A trip down memory lane to travellers’ food experiences

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Abstract

Purpose – Research on food tourism has a significant impact on destination attractiveness. However, components interfacing food experiences and memory are under-researched topics in food tourism literature. Therefore, this study aims to present a framework based on the components of rememberable food experiences while travelling through the lens of the diffusion of sensory stimulation.

Design/methodology/approach – This study adopted a qualitative application of “Memory-Work”, a social constructionist archetype suggested for food tourism-related research. A survey was conducted, and the respondents were asked an open-ended question.

Findings – The analysis found the components instigating these food experiences: Peculiar food and drink experience, setting/geographical location, companions and social interactions, celebrating occasions and touristic components (e.g. serendipitous travel experience and food nostalgic memory). Predominantly, rememberable food tourism experiences are more explicit than memorable tourism experiences.

Research limitations/implications – The components mentioned in this framework illustrate that various food-related experiences should be involved in destination marketing. Service providers could use these components to create unique destination stories.

Originality/value – This study is the first to present a newly developed framework for food tourism service providers that incorporates sensory impressions with food memories to explore the connection between food memories associated with a destination.

Keywords Food experience, Food and memory, Rememberable food experience, Food and travel, Travel and memory

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

In the past few years, food tourism has been established as a distinctive form of tourism, stimulating the hospitality and tourism industry’s development internationally (Giacosa et al., 2017; Stone et al., 2019). Food tourism is derived from tourists’ interest in exploring food and drinks around the host destination (Tung and Ritchie, 2011). Plentiful studies have stated that food is critical in outlining a particular destination’s uniqueness (Schwartz, 2020; Kaur et al., 2021). Consequently, food can be a crucial stimulant that can turn into a great selling point strengthening a country’s tourism picture and advancing its cultural heritage to attract tourists (Ferraris et al., 2021; Richards, 2021).

Food memories are integral to destinations and play an essential role in framing a traveller’s decision-making (Mariani and Okumus, 2022). There also exists a commercial impact of food on destinations, as food expenditure represents 20%–30% of the trip expenses (Stone et al., 2017). Food and drink encounters can effectively influence the impression and advancement of the destination (Khatabet al., 2021; Singh et al., 2021). Subsequently, the research on food tourism has a viable significance for the tourism industry. Stone et al. (2019) stated in their study that food experiences during travelling get engrained in the memories as food carries a more significant impact on memory than other destination attributes. The crafting of memories
involves a sensory paradigm. From a marketing perspective, it is crucial to explore the sensory impressions connected with a destination that can provide rememberable experiences, giving fruitful outcomes like positive word of mouth (Kan et al., 2021).

The pertinent role of sensory impressions in the travellers’ long-term food memory experiences at tourist destinations is not comprehended and portrayed clearly in the literature. Furthermore, the literature on rememberable food experiences lacks the inclusion of sensory impressions as an essential aspect of food tourism research. In the past decade, very few studies emphasised memory and food experiences. Therefore, this area needs further investigation. Prior tourism researchers (Kim, 2010; Tung et al., 2017; Tung and Ritchie, 2011) have given frameworks linking travel encounters to memory—generally concentrating on the whole trip or vacation. Tung and Ritchie (2011) suggested that future researchers determine particular travel components that stimulate rememberable experiences. This research aims to fill in the gaps mentioned above and aims to achieve the two objectives:

1. To examine how food-related activities during travelling experiences are associated with memory from a traveller’s perspective.

2. To present a newly developed framework that incorporates sensory impressions with food memories to explore the connection between food memories associated with a destination.

A sensory dimension of traveller’s experiences is also attached to the proposed framework. This sensory dimension is linked to the framework because food and drink-related activities involve more senses than other travel activities. The sensory aspects include touch, sight, smell, taste and sound (Hinojosa-Aguayo et al., 2022). Stone et al. (2021) invariably stated that memory could also be considered a sense because senses are immensely connected with memory, and sensory connections arising from food and memory can assist in explaining why food experiences are rememberable.

The present study adopted a qualitative approach to extend the literature on food tourism and the importance of memory in tourism by examining how food/beverages can make an experience rememberable. Tourism memory existing frameworks are reviewed in the study, and the authors developed a new framework including the distinctive components of food and drink experiences. Recommendations are given on how tourism providers can design rememberable food-related experiences.

2. Literature review

2.1 Food, food-related activities and memories

Dantec et al. (2021) stated food and drinks are intrinsic to memory as they generally involve all five organs. As per Ramirez-Gutiérrez et al. (2021), food can bring out cognitive, sentimental and physical remembrances. Nonetheless, it is challenging to accurately depict the association between food and memory. As per previous researchers, one significant explanation is that it is challenging to define memory (Kim et al., 2022) because it might indicate an individual or shared memory. As per Stone et al. (2017), memory is a continuous cycle, and it gives value to the past, either personally or socially. Furthermore, Tsai (2016) stated that the opportunity to reach out to new flavours permits travellers to acquire a sensory pleasure of local customs that creates positive memories.

As per psychology professors, food memories trigger associative memories (Dantec et al., 2021). The memories of food while travelling can be due to various reasons. For example, food memories are generally related to specific instances and can be described as events. For instance, while travelling, even regular exercises like eating may seem phenomenal in the
light of the cuisine or the setting. Table 1 shows components from previous frameworks that can prompt a rememberable food experience.

### 2.2 Memorable tourism experiences (MTE)

Tourism businesses need to know the art of developing memorable experiences for tourists. A destination offering a remarkable and outstanding experience will be a memorable one and will have a competitive advantage (Richards, 2021). Satisfied and delighted travellers can be the source of positive word of mouth for the destination (Afaq et al., 2021). In today’s world of social media, positive comments can further attract many travellers (Gaur et al., 2021; Singh et al., 2019).

The studies on MTE have mostly emphasised conceptualising and estimating its determinants (Kim, 2014). As per Fuentes-Moraleda et al. (2022), it is vital to identify the primary constructs that can make travel experiences memorable. Kim et al. (2010) uncovered that people who see their travel experience as memorable would generally recollect the seven dimensions: (1) hedonism incorporates excitement, enjoyment and new experience for travellers, (2) meaningfulness involves a feeling of accomplishment and self-discovery, (3) refreshment that includes a sense of freedom and rejuvenation, (4) native culture depicting the local culture and local people, (5) novelty comprises unique and new experiences, (6) knowledge involves exploring information and (7) involvement contains activities that interest travellers. An MTE scale was developed by Chandralal and Valenzuela (2013) to incorporate human interactions and social togetherness into MTE. For instance, intense MTE can advance into deeper associations with the near and dear ones due to shared travel moments.

### 2.3 Sensory enticement and memory

In regard to the food tourism experiences, episodic memories, which include the long-term storing of memories comprising personal experiences, are considered the most interesting (Schwartz, 2020). Stone et al. (2021) stated that travelling experiences should be strong enough to enter the category of long-term memory. Attaining tourists’ attention is a challenging affair for the destination managers. Therefore, to provide a rememberable positive experience to destination travellers, it is vital to explore the sensory stimuli of the travellers. Different sensory impressions like touch, sight, taste, smell or sound can assist in creating positive memories (Brochado et al., 2021). Fakfare et al. (2021) depict tourism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tr>
<td>Local culture</td>
<td>Local ingredients, methods and techniques, cultural background and traditions</td>
<td>Kim (2014), Lin and Mao (2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service quality</td>
<td>Friendly, respectful and supportive staff and exceeding service quality</td>
<td>Hernández-Mogollón et al. (2020), Kim (2014)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Novelty</td>
<td>Novel food features, a unique method of food preparation, unusual and new food experience</td>
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<td>Social interactions</td>
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<td>Sensory attributes</td>
<td>Food appearance, smell, flavour and texture</td>
<td>Mak et al. (2012), Randall and Sanjur (1981)</td>
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<td>Events</td>
<td>Family trip, meal-type, family customs, togetherness and level of involvement and break from the monotonous life</td>
<td>Lin and Mao (2015), Tung and Ritchie (2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>Family, delight or pleasure, physical setting and atmosphere</td>
<td>Kauppinen-Räisänen et al. (2013)</td>
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Table 1. Components of memorable food tourism derived from previous frameworks.
experiences as sensory impressions and highlight them as environmental factors. As per Brochado et al. (2021), despite the complexity wrapped around the concept of aesthetics, its broad definition supports that aesthetics depicts the impression of the outer world by the senses.

Furthermore, the study by Xu et al. (2022) states that destination managers should use aesthetic inventory and authenticity for their strategic planning as the magnificence of a destination moves ahead of the visual facets and involves all senses.

2.4 Rememberable food/drink experiences
Food/drinks are vital in destination attractiveness and significantly impact tourist destination choice (Richards, 2021). Food tourism is a multidimensional concept. It is much more than the basic idea of eating food as it incorporates the whole cycle of food production, preparation and consumption (Hall, 2020). There are many definitions of food, culinary or gastronomic tourism. Choo et al. (2022) state that food tourism is a process individuals use to explore and discover a place’s history and know its culture by exploring its food customs and events associated with forming MTE. Tsai (2016) specified that tourists who consume local food and cuisines at a destination learn the local culture and gain a delightful and refreshing experience.

Other studies intended to conceptualise models for a rememberable food experience and developed scales of measurements (Dedeoglu et al., 2022). Pourfakhimi et al. (2021) stated that having food can be a customer’s experience (the functional requirements to sustain oneself) or an exceptional experience (hedonic engagement). Once the functional needs are intensified with the introduction of novel components, it is said that a peak experience is created.

Nonetheless, this model’s constraint is not assessing other components like the quality of service and dining setting. Hernández-Mogollón et al. (2020) mentioned that a restaurant’s service quality is an essential attribute, and the physical environment and food quality should accompany it. Furthermore, Tsai (2016) found that locality also plays a vital role in creating memorable food experiences.

3. Methodology
3.1 Memory work
This study adopted the qualitative criterion of memory work, a social constructionist archetype introduced by (Haug, 1999). The application of “Memory-Work” is suggested in food tourism-related research (Small, 1999) and consumer research (Thomsen and Hansen, 2009). The current study applied “memory work” arising out of its inceptive feminist research (Onyx and Small, 2001). The criteria for selecting the respondents for conducting the research were set as the respondent’s age should be 18 years and above and should have gone minimum on one nightlong trip (at least 100 km or 62 miles) in the past three years. This age limit was set as the past studies on food tourism have used these minimum age criteria of 18 years and a minimum of 50 miles distance to be travelled as a tourist in recent years before including the participants in the study (Stone et al., 2017). The memory work approach involves a qualitative survey. Qualitative surveys use open-ended questions that can provide long written or typed answers (Stone et al., 2017). They help reveal experiences and opinions in detail by giving the respondents the liberty to express their thoughts freely (Braun et al., 2021).

3.2 Relevance of memory work approach
This study adopted this methodology for data collection by inviting people to recall a specific occasion or episode. This approach allows the respondents to write about a favourable
memory in regard to a question. Memory work enables the respondents to reflect on their experiences and emotions in writing, which evokes sensory aspects that may not be clearly carried out in other qualitative techniques like semi-structured interviews. For example, there is less involvement in descriptions like taste, colour and sound in many qualitative methods. These aspects, like the surrounding thoughts and images, are essential in making memories. Writing memories gives focused attention and helps discover tangible and intangible facets of sensations.

Furthermore, as per the memory work approach, a single broad question is better to evoke participants’ memories (Lupton, 1994). As per Kivela and Crotts (2009), answering one broad question without getting interrupted helps the respondent fully reveal the emotional and sensory facets of experiences while writing. It brings out the minutest memories and emotions, including the smell, colour and sounds associated with a particular memory.

3.3 Data collection
For this research, the responses are collected from four countries: The United States of America, Australia, Germany and India. These countries were chosen explicitly due to their size in providing a wide range of food-related experiences to tourists. An open-ended question was asked from the respondents: “Narrate your most memorable food/drink/experience while travelling.” The respondents were free to describe the experiences explicitly and give as much information as desired. The data collection was done over four months (October 2021 to January 2022).

Past research on memory, food, tourism and food experiences assisted in framing the open-ended question. For the data collection process, we visited the travel review site TripAdvisor of the selected countries and identified the users who gave a minimum of 20 reviews of different places. TripAdvisor is preferred for this study as it is regarded as a reliable online community where users write reviews on food experiences, and previous researchers in tourism have used TripAdvisor for data collection procedures (Yoon et al., 2019). Next, once the profile of the identified traveller was shortlisted, we sent them a personal message on their profile stating the purpose of our research and requested them to share their email address. We adopted this procedure specifically for data collection because we wanted only those participants to be included in the study who have actually visited some tourist places in the last few years to gather authentic data for our analysis. As per previous studies, online panels for data collection in the tourism industry have been a popular source (Stone et al., 2017). We have sent personal messages to more than 1,600 users on TripAdvisor; however, we got the responses and email addresses of only 200 users. We have sent the open-ended questionnaire to 195 users, as five email addresses were not valid. The questionnaire was divided into two phases. The first phase contained information regarding the demographics like name, gender, nationality and age, and the second phase had only one open-ended question, as stated above. We got the filled questionnaire from 150 respondents. However, only 110 responses were included as they met the selection criteria. The respondents were 46% male and 54% female. Figure 1 presents the demographics of the respondents.

3.4 Coding
To better understand the data, the responses were read many times. After reading the data, the authors initially created five broad categories detailing different responses. The categories were: food/drinks that gave respondents the most pleasurable experiences, places where the peak food/drink experience occurred, people with whom the memorable experienced occurred, the event or occasion that created the memory and what made the event memorable.
Consequently, data exploration was executed by implying the Query command in NVivo12. A mini description of a few words was assigned to the responses to collect all references related to the rememberable food experiences while travelling. At this point in the analysis, codes changed and emerged. Codes were also reclassified, new codes were generated, and new patterns were identified. The new patterns were further analysed. The uniformities in the responses were identified. Further, themes were developed, and the most persistent and important themes were identified after examining the initial and overall codes and patterns.

4. Results and discussion
Combining the findings of this study with the existing literature has helped develop the framework for rememberable food experiences. The analysis findings based on the memory work approach assisted in identifying the components that lead to rememberable food experiences. This section presents the various components that add a rememberable food experience. Every respondent’s age, gender and country of origin are recorded in parenthesis (e.g. 54, M, Australia).

4.1 Peculiar food and drink experience
Food memories can evoke strong emotional reactions beyond the food itself to the connections experienced with a particular place or person. As per the results, no specific food characteristic is reliably positioned as the most rememberable. It can be any food or drink experience.

*Local food specialities* were referred to as rememberable. The respondents generally mentioned them as famous food. The local delicacies were not restricted to what tourists may expect before visiting the destination. For instance, the below-mentioned quote depicts the appreciation for the local food speciality that shows the relevance of local food in creating memories. These findings affirm the assertions of *Kim (2014)* that local food specialities are closely related to rememberable food experiences. Also, previous research on MTE states local food is an essential dimension of MTE *(Tsai, 2016)*.

I had a fantastic experience at a restaurant in Greece; the mouthwatering local sugary sweet was heavenly. I was not aware of these delicious local sweets (38, F, Australia).

*Food authenticity* was linked with the rememberable food experiences of many respondents.
Strange or bizarre food depicts a different food that respondents experienced. Travellers’ food experience was memorable because they ate something unfamiliar in their country. This finding supported the existing study of Lin and Mao (2015) that confirms that local food authenticity evokes tourists’ memorability because most travellers are open to new and authentic food during travel. It leaves a lasting impression on their memory. The below-mentioned quotes depict the relevance of food authenticity in forming memorable food experiences.

We do not get reindeer meat at home but simply loved it in Finland and would like to have it (22, F, Australia).

I wish I could flock to Germany every year for its October Fest. The celebration of beer with friends and beer lovers, along with roasted meat and pretzels, cannot be expressed in words (28, M, USA).

Service is pretty much as important as food and drink for creating a memory. For numerous respondents, the food and its service are inseparable. Previous research shows that service is a significant factor influencing food tourism. The hospitality and services rendered by the hosts generally get engrained in the travellers’ minds for a long time (Kim, 2014). The findings of this study also indicate that service quality is an essential parameter for making the experiences memorable. The quote demonstrated below confirms the relevance of service quality in the tourism industry.

Tapas and wine in Venice with personalised service by the restaurant for a first-time visitor like me will always be remembered and cherished (20, F, USA).

4.2 Setting/geographical location
In tourism, the location and the setting play a vital role because people tend to remember the environment and the scene wherein the memorable experience occurred. The findings of previous studies on memorable food episodes depict that food preparations at ancestral homes and traditional restaurants of native places can form memorable experiences (Kauppinen-Räisänen et al., 2013). However, the angle of ancestral homes and native places is not found in the current study. The current study’s findings depict that many memorable experiences were formed due to the newness and uniqueness of the location and setting of restaurants. The respondents mentioned the themes, décor and environment in the restaurants they remembered. The following quotes depict that an unusual and unique set and environment can be a reason for making experiences memorable.

I remember my experience at a bizarre restaurant in Finland; the frozen palace gave me a wonderful dining experience. The entire place was built out of ice, and it is worth remembering (52, M, USA).

I experienced anxiety and fun at O. NOIR Canada, there was no light in the restaurant, and we were to guess the meal with our taste buds (42, M, Australia).

In all the quotes mentioned above, the respondents did not mention the taste of the cuisine or service. However, they remembered the unique environment, which shows that the exceptionality of places in the form of creative settings and environments can create memories.

View and service settings are also amongst the key elements contributing to memorability besides food. The work of Quan and Wang (2004) stated that the physical environment, like the ambience and setting, evokes memories as the environment imprints lasting memories in the travellers’ minds. The current study also demonstrates that view and service setting help form memories. The following quotes from the respondents show that specific components featuring a setting or a view can be essential elements in making experiences incredibly memorable.
In Germany, enjoying the cold breeze at sea with a chilled beer in hand is all I need for a good life. I even miss the hotel I stayed in; its outstanding beach location is worth remembering (55, M, India).

The view of the gorgeous Malom Lake, along with the delicious food, is all I want to experience again (49, F, Australia).

These respondents’ quotes reflect the relevance of view and location in making experiences rememberable. As it can be seen that the respondents might not recall the café or hotel’s name, and some did not even specify the dishes they consumed, but they remembered the view and location. It is evident from the quotes that eliminating the view or location from experience leaves almost nothing from the responses.

*Iconic street foods*’ taste created many memories for the travellers. The traditional street food and its surroundings had memorable impressions on travellers’ minds. The earlier studies’ findings depict that willingness to try new food is related to past experiences or prior food knowledge (Quan and Wang, 2004). However, the current study findings depict that travellers want to try new food even without any prior food knowledge or experience. These findings are in contrast to the findings of Sthapit (2017), who states travellers sometimes don’t prefer unfamiliar or local food and would prefer their routine food during their travel. Moreover, the results of this study suggest that the desire to search for and experience iconic street food and enjoy the local surroundings and atmosphere amongst travellers is growing. The following quote depicts the importance of iconic street food and its impact on creating memories.

The plate looked dirty, but the food was delicious; they called that bread Pav Bhaji. I enjoyed it eating on the busy streets of Delhi. I am unaware of other Indian cuisines, but I would love to try more street foods on busy small corners and streets (27, F, Germany).

*Eating at locals home* was another pattern that evolved from the respondent’s responses. Previous studies state that eating with friends and locals helps develop relationships and create memories (Tung and Ritchie, 2011). Although dining at locals’ homes is not a part of traditional tourism, the findings of this study depict that eating at local’s homes and spending time with the locals’ families created many memories for travellers. The following quote demonstrates the importance of eating at the locals’ homes, which results in creating memories.

My cousin’s friend invited me to her home in China; eating dumplings at a local home is a very different experience. The most rememberable part was when her grandmother made me learn how to prepare them (22, F, India).

4.3 *Companions and social interactions*

Social interactions and togetherness were critical components in creating memories. Family and Friends were observable companions. Previous studies linked mostly social interactions and food memories with family members, particularly mothers and grandmothers (Kauppinen-Räisänen et al., 2013). However, in this study featuring local residents was also a prominent pattern in the responses depicting the rememberable experiences. The findings reveal that eating with family and locals can also enhance sensory perceptions. The aspect of sensory indulgence is also stated by Stone et al. (2021), which state that sensory stimulation is aroused with food consumption which makes unforgettable food memories. The quotes of the respondents present the crux of this theme.

Seeing the preparations of making Paella in Barcelona by a local chef just for my wife and me was incredible. The traditional way of serving it made the food tastier, and I ate more (42, M, Australia).

In Italy, my four friends and I were taken to a cafe by two locals, and we had the pleasure of having Grappa made by an exceptional chef and a bottle of wine (28, M, Germany).
4.4 Celebrating occasions
Special events like honeymoons and anniversaries were often associated with happy food and drink memory. The food itself might be remembered because of the rememberable moment created with the near and dear ones. Previous research has recognised the significance of special occasions in creating memories (Stone et al., 2019). This study also ascertained that special occasions accompanied by food experiences could create memories. The following quote reflects the connection between celebrations and rememberable moments.

I fondly remember eating a famous dessert Ais Kacang with my wife in Malaysia on our honeymoon. My wife and I always remember the taste of the icy and colourful dessert (33, M, India).

Festivals and wine tours also play an important role in making experiences worth remembering. Previous literature mainly highlighted the aspect of restaurants in creating food destination memories (Sthapit, 2017). However, the findings of the current study state that rememberable food experiences can extend beyond bars and restaurant settings. Different festivals, wine tasting tours, and cooking classes were also found to create rememberable experiences. Many respondents mentioned that visiting farms, wineries, festivals, and fairs was a significant part of their travel to different destinations. The following quotes explain the role of festivities in making memories.

I am a vegetarian and loved the vegetarian festival in Phuket. The Thai celebration with music, vegan dishes and colourful parades was fun to watch (26, F, India).

The famous October fest in Germany is my favourite. Herring festival in Denmark was a cultural food festival, and the traditional dance and music enlightened us in unexpected ways (31, F, USA).

4.5 Touristic components
Besides the physical factors of an experience, numerous sociological or cultural factors are connected to memory. The components like novelty and authenticity are an essential part of tourism theories. These components are also discovered from the present study’s findings and are clubbed under the theme of touristic components.

Novelty is a prominent aspect visible in the responses that lead to creating memories. The responses depict countless rememberable food and drink experiences created after tasting the unique food/drink for the first time. Previous studies on MTE widely mention novelty as an essential component, and it is stated that the preference for local food is generally due to the aspect of novelty attached to the food (Quan and Wang, 2004). This study also depicts examples to represent the aspect of novelty in forming memories.

I ordered a pizza with octopus toppings in Venice for the first time. Initially, I did not want to eat it, but after tasting it, I began loving it (38, M, India).

When I went to Italy, I tried a snack named Arancini. It was delicious. My vacation bucket list to Italy always includes this snack (34, F, Australia).

Food nostalgic memory is also evidently found in the responses. It naturally appears significant because it reflects past overwhelming emotions. For some respondents, food evoked mental time travel to happy memories. Indeed, the work of Kauppinen-Räisänen et al. (2013) also found that food brings back memories that trigger nostalgia. The findings illustrate that sentiments and feelings, particularly the core senses of taste, smell and sight, were prominent throughout the responses. The following quotes exhibit the food memories of the past time that brought nostalgia amongst respondents.

I had a dosa in an Indian restaurant in Germany. It always reminds me of the taste and smell of the coconut and mustard paste gravy and the people’s hospitality (26, F, Germany).
The serendipitous travel experience was eminent in some of the food memories mentioned by the respondents. It appeared from the responses that the travellers were not intentionally out to look for a food experience. Instead, they surprisingly encountered a food experience that turned out to be a memorable one. The craving to revisit generally took shape due to a rememberable food experience. The work of Sthapit (2017) suggests that food memories trigger the travellers’ emotional attachment towards the destinations, influencing their revisit intentions for reliving the food experience in future trips. However, the current study suggests that reliving a food experience can occur on the same trip. The following quotes demonstrate the relevance of the serendipitous and surprising food experience.

My friends and I took a trip to Berlin and unknowingly bumped into a local café with the best kebab gaffs and good discount offers; presently, it’s our favourite eating joint (32, M, Germany).

My wife and I showed up at our booked hotel; we toured around the menu but could not decide. We finally settled foot in a small café eating dumplings and wine. It was terrific. The next day, we skipped our dinner, went to the same café and enjoyed the dumplings (60, M, Germany).

4.6 Experience enveloping numerous themes
It was determined from the responses that one experience can fit into varied categories, depicting that it was not a single component that resulted in forming a rememberable moment. The findings show that a combination of food, setting, friends, view, etc., can be involved in creating a memorable experience. The following quotes illustrate that it is possible that a combination of components is also responsible for creating a food memory rather than any single component.

I went to a local restaurant in Venice and had the creamy codfish and a glass of sweet wine. The view of the spectacular Rialto Bridge with friends around definitely makes it a rememberable experience for me (36, F, USA).

I can never forget my trip to Canada, the view of beautiful Niagara Falls and admiring the power of nature with my wife while eating delicious Butter Tart are still fresh in my memory (37, M, USA).

Below mentioned, Figure 2 presents the different aspects that contribute to every component in the framework. Consolidating the study results with existing literature has formed this framework depicting the components of rememberable food-experiences.

5. Conclusion, limitations and implications
5.1 Conclusion
In this study, the authors have depicted the connection between food experiences and memory, emphasising the role of sensory stimuli that give way to positive food memories. The framework’s components can assist tourism researchers and service providers to have an improved understanding of stimulating moments that can convert traveller’s normal food activities into lifelong memories. The components also provide insights into the dominant shift from product/service-specific tourism to co-established experiential tourism that can boost the emerging food tourism market segment comprising travellers from all age brackets, income groups and nationalities.

5.2 Limitations and suggestions for future research
Though limitations exist in a qualitative study utilising online samples, this method was still explicitly adopted to reach a larger sample. In future, this study could be extended by using quantitative data. The respondents could be asked to recollect a rememberable food
experience and determine which components (setting, novelty and food) could be recalled. Qualitatively, respondents could be given a rundown of the categories and enquire about their memories from every category. Also, researchers could more likely associate rememberable experiences with components like revisiting intention and satisfaction in the future. For instance, respondents expressed their desire to return to a rememberable experience—however, the "when" and "why" aspects can be further ascertained more explicitly. Finally, the study can be extended by including the bad experiences of travellers that the tourism service providers can use to target the areas that need improvement.

5.3 Research implications
These research findings contribute to the literature on food experiences and tourism by presenting a framework that uncovers different components of rememberable food experiences. The results highlight the relevance of elements like emotions, authenticity and social interactions that trigger memorable moments that help co-create memorability between the travellers and the host countries. This research further broadens the knowledge base of other vast disciplines like destination food branding and sustainable food tourism.

5.4 Practical implications
The findings of this rememberable food experiences study can be helpful for managers in developing their destination management strategies. Destination food branding activities can cater to regular tourists and also to the unique culinary segment with higher experiential expectations. WOM is the biggest driver that aligns travellers’ expectations and destination hosts’ practices with memorability in the emerging food tourism segment. This study recommends four practitioner strategies.

First, food promotional strategies should target both deliberate tourists and incidental food travellers. The deliberate tourists come after days of online planning for having food adventures. However, incidental food travellers need spontaneous-targeted promotion for creating their food experiences in an afternoon or a long weekend trip.

Second, food travellers’ pictures and words create WOM buzz due to their latest food adventures. Different social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook can encourage
user-generated comments, which can be good tools for promoting food tourism at macro-level destinations and helpful for micro-level entrepreneurs.

Third, mobiles and interactive technology have drastically changed the traditional ways of planning trips. However, the food-tourists state that they would have travelled more if trip planning were easier. Therefore, the inclusion of food-tourism experiences on tourism apps, online guides and recommendations could assist the destination managers in attracting more tourists.

Fourth, many travellers enjoy learning about the local food traditions. Therefore, the hosts and employees can engage the travellers by introducing them to traditional food culture by serving the distinctive local dishes in special and traditional utensils that can prolong the traveller’s memories of food experiences which can impact their revisit intention.

Fifth, destination food branding strategies can incorporate aspects like promoting the local food as a unique product and using it as a tool for positioning. Only price-based differentiating strategies will not work for saturated markets like tourism. Moreover, exceptional food can be used as place symbols and help represent a destination’s culinary identity.

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