Dining and Entertainment* (Destination Rotorua Tourism Marketing, 2007a) emphasised international cuisine and hangi food, offering a “wide range of casual and fine dining options”. Rotorua web pages and the brochure did provide advertising space for a list of restaurants. No emphasis was placed on local cuisine and no descriptions of regional produce appeared. The overall ‘theme’ for the dining and entertainment pages was that of ‘food in hospitality’ rather than food as a tourist attraction or as a valuable tool that could be used to help market the region and add to a sense of ‘place’. A formal restaurant scene, (see Figure 5.11), reinforces a ‘food in hospitality theme’ with local professional wait-staff being very attentive towards guests who are obviously enjoying the experience.

Figure 5.11: Dining out in Rotorua



Source: Destination Rotorua Tourism Marketing (2007a).

The Gourmet's Garden web pages for the Bay of Plenty and Rotorua did include an image of hangi food (see Figure 5.12) which appears to depict cooked meat and raw vegetables – with less than appetising appeal.

Figure 5.12: Hangi food



Source: Tourism New Zealand (2005h).

A description of the hangi cooking process was provided on *The Gourmet's Garden* web page for the Rotorua region, ending with: “after hours of cooking, the most delicious, succulent, juicy food is taken out and you can feed a lot of people with very little effort” (Tourism New Zealand, 2005h). Puha ‘boil-up’ (similar to watercress with pork bones and potato) was also featured, and this, it was explained, “... is a hearty flavour-some winter dish best mopped up with Maori rewena bread.” These descriptions, in the author’s opinion, would do little to convince potential gourmets and tourists to New Zealand, and Rotorua in particular, that the food is noteworthy. Further to this, the text stated that “a freshly cooked trout on the barbecue is one food adventure no one should miss” (Tourism New Zealand, 2005h). Although the possibility of catching a trout may appeal to some, the fact was not explained that unless the tourist actually catches, prepares, and cooks the trout themselves, it is illegal for trout to appear on the menu.

Figure 5.12 was repeated on the *Taste New Zealand Central North Island* web pages. Here the emphasis was on food as entertainment. For example, an indigenous food tour will “keep you entertained and well fed”. Or, “for an authentic historic experience, book a tour at the Tamaki Maori Village. A hangi

feast, cooked in an earth oven, is part of the entertainment” (Tourism New Zealand, 2007d). Unlike other regions featured on the *Taste New Zealand* web pages, no mention was made of alternative regional cuisine or of local restaurants featuring food grown and produced in the district.

In the RTO brochure, dining was included in a subsection along with transport and services. This provides a clear indication of the lack of value placed on food by Destination Rotorua as both a vital component of the tourism experience and a potential marker of regional identity. It also ignores the fact that food is integral to today’s lifestyle and is a status commodity for many visitors (Frochot, 2002; du Rand et al., 2002; Hall et al., 2003; Wolf, 2006). A short description of the dining opportunities outlined the different cuisines available in Rotorua: Korean, Thai, Japanese, Indian, Chinese, Turkish, Italian, Greek, Mexican and Mediterranean. Rotorua was marketed as “the heartland of New Zealand Maori culture”. Despite this, and the recommendation that visitors to the city try a traditional Maori hangi, there was little information about hangi food included in the brochure.

The following key points have emerged from the content analysis of marketing materials:

- (1) Tourism New Zealand positioned food as a key tourist attraction.
- (2) This positioning, however, was not reflected in the majority of regional marketing promotions. Analysis of RTO marketing material indicated that food was not used to its full potential in place marketing of some destinations.
- (3) This shortcoming was particularly noticeable in the promotion of Rotorua. In the face of globalisation and the challenges posed by-ever increasing homogenisation of food and cuisine (Rotherham, 2008), Rotorua has a distinct advantage over many regions in New Zealand in that it is able to offer a distinguishable cultural food product to tourists that is indelibly linked to the ‘place’ of Rotorua – visitors literally get to ‘taste’ Rotorua. Despite this, and the recommendation that visitors to the city try a traditional Maori hangi, there was little information about hangi food in marketing promotions. Critically there was an evident lack of food images in the promotional material.

- (4) Seafood was the most heavily promoted food commodity throughout the regions.
- (5) Key foods that were promoted indicate top-end, home-grown and handmade produce. Food was consistently promoted as 'fresh', 'local' and 'quality'.
- (6) Thematic analysis of marketing material for most New Zealand regions revealed a focus on regional and local foods, whereas Rotorua had an obvious 'international' focus in the promotion of food in the district.
- (7) In general, food was most heavily promoted within a hospitality context, i.e. its functional use.

Local food and drink is fundamental to creating a sense of place and providing visitors with a unique and distinctive experience (Haven-Tang and Jones, 2006). Consequently the need for effective marketing of food in tourism promotions is clear. This chapter has highlighted the potential for greater and more effective use of food in place promotion in New Zealand, and particularly in Rotorua. This ultimately has ramifications for tourism in New Zealand in terms of destination differentiation in an extremely competitive environment.

In analysing the reasons why food is not promoted as a key or supportive attraction, du Rand, Heath and Alberts (2003, p. 108), in their study of food in destination marketing in South Africa, concluded that there may be financial or marketing constraints or a "lack of knowledge regarding local and regional food". Du Rand, Heath and Alberts (2003, p. 108) acknowledge that these issues can be addressed with the incorporation of food into regional tourism strategies. One further constraint in the adequate promotion of food in the tourism materials could be attributed to poor communication between stakeholders, resulting in a less than cohesive collection of images for public consumption (Choi, Lehto and Morrison, 2006).

Internet sites, web pages and brochures change over time, material needs to be updated and some information becomes obsolete. A review of Internet marketing materials in 2009 pertaining to Rotorua showed no change in the content of Tourism New Zealand web information, including Taste Central North Island and *The Gourmet's Garden* information pertaining to Rotorua.

Furthermore, the format of the RTO website had changed since 2007, with food information now even less accessible – it was necessary to ‘hunt’ for the link to Rotorua dining, it eventually being found under ‘cultural attractions’. The list of restaurants in the Rotorua RTO brochure 2010 has been updated to reflect changes in restaurant closure and openings.

CHAPTER SIX

TOURISM AND LOCAL FOOD IN ROTORUA: CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Food is a means of destination differentiation in a globalised society and the use of local foods adds to the authenticity of a destination. Indeed, Telfer and Hashimoto, (2003) argue that destination competition and a drive to develop and accentuate points of difference from region to region are attributable to the rise in importance of regional cuisines. This chapter, focuses on interviews with experts from both food and tourism sectors, and discusses critical issues that are perceived to inhibit the use of local produce in restaurants and in tourism businesses in Rotorua.

The constraints identified by the experts (see Table 6.1) include the lack of an identifiable national and regional cuisine which makes it difficult to market a unique New Zealand cuisine or to market a distinctive regional cuisine. Tour groups visiting Rotorua are often budget orientated, on pre-paid accommodation and meal packages, making it unlikely that they will seek out up-market local food experiences. There are also a large percentage of domestic tourists to Rotorua, visiting friends and relatives (Ministry of tourism, 2009), who in the opinion of the experts, are less likely to be motivated by the availability of local foods. Adding to the constraints is the fact that international cuisine is heavily promoted in the district. According to the experts, hangi and concert is the only food related experience in Rotorua marketed to international package tour groups. Local foods often go unrecognised on menus and in marketing materials. These findings are consistent with results from the content analysis of brochures and web sites as reported in Chapter 5.

There are also food supply-chain problems for the district. Many of the experts interviewed who were directly responsible for food in restaurants reported difficulty in sourcing local foods. Buying locally produced food was said to be often more expensive than buying goods from large national suppliers, and local producers had, in some cases, proven unreliable. Some of the large hotels in the district have 'preferred' providers mostly located in Auckland for these reasons. With regard to this, the experts indicated that there is little in the way of collaboration or links between local food producers, suppliers and local

tourism businesses. Coupled with this is the fact that the district does not host a farmers market and there are no food events celebrating local produce and cuisine.

Table 6.1: Summary of reported constraints in linking food and tourism in Rotorua

Constraints
Lack of an identifiable national and regional cuisine
Family and pre-paid target markets
Preferred suppliers
Local food not promoted
Focus on hangi and concert
Focus on international cuisine
Difficulty in sourcing local foods
Local suppliers too expensive; and produce often not available in the quantities required
Reliability of local suppliers
No local food events
No local farmers' market
No local food networks

The chapter highlights the current limited role for local food in Rotorua tourism, the discussion also identifies ways in which food can be used to strengthen and sustain regional competitiveness, and create a sense of place. The potential for establishing a farmers' market in the district is discussed along with the experts' attitudes towards the authenticity of hangi and concert. Industry support for a more integrated approach to food and tourism is gauged as well as stakeholders willingness to work together in promoting local food.

6.1 Identifying national and regional foods

Food is expressive of place and cultural identity (du Rand and Heath, 2006; Hall and Sharples, 2003; Long, 2004), and given the fact that many international tourists want to taste New Zealand food, a starting point for this investigation concerned respondents attitudes towards use of local foods to

showcase Rotorua. One of the issues that concerned 72% of those interviewed about using local food to create a point of difference, is the fact that there is no one cuisine that can be described as 'New Zealand' cuisine. Tourism New Zealand, (2007b) describes New Zealand food as a diverse mix of cuisines. This is attributed to the multicultural nature of New Zealand communities, which has a large influence on the range of ingredients and dishes available. Taylor (2001, p. 16) also argues that New Zealand has no particular cuisine to call its own; however, far from being a handicap to the linkage of food and tourism, Taylor maintains that this has enabled New Zealand to embrace the different flavours and many global influences on the cuisine. One restaurant owner interviewed for this research described the food in New Zealand as:

... a mixture of many culinary traditions, flavours and ingredients, much of it a reflection of the immigration history of the country.

This mixture of culinary traditions, however, makes it difficult for international visitors to get a clear understanding of the cuisine in New Zealand. A lodge owner remarked that the international perception of cuisine in New Zealand is weak:

There is no clearly defined style of cooking or food that can be used to describe New Zealand food. Many of my guests just think - lamb, fish, beef.

Similarly a food and travel writer felt that cuisine in New Zealand had changed markedly in the last two decades. She was of the opinion that in the past some dishes could be identified as quintessentially 'kiwi'. Today the writer places more emphasis on the quality and origins of local ingredients rather than singling out a particular dish:

Up until twenty years ago there were dishes that you could say were indicative of the national cuisine – in particular the 'Sunday' roast, steak dishes and bacon and egg pie, trifle - now it is impossible to single out particular dishes. When I write about food in New Zealand I write about local ingredients grown in a particular place – that's what counts. Some regional restaurants gain a reputation for a particular dish incorporating a local delicacy – but the flavours can be Thai, Mexican, Japanese...

The fact that there is no one particular style of cooking or narrow expectations placed on particular dishes pleased one chef:

New Zealand cuisine is very innovative. We are not stuck in old traditions – our food has flavour. Call it Pacific Rim or Fusion cuisine – whatever- it's exciting experimenting, matching and putting ingredients together in a new way.

These quotes show the relative difficulty of linking food and place in the case of New Zealand, when a particular cooking style, ingredient, dish or flavour cannot be pinned down to any one particular region. When asked about dominant cultural influences on the food all of the respondents identified traditional British dishes and cooking. Simpson (1999) in his research of the origins of New Zealand cuisine relates that the roots of New Zealand cuisine originate from old traditions, many of which have now lost their meaning. These traditions were based on agricultural cycles from the northern hemisphere, particularly from England and Scotland which have the reverse seasons to New Zealand in the southern hemisphere. England and Scotland also have shorter growing seasons due to a harsher climate than New Zealand's, hence food traditions centered on preservation of foods, and foods that were heavy and fortifying against the cold winters (Simpson, 1999). Examples of this food include pies, roast meals, and thick soups. Maori have a 'traditional' steamed pudding that is cooked in the hangi and served with custard. The steamed pudding harks back to the roots of New Zealand cuisine and British traditions.

Simpson (1999, p. 161) identifies that it was the "very act of emigration which began a process that ultimately led to the disintegration of traditions." Simpson (1999) also maintains that the available pre-European food culture was largely ignored by colonial settlers and despite access to plentiful supplies of fish, fish was rarely eaten and then only as a supplement to a heavy meat diet. Demise of the heritage of the cuisine was further exacerbated by the advent and advancement of mechanical food production, bulk food processing techniques and distribution technologies.

An 'internationalization' of food also took a toll on the food heritage in New Zealand. One important factor in this appears to have been driven by the advent

of the Tourist Hotel Corporation (THC) in 1956, and the importation to New Zealand of European chefs and hotel managers (Tourism New Zealand, 2001). One of the restaurant owners interviewed for this thesis, who originally came from Germany to New Zealand, having been recruited by the THC, commented:

We were brought to New Zealand, mainly from England, Germany and Switzerland, to help improve the standard of food and hospitality in the government-owned hotels. We also had to train the local hospitality work force, so of course the food that was cooked and the service that we offered had its origin in those countries.

The interviewees were asked to identify foods that could be described as typical to New Zealand. The traditional roast – most often chicken or lamb with roast potatoes, kumara, pumpkin and gravy is seen as typically ‘kiwi’, as are pies; pavlova; ice cream; pumpkin soup; fish and chips; whitebait fritters and paua fritters. Other typical New Zealand dishes listed by the respondents were fudge and home baked produce: biscuits (chocolate chip and Anzac); carrot and banana cakes; scones; pikelets; and ginger crunch. It can be seen from this list that many of the dishes reflect British origins, but have been modified to incorporate locally available ingredients, for example the addition of kumara to the roast meal. One restaurant owner pointed out that:

... these dishes are often promoted in bakeries and cafes to international visitors as ‘New Zealand cuisine’. For example, one restaurant that opened (and closed one year later) in Rotorua marketed itself completely on the concept of these iconic ‘Kiwi’ foods.

Further complications arise with the identification of a national New Zealand cuisine as many of the ‘so-called’ New Zealand national dishes have disputed heritage. For instance, when discussing typical New Zealand dishes 65% of the interviewees pointed out that both New Zealanders and Australians lay claim to pavlova, pies, the barbecue and lamingtons.

Ironically takeaways and fast-food such as fish and chips, hamburgers and pizza were also seen as important aspects of New Zealand ‘cuisine’ by 75% of interviewees. Many of those interviewed (62%), (predominantly chefs and restaurant owners), emphasised the importance of fast food in Rotorua in

particular. The experts were of the opinion that for the many families with young children visiting Rotorua buying takeaways was a cheaper and easier option rather than dining in restaurants. The following quotes from an executive chef and restaurant owner sum up the opinions of those interviewed:

... many families visit Rotorua and it is the children who decide what the family eat. The kids will choose fast food such as 'McDonalds' because it is what they know and like. Buying fast food is also easier and cheaper for the parents traveling with children than going to a more up-market restaurant.

... families dine at McDonalds or in cafes rather than in the hotels. The food is cheaper and often it's what the children are used to.

The popularity of fast food is also evident to Simpson (1999, p. 162) who pointed out that “despite the natural abundance of quality, fresh ingredients what is most noticeable in New Zealand towns and cities is the vast number of fast-food outlets.” Simpson also maintains that when the majority of New Zealanders eat out, they consume fast food.

The experts were asked their opinion on the use of indigenous flavourings such as horopito, kawakawa and karengo to distinguish food in Rotorua. Three quarters of the respondents (75%), including the two RTO representatives, Tourism New Zealand representatives, and the local Chamber of Commerce representative, thought that the use of the herbs was a good idea, particularly for Rotorua, because they associated the herbs with Maori culture and saw the herbs as a way of providing uniqueness of flavor, although 15% (mainly chefs) remarked at the high cost of the seasonings. International tourists are perceived by 70% of respondents as being interested in trying dishes with indigenous ingredients. One lodge owner stated:

There is a real interest in herbs and flavourings such as kawakawa. Of course the guests want to know all about them – how they are grown, where they are grown. We make sure new staff can answer their questions. The guests seem to quite like the flavours.

In contrast 25% of respondents, (in particular the executive chefs) thought that these flavours were over-rated. One chef typified this when he said:

... the flavours do not stand out as something special that you want to try again. They don't have the same impact as herbs such as basil or thyme. Used on the menu you can see how they could tempt international visitors to try a particular dish – it's something different. I see the use of these herbs and seasonings as a very good marketing ploy

An executive hotel chef who had previously emphasized and promoted the use of indigenous herbs and seasonings on his menu had this to say:

Market response to the herbs as a selling point was indifferent, particularly with domestic tourists. The restaurant was not doing the turnover that we had hoped so we decided to promote regional cuisine and produce instead. I am passionate about using the fresh ingredients on my doorstep. Venison is readily available here in the Bay of Plenty and there are plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables to choose from. The region's fresh food is proving popular with international visitors.

The above comments indicate that the use of indigenous herbs in cooking, are of interest to international visitors and the majority of respondents believe that they can be used to emphasise uniqueness of food in Rotorua. Highlighting the use of these flavours may help to provide impetus to the more effective marketing of local food in Rotorua.

Research on visitor satisfaction and food and wine records a growing interest in New Zealand cuisine (Colmar Brunton (2005b), for example, one verbatim comment from their research included "I looked, but I couldn't find any specific New Zealand dish". The majority of experts interviewed for this research (85%) reported that in Rotorua the emphasis is on international cuisine rather than New Zealand or local foods. This focus is confirmed by the content analysis of marketing material reported in Chapter 5 of this thesis. One restaurateur remarked on the variety and number of ethnic restaurants in Rotorua:

You can take your pick of ethnic restaurants. The main ones are Chinese, Korean, and Indian. Tourists can also choose from Thai, Japanese, Belgium, Moroccan, Greek, Italian and even Mongolian cuisine.

Opportunities to satisfy tourist's desire for local foods appear to be not being met in Rotorua and this may have implications for the overall satisfaction with their visit to the district. The November 2009 Regional Visitor Monitor (RVM) for Rotorua tourism shows that expectations of good food and wine have declined since the last quarterly focus of the monitor. Also, while visitor satisfaction overall is high, the regional visitor monitor indicates that:

... the proportion of visitors who express a strong interest in returning to Rotorua is lower than in many other regions. This suggests that Rotorua may be viewed as an occasional or 'once in a lifetime' destination (particularly by international markets), with little to draw visitors back for a second or subsequent visit
(Angus and Associates November 2009).

Food offers the possibility of a way to link the Rotorua tourism industry more effectively to the local economy and community for more sustainable economic growth. Quality local food may also provide the impetus to convince visitors to make subsequent visits.

When asked about identifying regional cuisine in New Zealand all of the respondents were of the opinion that there are no regions which have a defining cuisine. This was seen as a hurdle in using food to differentiate the region. As the following interviewees point out - there is no history of any one particular ethnic cuisine in the regions that enables differentiation of the food:

Produce is not specific to a region and there are no regional culinary traditions to speak of. For example, New Zealand does not have distinctive ethnic regions as do parts of Europe, Canada and United States of America, and therefore distinctive regional cuisines have not evolved

(Food and travel writer)

... lamb, beef, salmon – they are available anywhere and everywhere...even the way we cook the food borrows from many other cuisines. Some regions identify with quality local ingredients, for example, Canterbury lamb or the Bluff oyster – I think this is the best we can do

(Executive chef)

A food television presenter commented that efficient transportation systems and the availability of globalised goods have been detrimental to the advent of regional cuisine:

The transport system throughout New Zealand, as well as ready access to imported foods, has contributed to the availability of produce, regardless of origin. As a result, in New Zealand there are no historical traditions pertaining to locally grown produce. If you take the festivals - such as the Bluff Oyster Festival and the Nelson Scallop Festival - these are recently invented 'traditions'.

These comments and opinions from the experts are particularly important to this thesis and to the premise that the relationship between food and tourism can contribute to regional identity and therefore to regional development. With respect to this, Bell and Valentine (1997, p. 37) consider that regional cuisine can be constructed or invented to reflect regional identity, according to local needs. For example, one of the challenges facing Canadian Tourism in creating stronger links between food and tourism is that there is (as in New Zealand) not an easily identifiable Canadian cuisine. Consequently there is movement towards the development of regional cuisine using indigenous and locally grown crops (Hashimoto and Telfer, 2006). According to Hashimoto and Telfer (2006) this is not simply about a simple fusion of flavours or variation of dishes from the 'Old World'. By using indigenous or locally grown produce innovative chefs can create dishes of unique and singular style, yet Canadian in its makeup.

Some regions in New Zealand such as Hawke's Bay, Marlborough and Canterbury have already gained a reputation for quality local foods; however, building a regional cuisine takes time. Making strong links to local produce is a key step in constructing regional cuisine (Hashimoto and Telfer, 2006). The potential for the development of regional cuisine in New Zealand is recognised by all of the industry experts. This is summed up by one local food supplier with the following comments:

Regional cuisine is as much about culture and food preparation methods and traditions of eating, such as specific foods consumed at different festive times, as it is about regional harvest. In New Zealand food products are beginning to be identified by the region – you know - Canterbury lamb, Bluff oysters, Nelson Scallops, Akaroa salmon, Kaikoura crayfish, are a few that I can think of. Tourists

want to experience local food and culture. Regional identification of produce meets those needs for tourists and at the same time raises regional profile.

All of the experts felt that the development of regional cuisine is contingent on the identification of local produce and the way that it is marketed. A Rotorua RTO representative stated:

... good marketing, branding and the advent of 'signature dishes' and 'signature' events such as Marlborough Food and Wine Festival, all help to draw attention to regional produce".

Over a third (35%) of the experts thought that the concept of regional cuisine is gaining in momentum in New Zealand through television programmes such as *Taste New Zealand*, which celebrates quality regional foods. A food tourism representative remarked:

It is important to emphasize regional cuisine in New Zealand as representative of the New Zealand culture and to build 'stories' around such dishes and the growing and harvesting of local ingredients. In particular, much more could be made of New Zealand's farming heritage and also of the perceived 'clean, green' image in the case of food production, much as it is for the promotion of natural scenery.

All respondents felt that it is important to develop and promote greater use of regional cuisine for the benefit of tourism and the local community in Rotorua. In addition, a large majority of those interviewed (78%) were happy to support initiatives aimed at strengthening ties between local food producers and tourism operatives. This group included suppliers, RTO representatives and chefs. As interviewees pointed out, using local ingredients can help grow pride and create interest in the region's food. One local chef noted:

... the development of a regional cuisine would help generate pride in community for the local food. It may also contribute to a healthier way of eating for the community.

Hjalager and Corigliano (2000) write that the lack of local awareness of quality and pride in local food traditions and produce in Denmark laid the local market

open to fast-food concepts. This could be one explanation for the marked popularity of fast-food in New Zealand.

One way of building a sustainable relationship between the food and tourism industries is through the promotion of local food in restaurants and cafes (Smith and Hall, 2003). In Rotorua the following five major heritage sites all have attached cafes: Agrodome, Buried Village, Te Puia, Rotorua Museum, and Whakarewarewa Thermal Village. Two of the cafes at Te Puia and Whakarewarewa link food in the tourism experience, offering sweet-corn cooked in the local hot pools as a cultural attraction. The remaining cafes do not take the opportunity to connect food and place. The use of heritage buildings and sites to promote local foods helps to increase the number of visitors and sales, adds value to the attraction and strengthens the ability of the destination to remain competitive (Henderson, 2009).

The majority (84%) of those interviewed considered that restaurants in Rotorua needed to focus more on local produce, for example, one of the local tourism business owners stated:

...locally produced lamb, beef and venison dishes (or other ingredients) could appear on the menu acknowledged as such. These dishes could also be integrated with indigenous herb flavours.

A restaurant owner was of the opinion that quality local foods could be used to promote top quality fine-dining experiences to guests:

We need to work more closely with local farmers and provide an outlet for their produce to ensure that it doesn't all leave the district. There is also the possibility of promoting boutique food experiences for a maximum of ten to fifteen guests featuring high quality local meats.

One of interviewees offering cultural food tourism experiences in Rotorua also suggested that koura, a native New Zealand freshwater crayfish, which are a distinctive and traditional food source for the district could be linked with tourism:

The farming of Koura, much like the Prawn Farm in Taupo, also offers great potential. Tourists could visit the farm and view the 'farming' process; an on-site restaurant could offer a variety of dishes utilising koura and the koura could also be used to supply the local restaurants. Koura provides a great point of difference for the local cuisine and it is 'fitting' because koura was once a common food consumed by local Maori. Fish and fishing are an important part of Rotorua's identity and heritage. In conjunction with this, there is scope for the development of a range of food products with Maori names and indigenous herb flavourings featured in attractive jars and packaging, promoting 'hand-made' in Rotorua. This could include a range of products such as bottled spring water from Rotorua and preserved koura and eel.

In 2009, discussions with the interviewee indicate that there has been some talk between local business people on the farming of Koura in the district; however, this idea has not progressed further. The respondent indicated that there are many issues at stake in Koura farming including environmental and planning concerns, community rights, investment, and ownership.

The same expert was also interested in growing and harvesting specialty food crops on communally owned land:

There is a great deal of land in the district that could be put into food production of fruit and vegetables for locally owned co-operatives supplying hotels, hangi and concert venues and restaurants in the district. One such crop could include 'Maori' potatoes. There are several different varieties of Maori potato that I am aware of, with a variety of different uses. Some of them have purple skins and others are of a deep purple colour, throughout. They look great on the plate, particularly when in contrast with green vegetables...

Another expert who owns and manages a local restaurant and artisan bakery identified other crops that could help to differentiate Rotorua from other regions:

Some crops do particularly well here such as tamarillos and feijoas – these are fruits that are not particularly well known overseas and with promotion could provide a point of difference to the local cuisine for visitors to Rotorua. Added to this, there is also the possibility of the export of food crops – particularly if they are organically grown. This would provide employment for local people and it means that the town is not so dependent on tourism for income.

These quotes indicate that there a range of indigenous foods as well as locally grown crops which could be harvested and used to create a competitive and unique, high quality tourism product in the district of Rotorua. Some of the suggested produce may help to revive food traditions and provide employment for local people. Community support through employment and positive endorsement of local food is central to efforts to develop closer links between the tourism and food sectors, and raising visitors' positive perceptions of local food.

6.2 Constraints in local food supply

Respondents were asked about the supply of local food in Rotorua. Twenty of the respondents interviewed are directly responsible for the purchasing of food and/or writing and production of menus. Of these respondents, 32% reported that they were often frustrated with local supply. There are a variety of reasons for this frustration. One executive chef stated:

... if I run short of a product the national suppliers are often able to supply the shortfall within the hour. Small local producers often cannot offer that service".

Another problem identified by restaurant owners concerned the cost of local produce. Nearly two thirds (64%) of the industry professionals interviewed indicated that most restaurant food in Rotorua is aimed at the budget market. Local food prices, therefore, need to be competitive with national suppliers; as one restaurateur pointed out:

Local restaurants tend to be budget driven – always looking for the best price and best deal, in order to meet the needs of the target market. National food suppliers with their economies of scale in the purchase and sale of food are able to provide produce at much cheaper prices than that of some of the smaller local growers and producers.

In the opinion of one executive chef, budget constraints force chefs to seek the cheapest produce, regardless of quality:

... catering for the needs of budget groups discourages sourcing quality local ingredients and prevents the development and growth of more up-market or innovative restaurants, - particularly hotel restaurants, as they must cater for their target market.

Another executive chef commented that price is extremely important when it comes down to choosing suppliers:

... I like to shop around and find the best deals. I find most local suppliers willing to negotiate on cost, particularly if I want large quantities of an item, or if I use the same supplier regularly.

Approximately one third (32%) of the 20 respondents dealing directly with suppliers reported that it is often difficult to source local food products despite the fact that many food crops are grown in the Bay of Plenty. A restaurant owner stated that:

... the fact that producers are not accustomed to dealing with, or supplying local hotels and restaurants, has made it difficult to get what you want...half the time I'm on the phone to suppliers sorting out an order....

One lodge owner explained that he relied on personal contacts to acquire the quality products demanded by lodge guests. The lodge owner stated that:

...this is often an unsatisfactory arrangement as it can be time consuming, and it is not one that I can totally rely on to deliver what I want

More than half (62%) of the interviewees (n= 20) that deal directly with suppliers expressed concern with the reliability and availability of supply by local producers in the district of Rotorua. Local food products were often not available or simply not available in the sometimes large quantities that were required.

One executive chef stated:

... in as much as I would like to use local ingredients on my menus, and support local food growers and producers, there are several major obstacles to this. Not the least being the problem of sourcing local produce from the Rotorua district, but also ensuring a reliable and consistent supply of quality, locally produced goods.

In response, one of the local suppliers pointed out that many of the producers in the district were small-scale producers and not able to meet large orders. The local supplier also explained that the larger growers had contracts to supply supermarkets with produce. The fact that supermarkets tend to buy in bulk, has meant that little of the local produce is available for the local tourism and hospitality sectors. This obviously has an impact on the supply of food products for the tourism industry. One suggestion is that in the future, co-operatives of the smaller local producers could help to alleviate supply issues for the tourism and hospitality sectors.

In comparing the ability to source local foods in other regions with Rotorua, a survey of restaurants by Smith and Hall (2003) in the districts of Hawke's Bay, Central Otago, and Canterbury, reported that 51.8% of respondents found it relatively easy to source local produce. Respondents (31%) from the Marlborough region had difficulty in sourcing local products. Smith and Hall (2003, p.261) put this down to problems in supply with local distribution networks in the Marlborough region.

One respondent interviewed for this research revealed that corporate hotels rarely use local suppliers for the following reason:

... many hotel chefs in Rotorua are required to operate within the constraints of 'preferred suppliers'. That is, suppliers nominated by the group 'head office' (usually located in Auckland) that offer 'rebates' in return for bulk purchase of product. In most instances the preferred suppliers are also Auckland based, including suppliers of meat, poultry and fruit and vegetables. This prevents the hotel chefs from purchasing from or supporting local Rotorua suppliers, or purchasing locally grown food in season at the best prices. As you can see there is little room for encouraging local suppliers or for encouraging the development of regional cuisine for the purposes of tourism.

A local tourism business owner also offered the following further insight into the minimal usage of local food in some Rotorua restaurants:

Many of the food businesses in Rotorua are franchises, for example, some of the bakeries, cafes and fast food restaurants in town. This means that much of the food is brought in and not produced locally. The food lacks uniqueness and does not promote

regional variance. Linked to this, ingredients are not used in a seasonal context and few restaurants in town have menus that reflect seasonal change of produce.

One executive chef provided the following explanation for the use of preferred suppliers:

... the majority of large hotels and franchises in Rotorua are owned and managed by corporate groups, many of these by 'off-shore' foreign companies rather than New Zealand businesses. Product is sourced from suppliers offering the best prices and deals.

Economic 'leakage' is therefore a factor in the Rotorua economy as food products are sourced and paid for elsewhere. Eastham (2003, p. 236) writes that the linkages in the traditional structure of supply of food in terms of cultivation, production, and consumption of the local, have to a large extent been broken, and that significant regional value through food in tourism may only be gained if those linkages are restored. This break-down of backward connections between food producers and local food businesses is an important issue for those wishing to use and promote local food in Rotorua. Restoring and developing closer ties with food producing sectors will need to be surmounted if food in tourism in the district is to be encouraged. This may mean the profiling of local food producers so that they may understand that they are part of the tourism industry and also to inform tourism and hospitality sectors of the goods and services available. According to the experts, reliability and competitive pricing are key factors in generating custom for local suppliers from corporate hotels.

The 20 respondents responsible for menus and food production were asked if they identified local foods on their menus. Approximately one third of the group (31%) indicated that they acknowledged foods from the district. Respondents identified the main local products appearing on menus as lamb, venison and blueberries. These products are readily available in Rotorua and the blueberry farm is an attraction in its own right, offering tours and tastings on a daily basis. The blueberry farm markets itself by placing brochures in the Rotorua Tourism Information Centre, however, local lamb and venison are not promoted or linked to the locality and surrounding farm land.

Content analysis of Tourism New Zealand and Regional Tourism marketing promotions for food in tourism, conducted during this research, indicates that local produce is strongly promoted in most regions in New Zealand. Rotorua is one of the notable exceptions to this. Smith (1992, p. 45) reported that in developing the attractiveness of New Zealand cuisine “the first thing that is needed is more faith and pride in our own image and local produce, to make more of it, especially by mentioning it on menus.”

Respondents were asked whether or not they felt that seasonality of visitors to Rotorua may be a limiting factor in sustaining local food ties with tourism. Nearly half (48%) of the respondents felt that local food could be used as a draw-card to extend the tourist season. One local food and beverage manager suggested focusing on encouraging weekend visitors to Rotorua from Auckland and Wellington using food along with accommodation in packaged incentives as this would be useful in sustaining restaurants during the ‘off-peak’ season:

... Auckland and Wellington weekend visitors could be targeted more effectively with the sale of package deals including air transport to and from Rotorua, quality local foods, and accommodation. This type of visitor is generally happy to spend more on quality food. Restaurants offering top quality local ingredients would also quickly gain a reputation for good food. There seems to be a continued focus on marketing Rotorua to large Asian tour groups and budget travelers – these groups are less likely to be motivated by quality local food.

This statement reiterates opinions held by experts that in order to promote local food in Rotorua, it is important to target visitors that are likely to appreciate high quality food. Many of the interviewees (68%) voiced the opinion that the upgrade of Rotorua airport, to enable direct flights from Australia, may increase the number of more wealthy and discerning tourists to the district for weekend visits and short breaks. One of the local RTO representatives interviewed was of the opinion that quality local food would be important to this group as food is an essential element of lifestyle for these people.

Tourism Resource Consultants (2009) point out that although Australian visitors are the largest market for arrivals in New Zealand (and indeed Rotorua); Australian visitors in fact have low spending patterns. This could be attributed to

the fact that many Australian visitors to Rotorua are visiting friends and relatives. The Australian average spending on food and meals per visitor is \$NZ372. This is low in comparison to all most all the other main visitor groups average spend per visitor on food: China \$NZ790; UK \$NZ673, Germany \$NZ638; USA \$NZ540; Japan \$NZ354 (Tourism Resource Consultants, 2009). The implications of this are that although the numbers of visitors to Rotorua may increase, spending per visitor on food and meals may not follow with increased numbers of Australians. On a daily basis, coach tourists are the highest spenders with \$NZ421 per day. However, coach tourists have the largest amount of pre-paid spending on accommodation and food. "The more money is prepaid in tourists' country of origin, the lower the benefit to New Zealand, as prepaid money usually involves commission (between 10 and 35%) paid to agents operating overseas" (Becken, Lennox, Fitt and Butcher, 2007). 12.4% of visitors to Rotorua are coach tourists (Becken et al, 2007). The more money prepaid for food in tourists' country of origin, the less money that is likely to be paid out for food in New Zealand.

Research conducted by Everett and Aitchison (2008, p. 160) found that in the UK food could be used to extend the Cornish tourist season. In relation to this, the research indicated that there is a correlation between seasonal trends and interest in local foods. According to Everett and Aitchison (2008, p. 160) although there is significant economic spend in the summer high season in Cornwall, there is less call for regional foods. "Restaurants actually have to reduce menu prices and introduce options like chicken nuggets" in order to accommodate the peak season visitor. In contrast, the research indicated that those visiting out of peak season are "more likely to patronise more expensive food outlets specialising in local produce" (Everett and Aitchison, 2008, p. 160).

Peak visitor months for tourists to Rotorua are December and January. In New Zealand these are summer months that coincide with school holidays, hence there are many family groups which visit Rotorua at this time. It was pointed out by experts earlier in this chapter that family groups are less likely to be motivated by high quality, local food experiences. Food and tourism linkages promoted more vigorously in off-peak times could offer Rotorua an extended

tourist season in which to sell local produce, thereby sustaining and strengthening local food and tourism industries.

6.3 Cultural aspects of food in tourism

Interviewees believed that local food experiences are of increasing importance to visitors to New Zealand. This coincides with Tourism New Zealand's visitor Experience Monitor 2008/09 which indicates that compared to previous years, there has been an increase in participation in food and wine events and shows among international travellers.

Hangi and concert are identified by all experts as an important cultural experience in Rotorua. It was pointed out by all those interviewed that hangi and concert was a very popular attraction for visitors and was also said to be vitally important to the district in terms of employment for local people, and in revenue generation for operators. This comment from a Rotorua RTO representative shows the importance and enduring nature of the hangi and concert to Rotorua tourism:

... the hangi is an important aspect of Maori culture and is intricately tied to the established perception of Rotorua as a destination.

Hangi and concert has a considerable history in the town: One expert interviewee, now a food supplier, recalled when hotels first began to promote hangi and concert:

The first major commercial hangi and concert began in the 1960's at one of Rotorua's oldest tourism hotels – the International, (now called the Heritage Hotel). Its popularity grew and soon all the large hotels in town offered similar performances. Since then the hangi and concert has become the leading cultural experience for tourists in Rotorua, and hotels are still the main venues for this experience, performing for tour groups nightly.

When asked if the interviewees had attended a hangi and concert experience in Rotorua it transpired that six interviewees had not. Of the remaining forty four respondents, eighteen had been to a hangi and concert at Tamaki Maori Village, ten had been to Mitai (a local Maori family owned and operated business), eight had experienced hotel run hangi and concert, three had been

to a hangi and concert on a local marae, five had experienced hangi and concert at Te Puia Maori Arts and Craft Center and geothermal experience. There were a range of issues raised about the hangi by the interviewees, concerning the authenticity of the experience and the perceived lack of experiential opportunities for tourists. For example one executive chef stated:

... it is not particularly interactive, and there is little point of difference between one hangi and concert and another, particularly between the hotels. Often the guests have little understanding of what's going on or the significance of certain dances. I think hangi and concert is better left to Maori tourism providers in more authentic surroundings rather than hotel performances. Also, once you have been to one hangi and concert – you've been to them all.

A television media representative was of the opinion that:

... the hangi needs more explanation surrounding the historical, cultural and practical aspects of the experience. This could be provided to guests in written form and in the guest's own language. Perhaps the information could be provided on a souvenir 'menu' card that they could read and take away with them.

Over half (62%) of the total interviewees remarked that they did not think the hangi was an authentic experience in that traditional cooking pits are not used, and the food presented did not represent authentic Maori food. One executive chef stated:

The hangi is packaged up to meet Western and Asian tastes. One of the reasons for the Westernisation of the hangi is that Maori food lacks complexity and is very simple. This makes it very difficult to build a whole product based on a simple and limited cooking method and with very basic ingredients that will satisfy the expectations of tourists". The hangi as a 'cuisine' does not stand on its own, as other ethnic cookery does such as Chinese, Thai, or Indian cuisines. The hotels in Rotorua have to embellish the hangi product with dishes that have little or no bearing on traditional Maori food.

In contrast to some of the negative points made in the preceding accounts, a food/travel writer was more positive in her view of the hangi:

... it is a simple style of cooking with simple ingredients and it is important not try and make it something that it is not. Most

international visitors will attend a hangi and concert as part of their itinerary and Rotorua is the place to come for this because of the strong Maori culture here. It is not an experience that you would repeat too often but it does give visitors a sense of appreciation for Maori culture and hospitality”.

Two hotels in Rotorua avoid issues of hangi authenticity by marketing it in a different guise. In both hotels what is essentially hangi and concert is marketed as ‘Feast and Review’. The question of the genuineness of the hangi is an important one in this study as this thesis argues that through food the tourists’ desire for authenticity can be met.

Taylor (2001, p. 10) writes “authenticity is only valuable where there is perceived in-authenticity.” The fact that many of the experts interviewed in this study find the hangi inauthentic does not necessarily equate with the tourists view. Cohen (2002) argues that it is important to understand the concept of ‘existential’ authenticity as it applies to the tourist, rather than focus on the academic or experts understanding of authentic. That is - the understanding that authenticity does not relate to the actual object or attractions – but rather how the tourist perceives authenticity in relation to themselves (Cohen, 2002). Existential authenticity is therefore an objective and personal construct linked to identity formation. The hangi experience and indeed ‘local’ food when available, provides existential authenticity as tourists can develop an authentic ‘sense of self’ in the process of relaxing, experiencing and ‘being themselves’. The location of the hangi – for example where the hangi takes place in a traditional Maori village rather than in a hotel, can add to the feeling of existential authenticity for the tourist when the imagery surrounding the hangi provides a deeper connection with the people and place that produced them (Boniface, 2003).

The two largest cultural shows owned and operated by Maori in Rotorua are Mitai and Tamaki Maori Village. Both of the tourist attractions offer hangi and concert. The author experienced Mitai hangi and concert four times during 2008/09 and also hosted guests at Tamaki Maori Village three times during 2008. Mitai offers a more intimate guest experience – catering for approximately 100 guests per show, and one of the main features of the evening is the time set aside for host interaction with the guests. Apart from the hangi and concert

Mitai also offers a guided tour to a local spring where guests are treated to the sight of a manned waka (Maori canoe). Mitai represents itself as a family-run operation – with many family members in attendance of the guests. Tamaki, in comparison, caters for very large numbers of tourists and provides a formal cultural show and hangi, along with a tour of a re-created pre-European Maori Village (see Figure 6.1 and Figure 6.2). The hangi provided at both tourism attractions was similar in terms of quality and content, with lamb, chicken and pork cooked in hangi pits, served with a variety of vegetables and salads.

Figure 6.1: Tamaki Maori Village



Source: Author, (2009)

Some (12%) of the respondents thought that Mitai hangi and concert provided a more authentic experience as compared to the hotels. When asked what made Mitai more authentic than other cultural experiences, one of the chefs remarked that: “the food is cooked in an actual hangi pit and the ‘lifting’ of the food is an integral part of the experience” (see Figure 6.3 and Figure 6.4). According to a lodge owner Mitai provides a more authentic experience in comparison to Tamaki because it offers greater interaction with local Maori.

Figure 6.2: Tamaki Maori Village



Source: Author, (2009)

Figure 6.3: Hangi food in pit, Mitai



Source: Author (2009)

Figure 6.4: Hangi experience, Mitai



Source: Author, (2009)

Of the interviewees who had been to the Tamaki Maori Village hangi and concert 75% were very happy with their experience although they did not rate the food particularly highly. As one food writer put it:

The evening was highly unique, inclusive and entertaining. I really enjoyed the experience. The food was well cooked and there was plenty of it, but it certainly was not something that will stand out in the memory.

More than half (63%) of those interviewed were of the opinion that the hangi is about maximizing tourist numbers and revenue gathering rather than providing an authentic cultural experience. Emphasis is not on sourcing local food and on most occasions the event is pre-booked and paid for by tour leaders and agents prior to group departure to New Zealand. One executive chef stated that the hangi is “easy money for the hotels.”

This is because of the nature of the ingredients and cooking processes used by the hotels. Potatoes, kumara and cabbage are not expensive food items, and the lamb does not have to be best quality because of the way that it is cooked. Coupled with this, it does not take skilled chefs to produce hangi food. Hangi ingredients

require little preparation except mainly the chopping of vegetables, there are no complex sauces to be made, and the degree of cooking is electronically controlled, and thus, does not require skilled judgement as to when the food is cooked. In terms of service, most hangi food is presented buffet style, which requires neither skilled service staff, nor large numbers of service staff.

Some (43%) of the experts argued that there is a need to diversify the Rotorua cultural food experience and to provide experiences with less focus on economies of scale. Greater emphasis was needed on more personalised and authentic encounters. Of the respondents, 30% (this included tourism business operators and some hotel chefs) felt that hotels in Rotorua should not provide hangi and concert at all as the venue for cultural attractions is an important aspect of authentic representation. A tourism business owner made the following comment which is indicative of the feelings of these respondents:

... Rotorua hotels should no longer offer hangi and concert because the 'Western' approach to the experience is too staged. Authentic venues for hangi such as at a marae would provide greater cultural significance and tourist appreciation

With regard to marketing of hangi and concert, 85% of interviewees were of the opinion that strong emphasis is placed on the hangi when selling tourism in Rotorua to the overseas tour markets. This may be the case in terms of marketing and selling Rotorua tourism to distributors, however, content analysis of marketing promotions conducted for this research found that hangi and concert is in fact little promoted by Tourism New Zealand or by the local RTO's to independent travelers accessing official Internet sites and brochures.

Of key importance is the following comment by a regional tourism representative for Rotorua, which helps to explain the low focus on hangi, revealed in the content analysis of Tourism Rotorua marketing materials. While it would be easy to identify Rotorua as the 'hangi pit' of New Zealand, Tourism Rotorua promote the use of indigenous herbs and seasonings as a means of regional differentiation:

...we have pushed for indigenous cuisine [...] in building a first class market positioning of an emerging New Zealand cuisine that is best consumed right here in Rotorua, where visitors can help harvest the

products from the forest, help in the preparation of those products and then enjoy eating them.

It was the view of 72% of informants that opportunities lay in providing other food experiences catering for up-market domestic and repeat international tourists. For example, one tourism business owner felt that Rotorua could establish a greater reputation as a 'hunting and fishing' destination. Restaurants could also specialise in game food. He was also keen to see the sale of trout legalized for use on restaurant menus:

'Top end' domestic tourists want food opportunities other than hangi, as the hangi experience appears to hold little appeal for this group. At the same time hangi and concert is seen as a 'one off' experience and therefore, repeat international tourism also provides for different food tourism opportunities. For example, there is the possibility of establishing a reputation for fish and game food in Rotorua such as wild boar, eel, pheasant, duck, koura (fresh water crayfish) and inanga (a type of lake whitebait from the Ohau channel and Kaituna river). This also provides for the associated experiences of hunting, fishing, and harvesting. Many lodges in the district already focus on hunting and fishing as part of the attraction of Rotorua. Perhaps the sale of trout could be legalised in Rotorua. Indigenous food product and Maori way of life as gatherers – provides another opportunity, as this aspect of Maori food heritage is not covered by hangi.

One local cultural tourism operator told of his organisation specialising in cultural tourism experiences in Rotorua that have helped revive old traditions:

... this entails small groups of tourists participating in a holistic experience of 'mind, body and soul'. Local elders are employed to recount stories of the 'old ways' and to paint a picture of the past. This is coupled with an interactive bush tour of Mokoia Island where the tourist, with instruction, gathers indigenous herbs and spices from the bush. A local chef then prepares and cooks dishes utilising the flavourings and presents these to the guests in a meal. The experience also includes a traditional Maori massage in an integrated package at the cost of NZD 300 – 400 per person. This creates wealth and employment for local iwi, people also remember the experience.

This quote provides clear evidence that local food can be a powerful tool in building a sense of place. Through stories and interaction the consumer has been directly linked with the land and the people that produce their food (Hall

and Mitchell, 2005). Another local cultural tourism operator and trained chef also suggested that greater promotion of indigenous food product, and Maori way of life as gatherers of food, may help Maori to retain their cultural identity:

... if a culture loses its cooking techniques, it's very difficult to rediscover them. Until recently, the only Maori food most non- Maori knew about was hangi - meat and vegetables cooked in an oven dug into the earth. This food is flavoursome and filling, but hardly refined. It is generally not known within the community, that every Maori tribe had its own delicacies and refinement. But with microwaves and frozen dinners, that knowledge was waning. I decided to learn as much as I could about traditional edible plants. I am now part of a business, which processes these plants for sale to chefs all over New Zealand. We have found that there is great interest and demand for our indigenous plant products for tourists visiting New Zealand as well as with Chefs overseas who have an interest in New Zealand cuisine. As well as this I have set up a non-profit organization to help Maori communities learn how to make the most out of their botanical heritage. I run training sessions in the bush about gathering traditional foods. I then buy what they harvest. My goal is sustainable wild harvesting of food that creates work in undeveloped areas. I also take small groups of tourists into the bush and teach them about the edible plants. As part of the experience, I prepare a meal in the bush utilising the plants that we have harvested.

Similar instances of a revival in traditional food practices has been reported by Everett and Aitchison (2008, p. 158) who found that with the growing public interest in food, old traditions in food production such as the making of Cornish ice cream have been revived. Thus, in Cornwall, food is recognized as a tool for “the conservation of traditional heritage and skills and way of life.” Linking food and tourism encourages the heritage training of local people which ensures that skills and ways of life are sustained (Everett and Aitchison, 2008, p. 157).

Not all tourists are of course interested in cultural tourism experiences or indeed in experiencing what New Zealand have to offer in the way of national and regional cuisine. Almost half (45%) of the experts interviewed felt that some Asian tourists had little interest in the food of New Zealand. The following quotes by a tourism business owner and two executive chefs sum up the experts views on many of the tour groups visiting Rotorua:

... experiencing new cuisines is clearly not of importance to certain sectors of the New Zealand tourism market, for example, the Asian tour group market. When this market sector visits New Zealand, meals are consumed at designated restaurants and these restaurants are generally all Asian owned and operated and serve only Asian food, typically, Chinese food. The one exception being in Rotorua, where tour groups will experience a hangi and concert.

The hangi appears to hold little significance for Chinese tourists -the guests rush in and eat the hangi and rush off again.

... in some instances Indian tour groups even bring their own chef. The chefs are responsible for all meals whilst the group is on tour and are accorded kitchen space for food preparation in the tour hotels. The tourists in these groups are very wealthy, older Indians and they are vegans and vegetarians. They are used to having servants and according to the tour guides – would not consider traveling anywhere in the world as independent travelers. They are different to other tour groups in that they do not appear to have a strict itinerary - breakfast is a leisurely affair - once they get up. The food cooked by their chef is very traditional Indian cuisine and the chef carries all the necessary herbs and spices for the dishes in a suitcase. The hotel supplies the main vegetable ingredients for the dishes although the Indian chef makes the bread.

The above observations with regard to visiting Asian tour groups and their food preferences indicate that further study is needed to understand the needs of these tourists. Asian tour groups are an important market for tourism in Rotorua. It is clear that greater interpretation of New Zealand food is required when marketing New Zealand as a destination to Asian visitors. For example, Yuan (Tourism News, 2004) indicated few Asian visitors like New Zealand food and only a small percentage (5%), are interested in trying New Zealand food. Greater effort could be made to educate visitors in their own languages as to the quality, variety, and health properties of fresh ingredients available. It could be explained that many of the dishes available are influenced by Asian flavourings. More effective international marketing with greater focus on local foods, and the high standards of food hygiene during production, may help to motivate more Asian visitors to sample the food in Rotorua and in New Zealand in general. The following quote also indicates that greater effort is required to help make Asian visitors feel more comfortable when dining in New Zealand restaurants and make the novelty of the experience more enjoyable:

During a tour of eight days, three western style meals and a cooked breakfast is the maximum acceptable, but they wouldn't really enjoy it as they are not used to having a meal on a plate rather than in a bowl, and feel awkward eating with a knife and fork

(Yuan, Tourism News, 2004, p. 6).

6.4 Food events

Food events, which include farmers' markets, are held to celebrate regional identity and local foods (Rusher 2003, Hall and Sharples, 2008a). Currently the District of Rotorua does not host a farmers' market consequently respondents were asked if they were in favour of establishing a farmers' market in the district. A large majority (86%) of the respondents were in favour of a market the remainder of the respondents were ambivalent about the necessity for the market. The interviews generated various responses. A suitable venue for the market was discussed at some of the interviews. More than half (63%) of the respondents favoured the centre of town as an appropriate venue. Others were of the opinion that the farmers market should be located away from the town in a country setting as befit a country market. The local RTO representative remarked:

... a farmers' market would add life to the center of town on weekends.

Other comments concerned the nature of local produce to be sold:

Such a market would need to concentrate on high-end produce such as farmhouse, preserves, and delicatessen products that may be purchased by locals and tourists alike

(Restaurant owner)

A farmers' market could be held in conjunction with the already established craft market and could present an opportunity for locals and tourists to purchase locally produced items such as fresh fruit and vegetables, ready-made salads, rewana and other ethnic breads, chilled, cooked meats, cheeses, puha, watercress and piko piko

(Tourism business owner)

... there are many lifestyle farmers in the district producing small quantities of artisan food products. Given encouragement, for example through a network of local food producers, and an organized market venue, many of these food producers may be persuaded to become stall holders.

(Restaurant owner)

Interviewees felt that there are local producers that could be approached to supply food items. It appears that there are also entrepreneurial opportunities for artisan food producers and an outlet for cultural products. Respondents also obviously hold definite opinions about the nature and type of the produce that could be sold at the market. Market organisers need to be very clear as to the definition of goods they will accept as 'local' produce. For example, Sims, (2009) reported a spectrum of understanding of 'local' food - from strong definitions of food grown locally to definitions based upon manufacture of goods locally made with imported ingredients.

The respondents also recognise the importance and value of farmers markets to tourism, and the markets potential economic contribution to the district of Rotorua. One local food supplier stated:

... the advantage of the market is that it provides extra income for producers that they may not otherwise have, it also cuts out the middle man, meaning greater returns for the farmer – less cost in the way of packaging and transporting too.

Hall, Mitchell and Sharples (2003, p. 43) report that farmers' markets are in fact one of the most successful aspects of linking food and tourism. Farmers' markets are said to make substantial contribution to rural economies, and provide alternative and additional outlets for farmers seeking to maximize returns (Hall and Sharples, 2003).

Another benefit of a Rotorua farmers' market highlighted by 58% of respondents is the opportunity for tourism operators to form closer ties with food producers. A lodge owner commented that:

Farmers' markets are of vital importance in the promotion of regional cuisine: In Rotorua the market would enable a much closer tourism business relationship with local suppliers and if there is one

particular product that is in season or is recognized as peculiar to the region then we ought to promote it on our menus.

As a Farmers' Markets New Zealand (FMNZ), representative states:

Customers seeking fresh, good quality local produce are coming face to face with local farmers, growers, preservers, and bakers. Add increased returns to food producers, a boost to regional economic development, social benefits and tourism spin-offs to the mix and quite clearly farmers' markets have something to offer everyone.

(Interview with Country News, May 2008).

Closer ties between local food producers and tourism representatives in Rotorua will help to reinforce local food systems and economic networks, and help create backward linkages (Hall and Sharples, 2008b) that may have otherwise broken down or not existed. Smith and Hall write:

The farmers' market is significant not so much because restaurants will purchase directly from it, but because it gives visibility to producers whom restaurateurs may otherwise have been unaware of, thereby establishing the opportunity for direct supplier-purchaser relationships to be established.

(Smith and Hall, 2003, p. 261)

For the consumer, farmers' markets enable the purchaser to "experience where the produce is from" (Hall, Mitchell and Sharples, 2003, p. 43), and to talk directly with the people who grow or make the produce. This is an important point for tourism in Rotorua as a farmers' market can help create a sense of place. This not only provides improved returns for the producer, as growers and producers sell their own products directly to the public, but also adds to the attractiveness and diversity of a destination (Hall, Mitchell and Sharples, 2003, p. 43). New Zealand *Sunday Star Times* (20th April 2008, p. 3) reports that farmers' markets are not just about quality and freshness "they make shopping a vibrant social experience, and they support the community." There are now forty registered farmers' markets throughout New Zealand *Sunday Star Times* (20th April 2008). Farmers markets located in the vicinity of Rotorua but not in the district include: Hamilton, Tauranga, and Tokoroa.

The interviews revealed that there have been two recent attempts to establish a farmers market in the Rotorua district, albeit not in the center of town, and on both counts this has failed. Apparent reasons for this failure were given as:

a lack of interested vendors and a lack of organization.

there was no coordination.

no main contact person.

Some of the respondents that were interviewed were part of the group that tried to organise the market. They are clearly disappointed with this failure to get the market “off the ground”. One executive chef was of the opinion that:

... there was no real driving force behind the set up of the market, and we just didn't have the 'pull' to attract the number of stall holders that we needed.

The literature review highlighted the value of a strong and passionate individual or ‘local hero’ to drive innovations forward. The literature review also stressed the importance of effective network or cluster groups of stakeholders to share in the development of a local tourism product. The value in a food network for Rotorua is that the group will bring together a range of attributes that makes it possible to achieve goals, such as the setting up of a farmers’ market that as individuals would be difficult, if not impossible. It is also apparent that the set up of a farmers’ market in Rotorua requires the support and direction from the Rotorua District Council in a public and private partnership. Endorsement along with initial funding and marketing of the venture may be required by the Council.

The respondents were also asked their opinion about holding an annual food festival in Rotorua. All of the expert respondents were of the opinion that an annual food event may help to raise the profile of the food in Rotorua. The Rotorua Chamber of Commerce representative stated:

An indigenous spring food festival, jazz, art, or flower festival - for example, a celebration of the flowering of the spectacular rhodoendrons in the district – in conjunction with central city hotels, cafes and restaurants, all provide opportunity for the community to showcase local foods.

Currently Rotorua hosts two music themed festivals. Hall and Sharples (2008a) report that food themed events are increasing in popularity, presenting the opportunity to highlight regional diversity. For example, food festivals provide a venue for the re-introduction of traditional food stuffs and encourage the development of new skills. They also afford tourists and locals with the opportunity to learn more about food. From a business perspective they provide stakeholders with the opportunity to secure high visibility in the marketing and promotion of products. In addition they help to reinforce local food systems (Hall and Sharples, 2008b).

6.5 Linkage between regional wine and regional food

Experts were asked about the importance of a link between regional wine and regional food in the development of culinary tourism. This question is of particular significance for Rotorua, given the reported opportunity that this linkage provides in the development of a regional cuisine and cultural identity (Cambourne and Macionis, 2003), and the fact that the district of Rotorua is not a wine producing region of note. Research conducted by Cambourne and Macionis into the use of wines in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) of Canberra concludes that:

Integrating the food and wine experience through all aspects of destination experience by, for example, ensuring that local wines are readily available on restaurant wine lists, would do much to enhance both regional wine and regional culinary image... at the same time greatly increasing their share of the tourist dollar. From a wine industry's perspective, restaurants provide excellent opportunities for the marketing and promotion of regional wines as well as giving tourists another reason to visit a region

(Cambourne and Macionis, 2003, p. 270).

Simon, (2001, p. 6 cited in Boniface, 2003, p. 132) writes:

Where vines flourish, McDonald's seldom does. Good authentic food is surely a prerequisite for any wine-orientated holiday, and wine and food grow up together in these [wine producing] regions.

The respondents (33%) that regarded the link between food and wine as important felt that the combination of the two provided for a 'total' experience. It was pointed out by one travel writer that "as wine trails have been developed

much more than food trails, the linkage of food and wine may provide many marketing opportunities for cuisine.” One lodge owner commented:

A regional food and wine marketing mix will help to raise consumer awareness of the diversity and availability of excellent local food to be had. Other products with a clear regional differentiation could also be positioned around a strong regional wine brand. Despite the fact that Rotorua is not a wine producing district, the wider region of the Bay of Plenty produces quality red and white wines and these could be more effectively linked with the local cuisine. Currently we purchase wine from vintners in Tauranga, but we don't really make enough of the food and wine mix.

The large majority of respondents (68%) did not think that a link between regional wine and regional food was important or necessary to the development of food in tourism. Interviewees from Rotorua responsible for the purchasing of beverage as well as food commented that little in the way of a direct linkage between food and wine occurred in Rotorua restaurants and tourism businesses. Experts also pointed out that in Maoridom there is no cultural heritage attached to the consumption of wine, therefore, wine held little relevance for food promotions in Maori tourism.

An interviewee reiterated the lack of partnership between the food industry in Rotorua and wine industries when he said that “it was up to individual operators to make the connection as wine was not seen as an integral feature of tourism in Rotorua.” Respondents were of the opinion that as each region had its own attractions it did not matter if wine was not one of them. One restaurateur said “visitors will try local foods anyway and individuals are quite happy to mix wine and foods from different regions.” Another restaurant owner stated:

'Iwi' wines were recommended instead of regional wines as a point of difference.

One tourism business owner also commented that:

In the case of Rotorua, it is not known as a wine producing region so local wines were not expected.

Lodge and restaurant owners commented on the fact the wine provided opportunities for greater interaction with customers. From the customers

perspective discussing local wines with local hosts contributed to the guests' satisfaction and enjoyment and often resulted in further purchases. For example, one respondent recommended the local blueberry wine:

... many customers want us to recommend a local wine to complement the food. They are also interested in learning about the local wines and food. In Rotorua, the locally produced wine is made from blueberries and guests are usually keen to try this. I also suggest that the guest may like to try the local beer and often from there we end up in a long discussion about the quality of New Zealand beer and wine.

Reporting similar results, another lodge owner stated:

Sometimes the guest will choose New Zealand wines from the cellar and to complement this, together we will construct a menu featuring best quality New Zealand produce. It's all part of the service and guests appear to really enjoy this interaction, it also gives us the opportunity to show off the many excellent wines in our cellar as well as the quality of our food.

6.6 Promoting food and tourism

When asked whether or not Individuals, the RTO, or an alliance of key stakeholders should be responsible for the promotion of local cuisine in tourism, all respondents thought that Tourism Rotorua should be responsible for the coordinated promotion of local food in key marketing media, although respondents indicated that they would like more input into the marketing of the district's food and restaurants.

Almost all respondents with a stake in the district (82%) indicated that they would consider working together to help promote food in the region. More than half (63%) of respondents were very interested in establishing a cluster group to help achieve this. According to two restaurant owners there has been a recent attempt to set up a restaurant group to promote local foods, however, the main organiser of the group left the district before the group really became active. It was also pointed out by one local expert that although the local branch of the New Zealand Chefs' Association is well established in Rotorua there has not been a concerted joint effort to promote local food in the region. When asked why this had not occurred, the interviewee explained:

... the group's members, which include executive chefs, restaurant owners and local suppliers, are all hugely busy in their own establishments. The group meets once a month for the purposes of 'networking'. We also organise and manage charity events during the year in order to support the local community. Sometimes there are cookery demonstrations and new products on show at our meetings. Our main objective though, is to promote the hospitality industry in order to get more young people interested in a career in cookery.

In a discussion with a Rotorua RTO representative about tourism network groups it was stated that:

Tourism clusters and marketing collectives come and go - largely their existence is dependent on market conditions and whether it is advantageous to market individually or collaboratively.

Tourism clusters are defined by the RTO representative as having some degree of management by the RTO (or sister Maori RTO), while marketing collectives are groups of operators that have come together with no involvement of the RTO. The preceding conversations indicate how very difficult it can be to form and sustain network alliances. Non-the-less cluster groups and networks are seen as very important to the sustainable competitiveness of destinations (Gossling, Hall and Weaver, 2009; Michael, 2007; Hall, 2004).

Respondents expressed a variety of attitudes towards current promotional and marketing efforts by tourism Rotorua. Many interviewees (78%) felt that other attractions in the region take much greater precedence over food experiences in the marketing of Rotorua. For example, two respondents (a restaurant owner and a tourism business owner) felt unhappy with the current promotion of food by the local RTO because they were of the opinion that the marketing material did not place enough emphasis on food:

For restaurants to promote outside of Rotorua it is a big challenge. Tourism Rotorua should be promoting the food along with other tourism experiences. Generally, I think that a change in marketing strategy is needed as the marketing tends to be one sided.

Mostly the tourism promotion for Rotorua is about scenery and hangi and concert. It is up to stakeholders with interests in food to

ensure top end travellers are targeted as well as the traditional Asian tour market and budget travellers.

Content analysis of Rotorua district marketing material indicates that food in the region is not regarded by the Rotorua RTO as being sufficiently strong enough to attract tourists in its own right, or considered essential in the planning and marketing promotions for the district. Some respondents (14%) complained that the information contained in the brochures did nothing to enhance the image of food in the district. Many (67%) of the respondents were aware that restaurants were listed in the brochures under various headings such as ethnic, traditional, and café, however, it was felt that there is little attempt to boost or brand local or speciality restaurants in the region. Two respondents did point out that the district quarterly tourism newspaper profiles restaurants featuring local produce. A local food supplier suggested the following reason for the general lack of promotion of local food:

The region is already successful, and there are so many other attractions to promote, people will eat the food anyway – look at the number of restaurants in town.

On the same subject a lodge owner remarked:

There aren't enough restaurants which offer regional specialities – what is there to promote? It's also difficult when the region has no identifiable cuisine and there is limited access to local produce.

Du Rand, Heath and Alberts (2003, p. 107) in their study of the role of regional food in destination marketing in South Africa reported that lack of funding of RTO's appears to be the major constraint in the promotion of food in a destination. When funds are insufficient the promotion of food which is considered as a product that will be consumed whether it is promoted or not, takes a 'back-seat' to other promotional activities.

Respondents in this study were asked whether or not they thought that food should be included in the Regional Tourism Strategy. All respondents thought that the linkage was of the utmost importance for tourism in Rotorua. The Chamber of Commerce CEO was of the opinion:

The integration and recognition of the importance of food in tourism in the district's tourism strategy should be a matter of course.

du Rand, Heath and Alberts (2003, p. 109) stress that lack of funding for the promotion of food in tourism needs to be addressed by the inclusion of food as part of an overall regional tourism marketing strategy.

In conclusion, the qualitative interviews indicate that food and tourism industry experts support closer associations between the local food and tourism sectors in Rotorua. Linking local food production more closely with the tourism industry than is currently the case does, however, bring a range of challenges and constraints (for a summary of these see Table 6.1). Despite these challenges, clearly there is considerable potential and opportunities for local food to play a much greater role in tourism in Rotorua.

A range of possible initiatives suggested by interviewees during the course of this research have been identified. Of utmost importance is the strengthening of relationships between the tourism sector and agricultural and horticultural sectors by guaranteeing outlets for locally grown produce. Experts suggest that this could be achieved through the promotion of local foods such as lamb, beef and venison (or other ingredients) on restaurant menus. Experts also recommend the promotion of unique and exclusive boutique food experiences featuring local produce. Establishing a farmers' market in the district will provide another outlet for local produce and help to build closer ties with consumers. Central to providing outlets for local produce is increasing the extent that local food is promoted in tourism marketing. In this context, interviewees expressed strong interest in having a greater say in the way that food is presented in Tourism Rotorua official marketing materials.

Further opportunities have also been identified such as establishing a specialist reputation for fish and game food in Rotorua with foods such as wild boar, eel, pheasant, duck, and inanga, as well as Koura farming and the revival of interest in local fish, such as eel, and fish products. Linked to this is the greater promotion of indigenous food product and Maori way of life as gatherers. An annual food event, for example a food festival, could reflect the fish and game image of Rotorua and provide the opportunity to showcase local produce.

The establishment of locally owned co-operatives growing fruit and vegetables and supplying hotels, hangi and concert venues, and restaurants in the district is also suggested. One such crop could be 'Maori' potatoes; an interviewee also proposed the growing and promotion of tamarillos and feijoas in conjunction with tourism. Another expert put forward the idea of developing a range of locally produced food condiments. In this interviewees advocate the use of a strong brand which identifies all locally produced food products with Rotorua.

Many of the suggestions provided by research participants are to do with the promotion, and marketing of local produce. Linking local food products under the same Rotorua brand (Rotorua – Feel the Spirit Manaakitanga brand) is an important aspect of this (Rotorua Tourism Advisory Board, 2007). An essential part of this is also to ensure the capture and protection of intangible assets (Hall and Mitchell, 2006). Suggestions, such as featuring local foods on the menu, are achievable in the short term and could provide an immediate boost to the attractiveness of Rotorua as a destination. Other suggestions, for example, Koura farming, and the establishment of locally owned co-operatives are long term projects requiring large amounts of funding and support from tourism representatives, community, and local council. The active involvement of the local community can provide Rotorua with the added opportunity to incorporate cultural distinctiveness and authenticity within regional economic development. What is clear from the list of suggestions is that the implementation of sustainable links between the food and tourism industries in Rotorua will take a concerted and integrated effort on the part of all stakeholders.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS

In an increasingly global economy, tourism destinations not only have to contend with overseas competitors for economic survival, but also have to vie with other regions and destinations within their own country (Kotler, Haider and Rein, 1993). Destinations, therefore, need to offer a unique and differentiated tourism product in order to remain competitive (Ritchie and Crouch, 2003). The promotion of food in tourism is seen as one way of developing the distinctiveness and identity of a region while retaining and maximising the benefits of visitor spend to the region's economy and local communities (Hall and Sharples 2003).

This thesis represents the culmination of an in-depth study focusing on Rotorua, New Zealand and the opportunities food presents for the diversification and differentiation of this popular and long-standing tourism destination. Rotorua is not known for its food and neither does it have a ready food heritage. The district of Rotorua does, however, have high unemployment and low socio-economic status relative to other parts of New Zealand.

The overall aim of the research was to examine ways in which local produce could be used to strengthen the tourism industry in the district and contribute to regional economic development and destination differentiation. The study argues that food, often a little used resource in local tourism, provides an opportunity to stimulate economies through back-linkages with agriculture and other food producing sectors (Hall and Mitchell, 2006). This helps protect existing jobs and create employment. Such is the integral nature of food in tourism that the benefits of stronger links between the two industries are often overlooked or often not recognised by destinations, particularly those destinations similar to Rotorua whose success in the tourism industry is generally based on primary attractions other than food (Okumus, Okumus and McKercher, 2007).

The core objectives for the research were: to establish the current role of food in tourism in Rotorua; identify constraints against the more effective linkage of the two sectors; and identify the extent to which local food was promoted in Rotorua tourism marketing materials in comparison to other destinations in New Zealand. In addition, the research sought opportunities for creating closer ties between the food and tourism sectors.

The study followed a grounded theory strategy encompassing an interpretive social sciences paradigm. A predominantly qualitative methodological approach, cross-validated by secondary data, was adopted to draw out and capture the rich data generated in interviews with food and tourism industry experts. The respondents were directly connected to the food and tourism industries in a professional capacity; for example, executive chefs, restaurant owners, food producers, local RTO representatives, cultural tourism operators, and tourism business owners. The interviews with the experts were an essential part of the study because of their unique positions in having an in-depth understanding of both the food and tourism industries within the local context. Included in the study was a content analysis of official tourism marketing materials and a case study of Rotorua. This 'triangulation' of research methods provided a means of cross-checking or bracketing findings derived from primary and secondary sources, thus increasing the reliability and validity of information collected.

In this thesis theories of 'globalisation' as they relate to destinations and changes in the consumption of food have provided a conceptual framework for the understanding of tourism and subsequently the growing importance of the relationship between food and tourism. There are parallels that can be drawn between the shifts in food consumption patterns and changes in demand for mass tourism to more individualised tourism experiences. Referred to as 'new' tourism (Poon, 1989), this constitutes a move away from the traditional three S's of tourism (sun, sand, and surf) to tourism that is a reflection of peoples overall lifestyle interests and activities (Butcher, 2003). As an indicator of lifestyle, food has transitioned from a necessity to a status commodity, and eating to a leisure activity (Hall and Mitchell, 2005, p. 76).

Boniface (2003, p. 124) suggests that a renewed focus on local food is an outcome of, and reaction to “a globalised eating and consuming lifestyle.” Food of ‘others’ provides an escape from modern industrialised, standardised, and globalised systems and processes. In something of a paradox, the linked pressures of globalisation and homogenisation have pushed the richness and variation of local and regional cuisines to the fore, and it is in this that food lends itself as a tool of differentiation for destinations, and helps to create a sense of place (Long, 2004). The research reveals that the forces of globalism are in fact of benefit to tourism and local communities choosing to integrate local food in tourism strategy. This is an important finding for regions such as Rotorua seeking to diversify their economic base and at the same time preserve regional identity.

People have a need to feel ‘grounded’ amid globalisation (Boniface, 2003). New Zealand’s agricultural roots and image as a ‘clean’, ‘green’ destination offers the perfect opportunity to fulfil this need. Bessiere, (1988) refers to people’s desire to ‘get back to nature’ in the countryside and to ‘trace’ the origins of their food. Holloway and Kneafsey (2000) suggest that farmers’ markets are the logical outcome of these trends as they are associated with the local and allow the consumer to interact directly with the producer of the food. In Hawke’s Bay, for example, farmers’ markets have become attractions in their own right. Unfortunately not all regions are building on this opportunity, especially those that do not have a name or a ready heritage for food and wine. Rotorua does not as yet host a farmers’ market. There have been two recent attempts by different local people to set up a farmers’ market; however, to date there has not been sufficient interest or motivation by producers to make a market viable in the district.

The research shows that one of the most valuable roles of food in tourism is that of delivering added value (Boyne and Hall, 2003). Special events, farmers’ markets food trails, tastings, cooking schools, and use of local foods in restaurants and cafes, all provide something extra for the tourist and by extension, the economy; whether this is to embellish a tourism product, heighten awareness of a product, producer, or process, or to add a different dimension to a tourist experience.

Inherent in this is also the potential for food activities to extend the tourism season as events, for example, food festivals and market days, sit well during off peak seasons such as autumn (Boniface, 2003, p. 124). Added value through food is not fully exploited in the Rotorua tourism industry, for example, local food is not often promoted in Rotorua restaurants or in conjunction with local attractions.

Against the backdrop of globalisation, local food is the embodiment of tradition and culture and as suggested by Long (2004) and Reynolds (1993) is perhaps the last bastion of 'authenticity' that is affordable on a regular basis by the tourist. It can be argued that Rotorua, like many other regions has not yet developed the full potential posed by meeting tourist's desire for authenticity. Rotorua has a range of traditional and contemporary Maori tourism experiences available for the visitor including hangi and concert, which is considered by those interviewed, as the main cultural experience in Rotorua. The industry experts pointed out that the hangi and concert is a major source of revenue for Rotorua hotels and provides a great deal of local employment and is therefore, a very important aspect of tourism in Rotorua. According to a local RTO representative "food, and in particular the hangi, holds an important place in Maori culture and is intricately tied to the established perception of Rotorua as a Maori cultural destination." It is this direct link with 'place' that lends authenticity to the food product (Sharples, 2003).

It is argued in the literature that the concept of authenticity should not be applied to food at all because of its temporal and dynamic nature (Hall and Mitchell, 2001, p. 310). Indeed, this research reveals a cynicism surrounding the hangi on the part of industry experts. The authenticity of the hangi was questioned with regard to the sheer commercialisation of the experience in maximising visitor numbers and maximising revenue. This included questions of authenticity over the cooking methods employed and the types of food served on the hangi menu, many of which have no place in hangi tradition.

Taylor (2001) and Lymburn, (2004) write that the vested effort and 'sincerity' in making an experience enjoyable and relevant for all have become more important than the concept of authenticity. Thus the notion of sincerity is especially germane

when arguing the relevance of hangi and concert in Rotorua tourism. Sincerity in this instance refers to the fact that the spirit of hospitality and cultural sense in which the hangi was traditionally steeped remain true (Lymburn, 2004, p. 30). In saying this, guests generally understand that it is not always practical or indeed possible to faithfully re-create some cultural experiences, thus staged authenticity is acceptable (Cohen, 1995, p. 22).

Wang (1999) argues that tourists also experience existential authenticity -that is the understanding that authenticity does not relate to the actual object or attractions – but rather how the tourist perceives authenticity in relation to themselves. Existential authenticity is an objective and personal construct linked to identity formation (Cohen, 2002). 'Local' food and indeed the hangi experience, provides existential authenticity as tourists can develop an authentic 'sense of self' in the process of relaxing, experiencing and 'being themselves', and in choosing products that they perceive as more ethically sound. Most Rotorua hotels offer hangi and concert. Hosting the hangi in a more traditional setting (rather than in a hotel), could add to the feeling of existential authenticity for the tourist. The imagery surrounding the hangi in a Maori village, for example, provides a deeper connection with the people and place that produced them (Boniface, 2003).

7.1 Summary of the research findings

The research reveals that food plays a limited role in Rotorua tourism marketing, promotion, and product development. The study highlights a number of constraints that affect the ability of food to become an integral part of tourism in the district and to act as a tool for regional development. These issues help to explain the relative lack of a close relationship between food and tourism in Rotorua.

7.1.1 Content analysis

One of this study's aims was to examine the extent to which food is featured in tourism promotions of Rotorua and New Zealand. In marketing the foods of New Zealand through its web site, Tourism New Zealand provided eight web links which represent eight geographical regions of New Zealand. In each of the regions,

different foods and specialities were recognised, providing a comprehensive overview of the food available, and demonstrating the potential to promote food in all regions as a key attraction or as a supporting attraction. In a supporting role, food was often linked with other attractions such as wine tourism, heritage tourism, local scenery and events.

The official Tourism New Zealand marketing material featuring food is closely linked with the dominant tourism discourse of mainstream tourism publicity. The '100% Pure', 'clean', 'green', outdoor brand image of New Zealand has clearly been transferred to the food. For example, emphasis is placed on freshly harvested food from the land and sea. There are multiple images linking food with outdoor and scenic views. In all, this ensures a cohesive, consistent, and 'authentic' marketing image of New Zealand is projected to the rest of the world.

This thesis highlights the fact that some of the RTO web sites and brochures, including Rotorua marketing material, failed to match this depth of promotion. For example, information in the brochures was primarily in the form of restaurant advertisements, where the provider is advertised and not necessarily products generic to the region. The information provided was often scant and not very informative. One main reason for the limited role of food in Rotorua tourism promotions stems from a lack of support and recognition by the RTO of the tourism potential presented by local food. For example, restaurants offering various international cuisines were promoted through listings in the marketing material, however, local food, with the exception of hangi, did not feature.

Content analysis of regional tourism promotions has demonstrated the need for some RTOs to assess and more fully recognise the potential food offers as a means of attracting visitors. Separate web pages for regional foods and the inclusion of more in-depth food information on regional web sites and in the brochures, on the part of RTOs, may help to establish food as a competitive tourism attraction in parts of New Zealand that have yet to embrace food in tourism. At the very least, this inclusion of local food in a more substantial way will

help to fulfil a complementary, 'eye-catching' role in the projected image of the destination (Hjalager and Corigliano, 2000).

According to Papen (2005, p. 79) "food images may convey multiple messages in the marketing of a destination, such as lifestyle, authenticity, cultural identity, status, and regional differences." It is, therefore, important to consider the role of food in tourism and how cuisine can be effectively harnessed in marketing promotions to enhance the attractiveness of a destination (du Rand, Heath and Alberts, 2003).

Two marketing themes emerged as dominant in the regional promotions in all media. Food featured very strongly within the context of hospitality in the regions, which indicates that one of the primary roles of food in New Zealand tourism is that of a service role. A second, and perhaps more crucial theme to emerge from the content analysis, was that of the increasing importance of local/regional foods to New Zealand tourism. From this it is apparent that the greatest strength in New Zealand cuisine and hence a growing relationship between food and tourism industries, lies in the quality and freshness of its local produce rather than in any particular local dishes, food traditions, or national cuisine. This view is also supported by the interview respondents who are of the opinion that regional cuisine in New Zealand has yet to evolve, but will do so over time particularly in response to planned tourism marketing strategies with regional development at the core.

Emphasis in the marketing materials was on home grown and handmade top-end foods. Messages portrayed through the promotion of local produce indicate a move by regions to differentiate themselves from other regions, and to promote a clear regional identity. For example, gourmet foods are promoted in Nelson/Marlborough; Northland promotes fresh regional produce; and the West Coast of the South Island - wild foods from a wild and rugged region.

In the *New Zealand 2010 Tourism Strategy* cultural tourism has been specifically identified as requiring further development. By extension, this thesis supports this view, given the small coverage accorded food in the cultural setting as revealed in

the content analysis. In Rotorua particularly there is more scope to offer tours and food trails focused on Maori cultural aspects of gathering food, and the traditional day-to-day cooking of ingredients used in Maori cooking. This type of tour provides an intimate experience for small numbers of guests and affords an interactive and unique insight into Maori culture, therefore helping to retain traditions and preserve a unique way of life.

Regional marketing material indicated a strong relationship between food and tourism in some districts. Regions such as Northland, Marlborough and Nelson, and Hawke's Bay, give significant recognition to food tours and routes, speciality restaurants and food events as a way of showcasing the region and offering the visitor food experiences. In two other destinations – Wairarapa and Queenstown, food was also a focal attraction; however, they were strongly marketed in conjunction with wine tourism. These regions directly reflect the interests of the Interactive Traveller with a focus on lifestyle, top-end produce, cultural interaction and education. Destination marketing by Northland and Hawke's Bay also has the potential to capture the interest of the specialist culinary tourist for whom food is the "primary motivating factor for travel" (Hall and Mitchell 2001, p. 308). In Rotorua promotions, despite the fact that the region has a strong agricultural industry and a growing horticultural sector, food was mostly presented in the form of advertisements for the hospitality industry. Given the numbers of tourists that visit Rotorua each year, there is enormous potential to showcase local ingredients through the many restaurants in Rotorua.

7.1.2 The interviews

Industry experts interviewed for this research were of the opinion that there is no one cuisine that can be recognised as a New Zealand cuisine; they were also of the opinion that there is no distinguishable regional cuisine in New Zealand. These two points may help to explain some of the difficulties in building stronger ties between food and tourism. The lack of an identifiable cuisine also makes it difficult to market a unique New Zealand cuisine or to market regional cuisine with any distinctiveness. Secondary data analysed for the thesis indicates that immigrants and visitors to Rotorua brought their own food with them, and that at times, the

food consisted of whatever was to hand. Today New Zealand food is a reflection of multi-cultural immigration with no one particular cuisine to call its own. Bell and Valentine (1997, p. 37) argue that this lack of a particular food heritage is not insurmountable. Bell and Valentine (1997, p. 37) consider 'regional cuisine' as a 'construct' incorporating a "peopled landscape", the "natural landscape" and tradition. Thus, the region can be considered from a geographic perspective but 'region' is also a product of human interpretation. Essentially this means that it is possible to 'invent' or 'build' a regional identity using food, according to the inhabitants needs. Regions within countries such as Australia and Canada, which also, arguably, lack an identifiable culinary heritage, have done just this.

In the opinion of the experts interviewed, another factor in the weak link between food and tourism has to do with the type of visitors to Rotorua. A large percentage of visitors (21.3%) to Rotorua are coach tourists (Becken, Lennox, Fitt and Butcher, 2007). Industry experts pointed out that a characteristic of this type of tourist is the fact that meals are pre-paid and pre-arranged (and generally low budget), negating the need for the tourists to purchase food in Rotorua. Also with the exception of breakfast, interviewees indicated that Chinese tour groups do not eat meals in hotels, but at Asian restaurants, unless experiencing hangi and concert. The Indian tour market also poses something of an enigma to those who would like to encourage the use of local cuisine in tourism. Several interviewees stated that Indian tour groups to Rotorua often travel with their own chef who takes care of all their meals. Cohen and Avieli (2004, p. 775) have noted that there is extreme reluctance by some groups of tourists, in particular Asian tour groups, to consume Western cuisine or foods different from their own. The authors believe that this is partially due to strict religious dietary requirements and also due to a lack of familiarity with Western cuisine.

Rotorua also positions itself as a family orientated destination (Rotorua Tourism Advisory Board, 2007). Many of the food and tourism experts (62%) interviewed for this research are of the opinion that children play a large part in selecting what and where families eat in Rotorua. The experts reported that fast-food outlets such as

McDonalds are a popular dining choice for families visiting Rotorua rather than more up-market restaurants.

In their research concerning the use of local foods on restaurant menus in New Zealand Smith and Hall (2003, p. 255) reported that “less than half of all restaurants (thirty nine percent) describe the origin of food on their menu in terms of being local or New Zealand produce (forty percent).” According to Smith and Hall (2003, p. 255), identifying local cuisine on the menu helps in regional branding and also assures customers that they are consuming locally grown ‘authentic’ foods. Although keen to identify local produce on their menus; and work in partnership with local suppliers, only a minority of those interviewed for this research, directly responsible for food purchasing, sourced food locally.

Eastham (2003, p. 235) recounts that “the extent to which tourism provides real value to a community [...] depends on the level to which it may support local economic activity.” According to Eastham (2003, p. 235), failure to source food locally reduces the economic flow-on effect to others in the community, and increases income leakage from a region. In this study, problems with sourcing local suppliers, obtaining sufficient quantities of selected produce, finding consistent and reliable suppliers, and sourcing produce out of season are cited as reasons for not taking advantage of regional produce. It was also pointed out by the experts that costs involved with buying local, are often higher when using local suppliers, as they are not able to apply economies of scale to pricing as large suppliers are able. In some instances, for example, in the case of some hotels and franchise food businesses, the source of food and food suppliers is dictated by international ownership and head offices removed from the locality. Food is sourced from Auckland by head office and transported down to the region. This is contributing to economic leakage from the Bay of Plenty region. In the opinion of the experts, it also provides little opportunity or incentive for smaller producers to supply produce to hotel restaurants. To overcome some of these constraints it is important that communication is improved between producers and suppliers in the district of Rotorua.

An important factor in the successful linkage of tourism and food and the ability for businesses to remain competitive and sustainable is action on the part of stakeholders to establish networks and/or cluster groups in the regions. A cluster is defined by Porter (1990) as a collection of businesses in a geographical region that are connected by the markets that they supply, products that they produce, as well as any trade associations and other suppliers that they have in common. Networks are about cooperative behaviour between organisations that may otherwise be in competition with each other (Hall, Mitchell and Sharples, 2003). The businesses in a network may be linked through social contacts or through resource based institutions such as banks, and regional and national agencies (Hall et al, 2003; Lynch and Morrison, 2007). Hall (2004, p. 170) maintains that the development of local networks and cluster relationships is crucial to local economic development because small enterprises are able to pool and share resources such as supplier and distribution chains, information and market intelligence.

Clusters form 'value chains' that enable successful competition in a globalised setting (Hall, 2004, p. 171). In terms of tourism this concept is critical because it is the bringing together of a range of attributes or increasing the breadth of product offerings to enhance visitor satisfaction that generates growth and employment opportunities (Hall 2004, p. 171). A cluster supports the networking of small to medium sized enterprises within a region so that they can achieve aims that may not be realised independently and enable them to compete more effectively with other regions (New Zealand Trade and Enterprise, 2007). Member businesses derive benefit through increases in economies of scale that clustering brings (Michael, 2007, p. 29).

In New Zealand, destinations identified in this research as places linking food and tourism - Hawke's Bay, Marlborough and Nelson, and Northland, Wairarapa, and Queenstown, have an ingredient common to them all which is the existence of a 'food group' to drive local food producers and tourism industry interests. In the case of Rotorua, this research highlights a lack of a concerted joint effort on the part of key stakeholders such as local farmers, food producers, and tourism operators, to promote food in tourism and to form local food networks or clusters. Research has

shown that the existence of an impassioned individual to drive and foster food cluster groups has been particularly important in the New Zealand situation as until recently there has been little national or local government involvement in encouraging food and tourism networks and cluster groups (Hall et al., 2003).

Rotorua appears to lack that impetus of a local food 'hero', indicating that the need for national and local government support in the development of networks is even more vital for the district. The 2015 New Zealand tourism strategy and recent public policy strongly advocates collaboration and partnerships in tourism, and with various central government funding initiatives along with regional government support, cluster initiatives integrating food and tourism businesses may now eventuate in Rotorua.

A part of the drive to get food and tourism groups working together, is the need for Rotorua business people to realise the advantages of firstly, clusters of competitive businesses operating together, and, secondly, of the advantages to be had in actually linking food and tourism. Almost all respondents in this study with a stakehold in the district (82%) indicated that they would consider working together to help promote food in the region. Many of the respondents (63%) were very interested in establishing a cluster group to help achieve this. Apathy on the part of local businesses and producers could be at the root of inaction and failure of some local stakeholders to work together. The inability of the food producing community to work together to run a farmers' market in the region is telling, however, potential members of cluster groups are possibly hesitant about working directly with their competitors. Cluster theory highlights the importance of trust and good communications between cluster members (Michael, 2007). Individuals in Rotorua seeking to establish food and tourism partnerships with complementary businesses also need to look beyond the immediate district of Rotorua, to the wider Bay of Plenty region and beyond for alliances.

Current tourism policy in New Zealand focuses on increased autonomy of local and regional stakeholders within the regions to manage resources in a sustainable way (Ministry of Tourism, 2007). For example the New Zealand Tourism Strategy 2015

states: “Local governments have a crucial role to play in delivering leadership, planning and management to their communities to maximise benefits and minimise negative impacts from tourism” (Ministry of Tourism, 2007, p. 48). The responsibility for the promotion of the region and individual attractions is autonomous with local RTO. All interviewees believe that responsibility for the co-ordination of promotion of food in tourism lies with Tourism Rotorua. Respondents are of the opinion that local and regional foods need to be accentuated in the advertising of the region as a tourism destination, including the promotion of speciality restaurants and restaurants offering local foods on the menu. du Rand and Heath, (2006, p. 107) in their study of the perceived constraints and gaps regarding food tourism in South Africa noted that when RTO “funds were limited the promotion of food, which is considered a product that will be consumed regardless whether or not it promoted, will not be included in marketing efforts.” In relation to this, the view was expressed by some of the expert informants in the interview process that as Rotorua is already a highly successful tourism destination, there has been no recognised need to link food and tourism in promotions. In light of the opportunities that linking food and tourism presents for the wider benefit of the community, it would be short-sighted not to promote local food.

All of those interviewed considered that it was vital to link food and tourism in the regional tourism strategy. The New Zealand 2015 strategy states:

It is important for regions and communities to preserve and promote their local character and incorporate this into all aspects of the visitor experience. To achieve this we need to strengthen existing and establish new events and products that promote regional identity and differentiation.

(Ministry of Tourism, 2007 p. 51)

This statement indicates a clear role for food in tourism. The Rotorua Visitor Industry Strategic Plan 2007-2015 is not quite so clear on its positioning and emphasis on preserving and promoting local character, merely making reference to improved returns for tourism business by encouraging the development of new

products to increase visitor spend. Tourism Rotorua have yet to be convinced of the virtues of building closer relationships with the food sector.

7.1.3 Opportunities

A variety of new, viable food products, were identified for the region during the course of the interviews, including: the promotion and development of indigenous cuisine featuring locally grown produce such as koura, eel, Maori heritage potatoes and vegetables, and a range of branded local produce and specialities featuring indigenous ingredients. The experts also suggested that local tourism businesses and the wider community would benefit from an annual food event such as a culinary fair which may help to raise the profile of local produce in Rotorua. Food themed activities such as festivals have become increasingly important in affirming community identity and values (Hall and Sharples, 2008). Rusher, (2003, p. 198) states: "... such festivals raise awareness of the host community and region, repositioning or reaffirming the region in the minds of festival attendees."

Other suggestions included greater promotion of boutique food experiences, featuring high quality New Zealand ingredients. Several respondents were also keen on establishing a reputation for fish and game food in Rotorua such as wild boar, eel, pheasant, duck, koura and inanga, as a specialist tourist attraction for the region. The supply of game food also provides for the associated experiences of hunting, fishing and harvesting.

Specialist food activities provide the opportunity to develop regionally distinct food experiences (Everett and Aitchison, 2008). Respondents suggested greater packaging of local foods together with other key attractions in the district, all of which will help to build a stronger regional identity for Rotorua tourism. The study also found that there is opportunity to create links with the many and varied food producers in the wider Bay of Plenty region. For example, there are a variety of food crops grown in the region such as feijoas, avocados, olives, apples, citrus, berries and grapes; agriculture and dairy farming are strong industries in the region. There are also smaller artisan producers of bread, cheese, salami, saffron and truffles.

7.2 Contributions of the thesis

Despite the fact that Rotorua is not known for its food and does not boast a ready heritage of food and wine, the research indicates that it is possible for destinations with these constraints to construct and invent regional identity and differentiate from other locations, using local food. Central to this is the development of regional cuisine using indigenous and locally grown crops. During the research a range of crops local to Rotorua and the wider Bay of Plenty Region were identified along with a number of indigenous wild foods that could be developed into marketable products. It is these crops, products, and cuisines which help to differentiate a region from its competitors. Tourists as well as local people need to eat. If their needs can be met through local resources this is not only environmentally sound but can also boost the local economy.

Local produce also meets tourist's desire for authenticity. This thesis enhances the body of knowledge relating to authenticity by engaging with debates and critical thinking surrounding the concept of authenticity and its applicability to food. The relevance of theorising authenticity based upon a static or objective view of food and culture is questioned in the literature (Taylor, 2001). Taylor (2001) and Lymburn, (2004) write that the vested effort and 'sincerity' in making an experience enjoyable and relevant for all have become more important than the concept of authenticity. Food experiences connect with the tourist at a personal level, therefore an existential understanding of authenticity is perhaps more applicable in its application to food (Wang, 1999; Cohen, 2002). In this view tourists are searching for a more authentic sense of self. Choosing 'local' products that are perceived to be more ethically sound and more personally pleasurable may provide greater existential authenticity for tourists.

This study has also made a contribution by drawing attention to barriers to the integration of food and tourism. Despite the potential advantages of linking food and tourism, this research indicates that such an approach is not without operational problems. Interviews with experts revealed that constraints may arise in destinations over the ability of local food distributions systems to deliver

sufficient quantities and reliable supplies of produce during peak visitor season. The production of food is seasonal as is tourism. Matching supply with demand can be problematic. Food producers need to be made aware of timings and fluctuations in the tourism calendar and be prepared to accommodate changes in demand. Conversely, if peak production time does not coincide with the peak tourism season, then hotels and restaurants may be forced to seek produce from out of region. In relation to this, the research indicates that the quality and freshness of the produce is very important.

One of the most important impediments to the greater integration of food in tourism, as perceived by the experts, is the high cost of local produce as compared to that supplied by large scale national suppliers. Large hotel chains with decentralised management teams often have their own suppliers located out of the region which are engaged to counter these costs. This represents substantial economic leakage in the local economy. Pre-paid tour groups also contribute to economic leakage through commission exacted in the country of origin.

Many of these issues have been encountered in other studies of the links between food and tourism, for example, Nummedal and Hall's (2006) investigation of the New Zealand's South Island's bed and breakfast sector's use and perception of local food. Some of the above issues may be overcome with the formation of cluster groups and networks working together to pool resources. Ultimately increased communication between suppliers, restaurants, hotels and tourism operators offering food is needed so that expectations on both sides are met.

Central to the relationship between food and tourism are the backward linkages created by the synergies of the food and tourism industries. Backward associations actually link the tourism industry more effectively to the local economy and help to sustain economic growth. This research shows that two key factors need to be in place to enable the role of food in tourism to be enhanced. The first factor is the recognition by stakeholders of the many benefits that the linkage of food in tourism provides. One of the most valuable contributions of the thesis is in emphasising the importance of cluster and networking initiatives in building closer links between

food and tourism. Cluster building is a means of establishing critical mass in marketing and promotion, and in establishing credibility. There may be difficulties in convincing competitors to work together, this study also highlights the need for a local 'hero' to initiate clustering activity, particularly in New Zealand (Hall, 2004).

The research has important implications for local District Councils, policy makers and Regional Tourism Organisations. The evidence from the interviews and the literature suggests that much greater leadership, support and coordination, not to mention financial assistance, is needed from this quarter to facilitate and promote food in tourism in the regions, in particular in the formation of cluster groups incorporating both vertical and horizontal integration. The research shows that government has an important role to play in the dissemination of information regarding the benefits of cluster and network formation. RTO's may also help by hosting and facilitating meetings in public-private partnerships.

Ultimately full support for increased inter-sector relations comes with the integration of food in tourism strategies and support from national tourism policy. The New Zealand Tourism Strategy 2015 acknowledges and provides for the development of new products that may help to extend the tourism season throughout the year. The strategy also encourages the advancement of products which help to increase visitor yield. The research indicates that food-based products are well placed to meet these challenges.

The Rotorua Visitor Industry Strategic Plan 2007-2015 makes reference to "working collaboratively across other community sectors that have a direct or indirect gain from the visitor spend" (Rotorua Tourism Advisory Board, 2007). Despite this statement there is no clear direction within the strategy as to how or where this collaboration may be achieved. This study mirrors other research that highlights the importance of improved communications between all stakeholders in the local tourism community. One of the most important findings of the study that has implications for RTOs is that a broader range of stakeholders such as those in the food industry need to be actively engaged in the local tourism chain (Cambourne and Macionis, 2003; Smith and Hall, 2003).

During the course of the study it emerged that Rotorua destination marketing has not capitalised on the opportunity to more thoroughly promote the region's food. Destination image is one of the key 'pull' factors that attract visitors to a region and food is an important aspect of that image (Fields, 2002). This research emphasises the need for increased promotion of food in marketing materials that more effectively meets the needs of potential tourists. The findings of the case study and interviews have emphasised the necessity to inventory local food opportunities in each area or region. This produce 'list' can then be used as part of the region's promotion and is the first step in building closer ties between food and tourism (du Rand, Heath, and Alberts, 2003).

7.2.1 Future research agenda

In order to build on this initial study of food and tourism in Rotorua ideally a large scale survey of tourists needs to be conducted which specifically relates to consumer behaviour and spending patterns, lifestyle (Hall and Mitchell, 2006), and food experiences in Rotorua. In relation to this it would be pertinent to survey tourists on the importance that they attach to the availability of local food. This will provide information as to the value of local food as a promotional tool for destinations.

Research is also required to understand the culinary needs of different tourist groups, for example Chinese visitors, and how best to offer food tourism experiences that contribute to the overall enjoyment of their stay in Rotorua.

The capacity of local food suppliers to meet the needs of Rotorua tourism sustainably and competitively also needs further investigation. Thought will need to be given to the infrastructure required in terms of the food supply chain and supplying local hotels and restaurants consistently and reliably with quality produce. This research would require information from both food and tourism stakeholders.

Research also needs to be conducted with regard to network and cluster building and producer/tourism dialogue. Initially a survey of stakeholders is suggested to

garner support for clustering/networks. The list of those surveyed should include RTO representatives, tourism and food sector representatives, policy makers, and funding bodies. This could be followed up with semi-structured interviews specifically designed to provide a deeper understanding of the practicalities and constraints that may be faced by group members.

The viability of a Farmers' market in the district is another suggested area for study. Initially particular attention should be given to why attempts to set up a market have failed in the past. Support for market operations in terms of producers and consumers needs to be established. The location of the market in Rotorua also appears to be a contentious issue that needs settling.

As some of the food initiatives identified in this research have focused on cultural products, local Maori representatives will need to be surveyed as to the possibilities of farming and growing, and supplying Maori foods for the local tourism industry.

In conclusion, this study's use of in-depth expert interviews has helped to identify existing food experiences and to identify a range of opportunities for the generation of new products and food related activities. The interviews also revealed a range of critical constraints which serve as impediments to closer ties between food and tourism. A growing demand for quality local food has provided regions with a potential tool to enhance local and regional development and contribute to destination differentiation: one that increases visitor yield without compromising regional integrity. This thesis has demonstrated the value of food and its ability to enhance a destination's appeal. The use of food in tourism can contribute to regional economic and social sustainability and its potential role should not be underestimated, and indeed, should be nurtured by tourism policy makers, planners and other industry stakeholders.

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Appendix 1

INTERVIEW GUIDE

This will be the core set of questions areas. The emphasis and content will evolve according to the person interviewed.

Professional status

1. What is your professional status/title eg executive chef, restaurant owner?
2. How many years have you been in the food and/or tourism industry?

National and regional cuisine

3. Does New Zealand have a particular cuisine to call its own?
4. Does New Zealand have regional cuisine?
 - Identify typical New Zealand foods
 - Is there potential to develop a regional cuisine in Rotorua?
 - Can food be used to create a point of difference for the Rotorua region?
 - Support for developing a regional cuisine?
 - Do you think local food experiences are important to visitors?
 - Do you identify local food on your menu?

Barriers to closer links between food and tourism

5. Identify barriers to establishing food and tourism linkages
 - What are some of the issues to do with local food supply e.g. cost, seasonality?

Cultural Aspects of food experiences

6. Identify main food experience in Rotorua tourism
 - Have you attended a hangi and concert in Rotorua?
 - Do you think the hangi is an authentic experience?
 - Which hangi experience do you think is the most authentic and why?
 - Are there any other food experiences that could be developed to enhance the distinctiveness and attractiveness of the region?

Promotion of local food

7. Do you think that the Rotorua RTO should be promoting local cuisine or should the promotion come from local food producers or local restaurants or local tourism operators or an alliance of all the key stakeholders?

- Would you be prepared to work as part of a group promoting food in the region?
- What is the potential for establishing a farmers' market in the district of Rotorua
- Holding a food festival in Rotorua?
- Is the region's little developed wine industry a perceived barrier in linking food and tourism?
- Are you happy with the current promotion of local food in Tourism Rotorua marketing materials?

Regional Tourism Strategy

8. Do you think that it is important to link food and tourism in the Tourism Rotorua strategy?

Other comments and observations

Appendix 2

Participant Information Sheet

Date Information Sheet Produced:
September 2004

Project Title

Food, Tourism and Destination Differentiation: The Case of Rotorua, New Zealand

Invitation

This is an invitation to participate in an ongoing study into the use of food in tourism.

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of the research is to understand the role of food in Rotorua and New Zealand tourism and how food in tourism may be used to gain local economic advantage and differentiation.

How are people chosen to be asked to be part of the study?

Participants in the study are selected based on relevant industry experience, expertise and position and includes hospitality and tourism representatives, contacts and officials.

What happens in the study?

Participants are invited to take part in an interview process consisting of about 20 questions to garner your thoughts and views on the use of food in tourism.

What are the benefits ?

Participants will make a valuable contribution to the research project, aspects of which may result in publication, and it is hoped that participants will enjoy the interview process.

How will my privacy be protected?

Individuals may be identified in the final report; however opportunity to remain anonymous will be given. All raw data will be stored in a locked cabinet.

How do I join the study?

Please complete the consent to participation form and return to researcher.

What are the costs of participating in the project? (including time)

There are no direct costs attached to participating in this project, however, the interview will require about one hour of your time.

Opportunity to consider invitation

Participation in this research is optional. If you do not wish to participate in the research process please inform the interviewer when appointment times are being confirmed with you. You may also withdraw at any stage during the interview.

Opportunity to receive feedback on results of research

A copy of the report from the research will be made available to you.

Participant Concerns

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary, AUTEK, Madeline Banda, madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz , 917 9999 ext 8044.

Researcher Contact Details: Rose Steinmetz C/O Auckland University of Technology 917 9999

Project Supervisor Contact Details: Dr Simon Milne, simon.milne@aut.ac.nz, 917 9999 ext 8777

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on October 2004 AUTEK Reference number 04-130.



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TE WĀNANGA ARONUI O TAMAKI MAKAU RAU

Appendix 3

Consent to Participation in Research

Title of Project: Food, tourism and destination differentiation: The Case of Rotorua, New Zealand

Project Supervisor: Dr Simon Milne

Researcher: Rose Steinmetz

- I have read and understood the information provided about this research project (Information Sheet dated September 2004.)
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- I understand that the interview will be audio-taped and transcribed.
- I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.
- If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.
- I agree to take part in this research.
- I wish to receive a copy of the report from the research: tick one: Yes
 No

Participant signature:

.....

..

Participant name:

.....

Participant Contact Details (if appropriate):

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Date:

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.