

Master Thesis

How do different Actors in the Copenhagen Food Scene stage Food to the Public?

How does this contribute to the Food Component of the Tourism Industry?



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Abstract

Visitors can experience new flavours, textures and culinary traditions through food tourism. Food has the power to increase a place's sustainability, to strengthen its economy, and to demonstrate how welcoming a place is. As a result, the industry of food tourism is growing in popularity. Copenhagen, Denmark is well positioned in the field of food tourism, as the foodie destination is home to many Michelin-starred restaurants. Noma, crowned the best restaurant in the world five times, is one example of many other restaurants which offers the sustainable New Nordic Cuisine. The method of word-of-mouth is considered to be one of the most successful, as people recommend something who are considered genuine. The global phenomenon of influencer marketing is another word-of-mouth marketing, which has gained popularity in recent years and is therefore increasingly included in the marketing strategies of brands to improve communication in the market, also in the food scene.

In this Master thesis qualitative research was applied to gain insights from different stakeholders in the Copenhagen food scene. Therefore, semi-structured interviews and netnography were used to answer the research question "How do different actors in the Copenhagen food scene share food to the public?" and the sub-question "How does this contribute to a component of the tourism industry?". The purpose of the study is to find out how different stakeholders like food tours, public organizations, private restaurants and influencers are working together to stage Copenhagen's food scene which will give precious information about how they are intertwined. This thesis is beginning with the introduction, the research question and then the literature review. The methodology follows, which includes the approach of this study as well as the limitations. Followed by the analysis, the discussion and lastly the conclusion.

Even though not all stakeholders interviewed in this Master thesis contribute directly to tourism, they still do indirectly. Copenhagen's food scene is made up of a mix of small bakeries as well as restaurants like Noma, which represents a very diverse food scene. Like the food scene, however, its tourists are diverse too, associating food with different things. This implies that stakeholders stage food differently. This Master thesis also shows that Copenhagen is considered a foodie destination, although its stakeholders do not always cooperate ideally.

1 Introduction

This Master thesis with the question “How do different actors in the Copenhagen food scene share food to the public? with the subquestion “How does this contribute to a component of the tourism industry?” focuses on the present food tourism in Copenhagen, Denmark. Many countries promote their destination with food and try to attract people in this way, as it is part of their visitor experience and food experiences can add value to the already increasing importance of tourism (Getz et al., 2014; Rachão et al., 2019; Sengel et al., 2015).

Food creates unforgettable experiences in the hospitality and tourism sector and is therefore part of experience tourism; thus, a large focus is placed on food tourism in the destination strategies (Mariani & Okumus, 2022; Yeoman & McMahon-Beatte, 2016). Adventure travellers are looking for instance for new haute cuisine (Mariani & Okumus, 2022). Although, food tourists count itself as a market segment (Sengel et al., 2015). Wonderful Copenhagen is responsible for these destination strategies in the city of Copenhagen. They are representing the destination management organization of Copenhagen and thus have the goal to develop and promote business and leisure tourism (Wonderful Copenhagen, n. d.). Also, this official tourism organization of the city promotes the restaurant scene in Copenhagen. On their website, various restaurants and bistros are promoted, so that everyone can find what they are looking for. Whether traditional Danish food, good value for money, Michelin restaurants, child-friendly restaurants or restaurants that celebrate the Danish lifestyle of *hygge*, everything is included. Also, on the website they point out the world-class and innovative restaurant Noma with its local and seasonal ingredients and its New Nordic Cuisine (Visit Copenhagen c, n. d.).

One of the obvious reasons for focusing on food tourism is the economic profit that the destinations make through it (Rachão et al., 2019). Also, because food and beverages play a major role in whether or how comfortable tourists feel abroad (Lin et al., 2011; Yeoman & McMahon-Beatte, 2016). The choice of restaurants is also important in this regard (Lin et al., 2011). That means bad food and drink equals feeling rather discomfort in the residing land (Yeoman & McMahon-Beatte, 2016). Cultural character of the destination in tourism refers to activities that involve learning about or consuming local products. That means that local food

is considered an important part of it and food tourism is entertaining (Sengel et al., 2015). Food tourism is food that not only satisfies hunger but also promotes social learning and relationships. Furthermore, it is consumed at places where one is confronted with the local culture and thus learns culture, the local geography and meets people (Rachão et al., 2019 & Sengel et al., 2015). The impact of local food on the tourist experience was in the literature often neglected, although a trend is emerging to discover the authenticity of another country and with it the local gastronomy (Sengel et al., 2015). Hence, food is necessary to understand the culture of a country (Rachão et al., 2019). Nevertheless, it should be remembered that every tourist has a different approach to local food. Some see local food as the main reason for a trip, others only as an additional experience, and others prefer to consume their regular diet even on vacation (Sengel et al., 2015).

In this Master thesis, food is seen as a part of the identity and culture of Denmark and at the same time as a major component of the tourism product (Yeoman & McMahon-Beatte, 2016). Food can be a major pull factor of a country but also the main reason why people travel to the country. At the same time, food can show the autonomy of a country, as food shows where it is produced with which gastronomical process and innovation of the country. For this reason, it is important to produce sustainably goods. Food is being included in more and more tourism services, making it increasingly important for destinations to do likewise in order to remain competitive and position themselves attractively (Mariani & Okumus, 2022).

This Master thesis looks at different stakeholders in the food industry who are consciously or unconsciously responsible for attracting tourists. Hence, this does not have to be their main motivation. That is why different organization that promote food in Denmark and different influencers will be interviewed, which will give precious information about the current promotion of food in Copenhagen and about their way of attracting tourists.

1.1 Research Question

This paper, with the research question "How do different actors in the Copenhagen food scene share food to the public?", focuses mainly on various important stakeholders involved in the food scene of Copenhagen, Denmark.

For this, mainly organizations that either offer food tours or organize food events will be interviewed. In addition, influencers as well as restaurants that work together with influencers will be interviewed to also look at the private side that attracts food tourists. For this, an influencer from Copenhagen and one from Norway will be interviewed. Since the New Nordic Cuisine is relevant in all of Scandinavia, the choice of influencers will show if they promote New Nordic Cuisine to their followers or if they choose to focus on a different cuisine (Ooi & Strandgaard, 2017).

As a subquestion, the following question is used in this Master thesis: "How does this contribute to a component of the tourism industry?". Through this question, the Master thesis focuses more on tourism and thus sees the various actors of Copenhagen's food scene as stakeholders that attract food tourists. This may be because of their main motivation or also that their main task and goal is not dedicated to attracting tourists. What they all have in common, however, is that their activities draw attention to the food experiences and offerings in Copenhagen. This thesis explores the question of how various stakeholders from different industries contribute to attracting tourists to Copenhagen through the increasingly popular food tourism and how they are not directly connected but intertwined (Okumus, 2021). Questions that are being asked include how the current food tourism in Copenhagen looks like and how they think Copenhagen is positioned in the food tourism sector.

Due to the fact that Copenhagen has become known for its New Nordic Cuisine in recent years, this Master thesis will look at the influence on tourism in Copenhagen of famous restaurants like Noma, which has been awarded several times as the best restaurant in the world (Denmark.dk, n. d.; Leer & Hoff-Jørgensen, 2022; Morris, 2020; Ooi & Strandgaard, 2017). How can a country that based its traditional dishes mainly on homemade meals with ingredients such as fish, pork, rye bread, cabbage, and root vegetables potatoes through the cold winters and still follows the same in its modern cuisine attract tourists for the food (Denmark.dk, n. d.; Leer, 2016)? This question is addressed in this Master thesis to determine the potential of food tourism in Copenhagen and to find out how this could possibly happen with a city like Copenhagen.

1.2 Structure of the Project

This project starts with the Introduction, which briefly discusses important stakeholders of the Copenhagen food scene and food tourism. In addition, the introduction shows how the research question is formulated and what the objectives are.

This is followed by the literature review, which presents the study's background and the context of this project. Topics like food tourism, the foodie destination, the food culture of Denmark, the sustainability in food tourism through the New Nordic Cuisine and influencer marketing are explained.

Following this is the methodology part, which explains the approach of the study in different subtopics such as qualitative research, research design, data collection and netnography.

After that, the analysis, with the help of the knowledge gained from the interviews, the netnography and the literature review, follow. At the end the discussion/conclusion follows including the limitations of this Master thesis.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Food Tourism

Ellis et al. (2018) describes food tourism (which also includes beverages) as "visitation to primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants and specific locations for which food tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of specialist food production region are the primary motivating factor for travel" (Ellis et al., 2018 & Okumus, 2021). This definition is still accurate, but gradually culture is also becoming increasingly important to mention in the context of food tourism (Ellis et al., 2018). Food tourism offers tourists new tastes, textures, heritage, and local culinary cultures and customs. This leads to authentic food and beverage experiences for tourists. The literature also shows a pattern likewise often includes the same overlapping themes such as: unique food and drink experiences, destination marketing, segmentation of food tourists, molecular gastronomy, sustainability, authenticity and culture (Okumus, 2021).

There are several names that indicate the same or at least similar as food tourism: Food and wine tourism, tasting tourism, culinary tourism or gourmet tourism. Especially the term culinary tourism shows the relationship between different cultures that food creates. Food and culture are therefore inevitably linked. Food also provides the opportunity to learn from another culture and creates a knowledge transfer from the destination. Moreover, food serves as a cultural experience. Food shows the ethnicity and cultural identity of people. This is because people connect food with rituals, symbols and traditions and thus it is part of the authenticity of a destination. Thus, tourists interact and create an experience. New motivations of tourists who sign up for farm tours, food tastings, wine or beer trails, cooking classes or the like can be understood in this way (Ellis et al., 2018). Recent literature also indicates a focus on: cooking classes in for example educational and experiential cooking, culinary trails, food guides, cooking ingredients and offering local cuisines (Okumus, 2021). However, people who are just looking for the must-eat food of a destination also belong to this category. In this paper, the term "food tourism" is used, as it is one of the most commonly used terms and generally refers to the sensual experience of food as a tourist in general (Ellis et al., 2018).

Food is part of the intangible heritage of a destination, therefore sustainable development and management of cultural resources are inevitable aspects of food tourism (Ellis et al., 2018). Food has the power to improve a place's sustainability and authenticity, to boost its economy, and to establish the friendliness of a location (Lin et al., 2011).

Food tourism is an increasingly popular industry, which has positive effects such as increasing the motivation of people to visit a country or, as mentioned before, enhancing its sustainable processes and thus stimulating the agricultural industries, among others (Okumus, 2021). On the other hand, can tourism attract an enormous amount of people, the food supply system can be strongly impacted that can lead to unsustainable impacts (Ellis et al., 2018). To enhance food tourism in a positive direction, more focus should be placed on sustainability, resource management and various environmental issues (Okumus, 2021). To further minimize negative impacts, the government must be involved, and planning must be done with a wide range of stakeholders. Production as well as consumption of cultural goods are part of a sustainable food tourism management, which is a necessity (Ellis et al., 2018).

An example of a popular attraction for so-called food tourists is the five times voted best restaurant in the world Noma (Denmark.dk, n. d.; Leer & Hoff-Jørgensen, 2022; Morris, 2020). Few restaurants in the world have received as much recognition as Noma that is the reason why many people travel especially for trying it out (Morris, 2020). Noma is a fine-dining restaurant that has three Michelin stars and has been serving its guests a New Nordic Cuisine since 2010 (Denmark.dk, n. d.; Leer & Hoff-Jørgensen, 2022; Morris, 2020). Especially because of its presentation of the sustainable New Nordic gastronomy is Noma popular. The culinary movement of the New Nordic started in Scandinavia 15 years ago. This food movement is greater than any previous food development movement. The goal is to transform every step of the food chain from production to consumption. 10 principles must be followed to be part of it, which are based on sustainability, regionality and respect for nature (Morris, 2020). In addition, Noma offers junk food as gourmet burgers in its restaurant POPL, which is well visited as people that want to experience the "Noma experience" also without paying a fortune (Leer & Hoff-Jørgensen, 2022; Poplburger, n. d.).

2.2 Foodie Destination

Food gives a country a part of its identity, which many like to travel to. Food can become a brand, namely the destination brand identity and can thus contribute to building a destination brand (Lin et al., 2011). As a result, brand image directly represents a brand's strength and helps to create the destination's brand (Lai et al., 2019). This brand identity serves to differentiate products and make consumers more loyal (Lin et al., 2011). The perception of a brand in terms of its attributes and associations, which are typically organized by tourists in significant ways and retained in memory, is one of the most important success factors for location branding. Food and cuisine have been conceptualized in the tourist industry as one of the factors influencing destination brand image (Lai et al., 2019). In addition, a strong food identity can contribute to the sustainable development of a destination. This has been particularly used in tourism marketing in recent years, as destinations compete more and more for tourists (Lin et al., 2011). Food is therefore directly or indirectly linked to the destination and can be used as a brand and marketing purpose (Lai et al., 2019; Lin et al., 2011). In addition, food is considered a key tourist attraction. It is well known that branding is a successful strategy for a destination to increase awareness and foster a favourable perception in the thoughts of visitors.

Food has a wide range of symbolic meanings because it is frequently entwined with the social, cultural, and natural characteristics of a particular area. Food has a strong association with place as a consequence. Cajun food, Italian pasta, and French wines are a few excellent examples. As a result, a destination's identity is significantly influenced by the uniqueness of its food in connection to its surroundings (Lin et al., 2011). Tourists travel in general to places where they can sample high-quality regional goods (Lai et al., 2019). In order to have a distinctive and attractive experience, many visitors are drawn to local and ethnic cuisine (Lai et al., 2019; Lin et al., 2011). While tourists experiment with unfamiliar foods and learn about new cultures linked with food, their hosts may promote their cultures and histories through local cuisine. Local communities and people make their food marketable and contribute to the identity of the location (Lin et al., 2011).

It takes a distinct and appealing individuality to develop a powerful brand. Therefore, it is crucial to give visitors connections between food, encounters, and destinations that are

meaningful. Food can be regarded as both a commodity and a symbol in activities related to food such as festivals and exhibitions of agricultural products, which can give visitors a richer experience (Lin et al., 2011).

2.3 Food Culture of Denmark

Traditional Danish cuisine is described as rustic, hearty and filling. Before industrialization, products were mainly produced at home or from local farms. This explains why Danish cuisine is derived from peasant dishes (Denmark.net, n. d.). The cuisine is influenced by German and French cuisine and revolves around fish, pork, rye bread, cabbage, and root vegetables (Denmark.dk, n. d.; Denmark.net, n. d.). Denmark has used food preservation processes, which are still very useful today. Methods such as smoking, salting or brine-pickling are among them. The reason for this is that in the past this kind of food could be conserved well despite the short summers in Denmark (Denmark.dk, n. d.). Thus, in the past, the food had to be preserved for a long time, as people needed food despite the cold winters. The harsh winters also meant that a lot of meat and fish had to be consumed in order to get plenty of nutrients, vitamins and warmth. Likewise, many potatoes were eaten, as they possess many carbohydrates (Denmark.net, n. d.).



Figure 1: Danish Cuisine
Source: Pinterest, n. d.

Today, one of the most famous traditional Danish dishes that dates back to the 19th century is for instance the *Smørrebrød*. It is eaten as an open-faced sandwich particularly at lunchtime.

It is a piece of rye bread richly topped with fish, meat, eggs, potatoes, onions as well as horseradish. There are countless different types (Denmark.dk, n. d.; Visit Denmark, n. d.). *Stjernesked* (translated: shooting stars) is also a type of *Smørrebrød*, which is likewise served on a rye bread and topped with shrimp, fried plaice fillet, caviar and lettuce (Visit Denmark, n. d.). Another meaty meal is *Flæskesteg*, which is crispy pork with potatoes and parsley sauce. Danes voted their classic pork recipe a few years ago to their national dish. Other classics that Denmark has declared for itself are, for example, hotdogs. They are sold at countless sidewalk carts and in many different variations. If you are in the right place at the right time one can even spot the vendors trailing their hotdog stand around town (Denmark.dk, n. d.; Visit Denmark, n. d.). Other famous Danish classics are, for example, oysters or *Frikadeller* (translated: meatballs). They can be served for lunch or dinner (Visit Denmark, n. d.). The Danes also have a sweet tooth with their *Wienerbrød*, which is a puff pastry filled with vanilla sauce in the center (Denmark.dk, n. d.). There are also other pastries, which are called *Wienerbrød*. These include, for example, *Kanelsnegl* (translated: cinnamon snail) or *Frøsnapper* (translated: seed snappers). Although these pastries are not really Danish, but were brought to the country by Austrian bakers, the Danes are proud of "their" pastries (Visit Denmark, n. d.). Likewise do Danes love cakes. Especially the *Drømmekage*, which is considered a brown sugar cake, is particularly celebrated (Denmark.dk, n. d.). You will not die of thirst in Denmark either, as the country is at the top when you consider the amount of beer it produces compared to the number of inhabitants. For example, the brand Carlsberg is a beer label, which is world-renowned. Likewise, Schnapps varieties, like the high percentage alcohol *Aquavit*, are very famous and popular in Denmark (Visit Denmark, n. d.).

In the last 30 years, Danish cuisine has transformed and adapted to the New Nordic Cuisine, which brought a lot of local and seasonal products to the food scene of the country (Denmark.dk, n. d.). A food scene or also called culinary scene consists of the word "food"/ "culinary" which means dining and "scene" which describes in a film, play or book different actions which all take place in one place. Thus, the culinary scene refers to the food experience/offerings of a particular place (Collins, n. d.). In New Nordic Cuisine, old recipes are rediscovered and modified. Food is prepared again the way it was made before industrial agriculture (Denmark.dk, n. d.). This evolution of Danish cuisine, introducing innovation to traditional dishes has let to Denmark being a popular destination for foodies. What makes

Danish modern cuisine so outstanding is that tradition is still strongly present in the modern Danish dishes. This is where the unique flavours of Danish food come from. Thus, Danish cuisine offers many different types of food, which makes it so appealing (Denmark.net, n. d.).

In 2022, 15 restaurants in Denmark together held 24 Michelin stars. This is the highest number compared to other Nordic countries. The restaurants Geranium and Noma hold the most stars, with three (Denmark.dk, n. d., Visit Copenhagen e, n. d.). While Noma opened in 2003, Geranium opened in 2007 (Noma a, n. d., Tastingtable, n. d.). Two-star Michelin restaurants in Copenhagen with their opening years are:

- *Kong Hans Kælder*, 1976 (Konghans, n. d.)
- *AOC*, 2004 (MyGuide, n. d.)
- *Kadeau*, 2007 (LAMPOON, n. d.)
- *Jordnær*, 2017 (Visit Copenhagen g, n. d.)
- *Alchemist*, 2019 (Hall, 2023)

And Michelin restaurants in Copenhagen with one star are the following:

- *Søllerød Kro*, 1677 (Søllerød Kro, n. d.)
- *The Samuel*, 1891 (The Samuel, n. d.)
- *Kokkeriet*, 2001 (Kokkeriet, n. d.)
- *Formel B*, 2003 (Formel Family, n. d.)
- *Kiin Kiin*, 2005 (Michelin Guide, n. d.)
- *Marchal*, 2013 (Eatweek Guide, n. d.)
- *Alouette*, 2018 (Visit Copenhagen a, n. d.)
- *JATAK*, 2022 (Visit Copenhagen f, n. d.)

With this ranking, one can notice that most of the 15 Michelin restaurants in Copenhagen have been opened in the last 20 years. Only Kokkeriet opened in 2001 and Søllerød Kro, The Samuel and Kong Hans Kælder many years ago (Visit Copenhagen e, n. d.).

2.4 Sustainability in Food Tourism through the New Nordic Cuisine

The Nordic Cuisine Movement is regarded as the most significant and powerful culinary revolution in the history of the Nordic countries (Meyers, n. d.). The New Nordic Movement has helped Scandinavian countries – Norway, Sweden, Finland, Iceland, Aaland Islands, Faroe Islands, Greenland and especially Denmark – and their cultures to become recognized internationally by the creation of a brand and many restaurants followed (Leer, 2016; Ooi & Strandgaard, 2017). This is due to the fact that gastronomy is a way to market oneself and show one's identity through food (Ooi & Strandgaard, 2017). Before the New Nordic Movement, especially the Mediterranean and French cuisine were considered as good cuisine. New Nordic Cuisine seeks to stand out as a new culinary repertoire through authenticity. In the literature authenticity is defined with the term's tradition, regionality, simplicity and history (Leer, 2016). A destination brand should focus on the authenticity and uniqueness of a destination, so that key stakeholders such as tour operators, attraction managers, tourism promotion authorities and restaurants can make their products and services unique and thus competitive (Ooi & Strandgaard, 2017).

In 2004, food entrepreneur Claus Meyer launched the New Nordic Cuisine (Leer, 2016; Meyers, n. d.). In 2006, the Nordic Council funded a program called "New Nordic Food - Enhancing Innovation in the Food, Tourism, and Experience Industry" (Leer, 2016). Claus Meyer is also the founder of the restaurant Noma what is considered the true champion of New Nordic Cuisine (Leer, 2016; Ooi & Strandgaard, 2017). Claus Meyer wanted to develop through the New Nordic Movement actually only the Danish food culture, but has played by its naming a clever move, since the Danish food brand stood for no positive. However, "Nordic" is free of any associations and even brings positive connotations with it. This is due to democracy, liberal welfare, popular cultural productions and design, which are linked to the North (Leer, 2016). Copenhagen is considered the epicenter of the New Nordic Cuisine movement and led to Copenhagen being seen as a food Mecca (Leer, 2016; Ooi & Strandgaard, 2017). Claus Meyers plan was to use only products and ingredients from this area to develop a cuisine that embodied the distinctiveness of Scandinavian nature. This idea came up because in the 1960s, Danish food culture was criticized, as well as the industrialization of dairy and pork production in particular. The New Nordic Cuisine, thus, states to use only products from the Nordic terroir in dishes. In general, there are 10 rules that must be followed in order for

dishes to be called New Nordic. The first one indicates that the dish should express "the purity, freshness, simplicity and ethics associated with the region". Other rules state, among other things, that the products should be seasonal and that the production and use of products are significant. In general, the aim is to rediscover, rethink and promote the Nordic food culture and its traditions, and to integrate modern knowledge about health and animal welfare. The New Nordic Cuisine could also be considered an alternative food movement, since "slow food" and products from local farmers are preferred (Leer, 2016). The New Nordic Kitchen manifesto reads more precisely:

1. Expressing the purity, freshness, simplicity and ethics that is associated with the region.
2. Reflecting the different seasons in the cuisine.
3. Using raw materials that are particularly superb in the climate, landscape and waters.
4. Combining the demand for good taste with current expertise about health and well-being.
5. Promoting the Nordic products as well as the variety of Nordic producers and to spread awareness and understanding of the cultural contexts in which they originated.
6. Advocating for the well-being of animals and sustainable production practices in marine and terrestrial environments, both cultivated and wild.
7. Exploring novel uses for traditional Nordic food products.
8. Fusing top Nordic cooking techniques and culinary customs with external influences.
9. Balancing local autonomy with regional trade of premium products.
10. Collaborating with stakeholders from various sectors – including consumers, culinary professionals, farmers, fishermen, food manufacturers, retailers, wholesalers, researchers, educators, policymakers, and regulators – in pursuit of shared benefits for all residents of the Nordic countries.

The manifesto was approved by the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2005 as the philosophy guiding the New Nordic Food initiative, which was supported by extensive national development initiatives (Meyers, n. d.).

2.5 Influencer Marketing

The internet has created new ways to consume, share and promote. Information is no longer only shared with consumers, but people can also share and connect. Blogs are considered the first phase of where it was possible to share online life documentation and thereby connect and also promote products or services. With newer technologies and applications like Facebook and Instagram, online following became even easier (Leung & Palmatier, 2022).

To get customers to the feeling of desire and purchase, advertising uses humour, love, guilt or even sex. Another advertising tactic that is frequently used is word-of-mouth marketing. In this type of marketing, it is the friends or family members who pass on their opinion and thus influence (Brown & Fiorella, 2013). This type of marketing is one of the more successful, as the opinion of close ones is perceived as more genuine, as it is also known that they do not receive any profit through their influence. Thus, their recommendations are seen solely as support (Brown & Fiorella, 2013; Leung & Palmatier, 2022). Through the discovery of successful word-of-mouth marketing, the theory was confirmed that influence from people who are sympathetic to one, can persuade others to buy which was a start for the influence triggering on social platforms in 2010 (Brown & Fiorella, 2013).

Online influencer marketing or also called influence marketing, is focusing on certain key individuals and is therefore another kind of word-of-mouth marketing (Brown & Fiorella, 2013). Influencer marketing has become an important strategy for brands in recent years. It is the strategy of using the unique resources of influencers to promote the products or services of a company in an authentic way, which expects to increase demand. Influencer marketing is a global phenomenon and has become an integral part of many brands' marketing strategies that try to use resources of influencers to expand and improve the effectiveness of marketing communication. Influencer marketing also allows companies to choose specific influencers for their brand, such as micro-influencers. This allows them to keep expenses for marketing purposes low. The biggest difference of influencer marketing to word-of-mouth marketing is the circumstance that in word-of-mouth marketing, existing customers who have not been hired by marketers share their information with others. Influencers who have been selected are also usually paid but how much money the influencers receive depends on a number of things like the number of followers, the engagement rates, the format and the industry they

are working in. Sometimes influencers are also paid by free products or services from the company. They must then create a certain amount of content and promote the company as agreed in a contract (Leung & Palmatier, 2022).

Influencers are individuals or groups who have a network of followers and are considered digital opinion leaders by those. In some cases, these influencers even hold celebrity status without being celebrities for a specific professional activity (such as athletes, actors, musicians or similar). The biggest difference to celebrity endorsement is that with influencer marketing, the influencers receive considerable trust from the companies. The influencers are shown how the company would like to be presented, but since the influencers have to harmonize with their followers, they are given a high degree of freedom. Companies choose their influencers by wanting to attract like-minded people like the influencers themselves. Thus, companies choose an influencer who corresponds to the particular segment they want to attract. This is because people tend to follow those who have similar interests and tastes, as well as a similar background (Leung & Palmatier, 2022).

Nowadays we live in a world with a great abundance of data and advertising. Through social media, everyone can give their opinion and one can get informed very quickly with a lot of information. At the same time, however, people are more impatient and furthermore, time spend on a website is shortened (Brown & Fiorella, 2013). Hence although more and more brands are using influencers to promote their products and services, there is still a lack of knowledge about how much influencers actually contribute to the success of a company (Leung & Palmatier, 2022). This means that influencers who advertise food destinations or places do not necessarily contribute to a place's tourism, or at least it can be hardly traced back to them (Leung & Palmatier, 2022).

3 Methodology

The methodology of the study is important as without precise results and conclusions, the entire paper is worthless. In order to create a good quality research paper, it is vital to use the right kind of technique in the study (Iacobucci & Churchill, 2015).

Qualitative interview research aims to understand the depth of the outcome. The qualitative study design of the research allowed to focus on some conditions of food tourism to find out how the food scene that attracts tourists works in Copenhagen. It also aimed to find out what methods companies use to integrate food tourism into their business. Following the empirical approach, semi-structured interviews were conducted to collect data from different food scene stakeholders (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, n.d.).

Iacobucci & Churchill (2015) assert that the research methodology encompasses a description of the study design and the data collection strategy, which aids in the interpretation of accurate and trusted data.

3.1 Qualitative Research

The goal of scientific research is to identify a problem and find a solution to it. There are different methods which formulate a research design for the study. Qualitative and quantitative research are two major approaches to gather and interpret data in research. Quantitative research was the fundamental approach, but also qualitative research has gained popularity among researchers.

The main goal of qualitative research is to comprehend a research question from a humanistic or idealistic perspective. There are three main types of qualitative research: observational studies, interview studies, and textual/documentary analyses. The study's participants are given a voice through qualitative research. It enables the participants to discuss their personal experiences. This can help to discover new aspects of the topic. Everyone's involvement is enhanced in the study through qualitative study. The qualitative method is used to understand the experiences, beliefs, behaviour, attitudes, and interactions of different stakeholders. This research technic creates non-numerical data. Qualitative research has gained recognition among other things for the fact that it adds a new dimension to studies that cannot be

acquired through the measurement of single variables. Hence, qualitative research can have a huge effect on data collection, its analysis, and the results' interpretation (Pathak et al., 2013).

The project's research question, "How do different actors in the Copenhagen food scene share food to the public?" with the subquestion "How does this contribute to a component of the tourism industry?", led to the decision to employ qualitative research as the methodology. Qualitative methods will be used in this investigation like interviews and netnography. Higher comprehension is made possible by the qualitative method of this research and the possibility to get a close look at the opinions of various important stakeholders (Saunders et al., 2016).

3.2 Research Design

A research design is a process or strategy for gathering and analysing data in a study to ascertain truths found in one's environment. It is a thorough and scientific approach for presenting discovery. A method of exploratory research is used in this study. This is done in order to learn how different industries like public restaurants, private restaurants and influencers are attempting to attract food tourists (Saunders et al., 2016).

This study applies an exploratory research method due to the fact that the goal is to find out how different stakeholders, who are not necessarily in the tourism industry, behave in the food scene and thus attract tourists. When investigating a subject or problem, the exploratory approach typically starts with "how" or "what" questions. They collect broad information through making observations. Interviews can be used to gather extensive information. To gather the necessary data, the respondents to this study were given the opportunity to reply to a fixed set of interview questions (Saunders et al., 2016).

This study examines the food scene in Denmark, Copenhagen and takes a close look at the key stakeholders that comprise the foodscape. The study's goal is to learn about how public organizations, private restaurants and influencers are getting involved to bring attention to the food scene in Copenhagen. In addition to that, it will be found out if and how these different stakeholders attract tourists and also if this is done on purpose. The acquired data from this research helps to identify the key aspects of food tourism (Saunders et al., 2016).

3.3 Data Collection

Iacobacci & Churchill (2015) claim that a variety of data collection techniques are used in descriptive research approaches. To conduct interviews, is the method used in this study to collect comprehensive data (Iacobacci & Churchill, 2015; Saunders et al., 2016).

3.3.1 Interviews

Qualitative interview research is used in order to concentrate on the numerous conditions surrounding food tourism with the aim of figuring out if this kind of tourism is already existing in Copenhagen. Additionally, the goal that needs to be found out is the key methods employed by the public food organization, private restaurants and influencers about triggering food tourists to visit (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, n. d.). To gather the necessary data, the responders to this study are asked to answer a predetermined set of interview questions (Saunders et al., 2016). Semi-structured interviews are conducted after the empirical approach in order to gather data from organizations that promote food and influencers (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, n. d.). In semi-structured interviews respondents are free to share their ideas, feelings, and experiences. Thus, they will demonstrate whether it is felt that the city of Copenhagen is aware of the potential of food tourism and whether they are making use of it. In addition, it will be determined whether they want to use it (more intensively) to attract tourists in the future. The following are the chosen organizations that promote food in the food scene of Copenhagen that will be interviewed:

- Food Tours.eu
- *Madkulturen*
- The food project (Copenhagen Cooking, Copenhagen Beer Week, Food Festival & *Madens Folkemøde*)

In addition, a restaurant is interviewed, which collaborates with influencers:

- Delphine

Influencer who are targeted to be interviewed are the following:

- Rasmus Palsgård with his account *feinschmeckeren* (32'700 followers – as of March 2023)
- Julie Christensen with her account *julie.b.christensen* (11'200 followers – as of March 2023)

This selection was made due to the fact that these are influencers who are based in Copenhagen or Scandinavia and have a large number of followers. Julie Christensen is from Norway and has with her Instagram account julie.b.christensen 11'200 followers (as of March 2023). She calls herself in her description: "The Nomadic Foodie: Solo traveler, drone pilot and food lover". Whereas Rasmus Palsgård has with his Instagram account feinschmeckeren 32'700 followers (as of March 2023) and is a journalist who writes about food and wine based in Copenhagen.

In addition, secondary literature is consulted, which contributes to support the obtained first literature data.

3.4 Netnography

To analyse and understand online communities and cultures the qualitative method of netnography is used. Through this method, insights are created through an ethnographic lens that shows the behaviour online. New events, such as social media and the possibility to post and share at any time with one's community, have made the method of netnography important for the various stakeholders in tourism. Also due to the fast technical development, people are trying to find out more and more about netnography.

As people are revealing themselves on social media, netnography can expose a lot about people's cultures, experiences, desires, but also expectations. Although netnography promises to be very helpful for the tourism industry to understand the wishes of for example tourists, netnography is still used with shyness. This may be due to the fact that the awareness of netnography is still insufficient or that people do not yet dare to use it extensively (Tavakoli & Wijesinghe, 2019).

In order to analyse, based on influencers, how they connect their Instagram account to food and what kind of food they promote, the two influencers who were interviewed as part of this Master thesis were chosen.

3.5 Limitations

This study has a number of noted limitations, including the following:

It was very difficult to get commitments for interviews. Thus, the original idea to include the destination management organization Wonderful Copenhagen was changed and the focus of this work was weighted towards other stakeholders due to the lack of access to the field. But also here, it was difficult to get acceptances and in two cases I received them, but in the end, I did not get an answer anymore when speaking about possible interview dates. That's why I finally contacted other stakeholders, who helped me with their information and gave this Master thesis insights into a different point of view.

Another limitation is the limited time available for this Master thesis. Since a semester lasts only four months and next to it, I worked in a part-time job and attended a Danish course there is not that much time left. For this reason, time management became an important part of my work week, which however worked out fairly well. The fixed deadlines, where I had to send new written chapters of my Master thesis to my professor Carina Ren, also helped to know how far I had to be with my thesis in order to meet the deadline.

4 Analysis

This chapter will present the analysis of this Master thesis through the interviews conducted as well as the analysed netnography and added literature. This is followed by the discussion and conclusion. The data is categorized into various subtopics. It is shown that the food scene in Copenhagen ranges from the famous expensive restaurants to the small bakeries around the corner and that all of them have an important role in the overall food scene picture of Copenhagen.

4.1 Stakeholders Views of Present Food Tourism in Copenhagen

Speaking about food tourism in Copenhagen, Simon Presley from Foodtours.eu says:

“Copenhagen is one of the premier culinary travel destinations right now in the world, I think. [...] that’s very much like a kind of thing because of the New Nordic culinary movement. It really made everyone interested in food. First in Copenhagen then in the rest of the country and it kind of forced everyone to opt their game. Which is why you have so many offerings right now in Copenhagen and the level tends to be very high [...].”

Here he is most likely referring to Michelin restaurants like Noma or Geranium, which he also mentioned later in the interview. Simon explains that he notices that food tourism in Copenhagen is growing. This aligns with the insights from Okumus (2021), whose research shows that food tourism is an increasingly popular industry. In addition, during the Coronavirus disease pandemic, there were relatively few restrictions in Denmark, which made Copenhagen an easy destination to travel to, Simon says. This is confirmed by McKenzie (2021) that indicates that Denmark, due to its early high number of people vaccinated against Coronavirus disease, quickly returned to a normal everyday life. Thus, it was possible to return to life without showing a “Covid-passport” or without masks and also to meet large numbers of people again, which made a restaurant visit easier again. Agnete Malene Boye from the Food Organisation of Denmark (FOOD) is also sure that the run on Copenhagen in the area of food tourism is big. She also thinks that this is due to the New Nordic Cuisine, which is an important part of the Danish food culture:

“I am sure that some or actually a lot of tourists are visiting Copenhagen especially because of our reputation, our rewarded restaurants and the history of the Nordic cuisine as a very important part of our food culture.”

This could be due to the fact that the New Nordic Cuisine was launched in Denmark by Claus Meyer in 2004 (Leer, 2016; Meyers, n. d.). She also holds the reputation of food and also the rewarded restaurants in Copenhagen responsible for the huge food tourist rush. Hannibal Hoff from *Madkulturen* agrees with Agnete that tourists travel to Denmark to try the best restaurants in the world. He also mentions the New Nordic Cuisine:

“Since the New Nordic manifesto, the culinary scene in Denmark and Scandinavia in general and Copenhagen in particular has become much more interesting, versatile and attractive to visit as a food tourist.”

Sille Dallmann of the Copenhagen Food Collective comments on food tourism in Copenhagen, saying that she has heard of people booking their dinner reservations before their accommodation, as food is so important to them. She also mentions the renowned restaurants that attract tourists, like Noma and Geranium. This could indicate that restaurants such as Noma, for example, are booked out a lot in advance and this is why tourists book these types of restaurants before their accommodation (Noma b, n. d.).

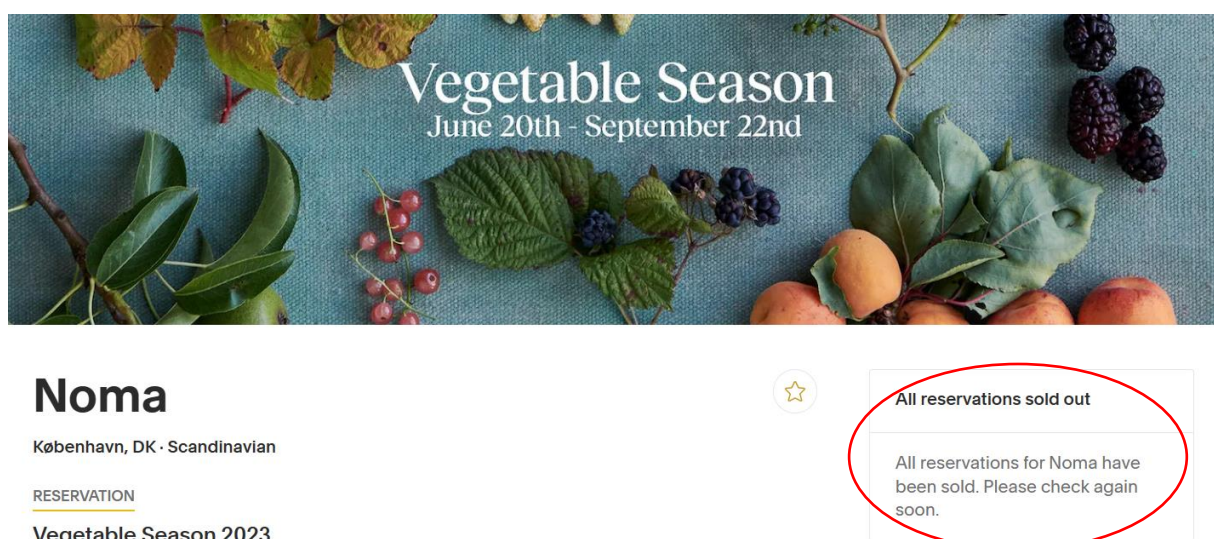


Figure 2: Impossible task to reserve Noma
Source: Noma b, n. d.

It appears that many of the interviewees mention Michelin restaurants such as Noma or Geranium as being particularly popular and attracting tourists. In addition, Silke comments that her Nordic restaurants are especially popular with tourists. Additionally to that she mentions the following speaking about the Copenhagen food tourism scene:

“We believe that we are contributing positively to the Copenhagen food scene, and thereby helping branding Copenhagen as a great food tourism destination [...] to attract more tourists in the future.”

Julie Christensen is an influencer that thinks too that Copenhagen has quite a bit of food tourism due to its best restaurants in the world. She also travels to Copenhagen at least once a year just to eat the cardamom buns from Juno Bakery. Rasmus Palsgård (also an influencer and journalist) believes as well that a large part of Copenhagen's tourism comes from the food scene in the city:

“A lot of the tourism is built on our vast food scene in Copenhagen.”

What is interesting in this section is that New Nordic Cuisine with for example restaurants like Noma or Geranium were mentioned by the interviewed stakeholders quite frequently, but only a small amount of people can afford to visit such eateries. This is due to the fact that these restaurants are some of the most expensive in Copenhagen, which not everyone can afford, as they possess three Michelin stars (Denmark.dk, n. d., Visit Copenhagen e, n. d.). Julie is the only one of the interviewees who also mentions a delicacy that middle class tourists can actually afford: a cardamom bun from a bakery. This shows that the food scene of Copenhagen emerges from many different stakeholders as well as content. It needs the “big fishes” like the restaurants Noma or Geranium to attract attention, but it also needs the “small fishes” like a bakery that sells cardamom buns, since not everyone can afford a visit to a Michelin restaurant and cardamom buns are an equally considered Danish food. Copenhagen's food scene is therefore made up of different performers that attract a variety of people. So, Rasmus's comment about the vast food scene in Copenhagen entails that a vast tourist crowd is visiting the city as well.

4.2 Ways of Staging the Food Scene

Simon explains that they give tourists a culinary overview of the Danish cuisine during several hours of different walking tours. During the tour one walks about four kilometers within four hours to taste a total of 8 different small portions, which in the end correspond to a whole meal (Foodtours.eu, n. d.). Foodtours.eu tries to bring Danish traditional food to ordinary people who do not necessarily have the opportunity to visit restaurants like Noma or Geranium, according to Simon. But still, he comments on his offered tours:

“You know our product is something that I would say is accessible to most ordinary people but I’m not going to lie and tell you that we aim the slightly more high-end market. Because we do work with some very skilled suppliers that are kind of in the higher end price range the things we do.”

About Noma he mentions the following:

“I went to Noma with a colleague of mine, and it was the most expensive restaurant I’ve ever gone to, but it was a very nice restaurant experience. Not necessarily the best food I’ve had [...]. The experience was amazing.”

So what Simon is saying is that people who visit a restaurant like Noma are not necessarily visiting just because of the food, they are visiting because of the experience. Therefore, Simon tries to give a good eating experience to the tourists who visit his tours. Tourists have the possibility to taste different delicacies of the Danish cuisine on Simons tours, such as cheese, *pålægssalater*, *smørrebrød*, hotdogs, beer, hard candies, chocolate, liquorice or honey. Simon says that they share food with people in a kind of activity where they promote the small businesses. That shows local sourcing which relates to staff and therefore to social sustainability (BWL-Lexikon, n. d.). Agnete says FOOD promotes just like Foodtours.eu to help local Danish restaurants, bars, chefs and the food scene. Thus, they organize different food festivals or projects. The projects she mentions are "The gastronomic and green travel team" or "The plant promise". She also uses the term “experience” when speaking about projects like the Copenhagen Beer Week, *Madens Folkemøde*, the Food Festival and the Copenhagen Cooking. Agnete explains that Copenhagen Cooking is an “exceptional food experience”,

where different dinners, picnics, workshops, talks and much more are organized with the help of different restaurants and bars in Copenhagen, which are happy to be part of it. One big difference of Foodtours.eu is that the food they promote can be any kind of food. Hannibal says that they promote "better food for everybody" so just like FOOD they show with various projects which involve as well cooking together. In addition, like some workshops at FOOD, they seek to improvise people's cooking skills and foster people's knowledge about food.



Figure 3: Long table dinner at Copenhagen Cooking
Source: Interview with Agnete Malene Boye (Project manager and communication advisor of Copenhagen Cooking and Food Organisation of Denmark)



Figure 5: Long table dinner at Copenhagen Cooking
Source: Interview with Agnete Malene Boye



Figure 4: Long table dinner at Copenhagen Cooking
Source: Interview with Agnete Malene Boye

On Julies Instagram profile I can see right away that, as already revealed in her description, traveling and eating play an important role in her life. This is a big difference to other food influencers, which is noticeable on her Instagram, since others often do not post their food tips from so many destinations. Many Asian destinations like Okinawa, Tokyo, Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, Bali, but also European destinations like Norway, Amsterdam, Athens, Madrid, Valencia, Malaga, Menorca, Barcelona, Lisbon, Rome, Dubrovnik, Malmö,

Copenhagen and many more make it into her Instagram highlights. Julie shares food with her followers through Instagram, TikTok, YouTube and also private messages as well as comments. The way Julie decorates her post with tags and hashtags seems rather simple. She tags the restaurants in her post and often uses around 10 hashtags which normally tell the country and city, where she is located, what kind of dish is on her plate and often also a hashtag which says that she is on a trip and that is the best thing she has tried so far. Julie shows herself and sometimes others on her shared content with the food together. For example, she appears with her father to show how to eat the Norwegian "Napoleonskake" properly. On other content you are in the middle of a food market in Seoul, where she shows how people cook in a small space on the open street and feed countless people. These are mostly videos from guided food tours. Often the people who are preparing the food are shown and photos of the destination and the restaurant are displayed. She films herself briefly on the videos as she eats, but the focus is on the food and the location. Most of the time it is short videos that play with a song that Julie shares or a series of two to five pictures. She shares any food that she thinks is memorable but rather *"passionate individuals than big chains"*.



Figure 7: Food walking tour
Source: Julie Christensen's Instagram (Influencer)



Figure 6: "Passionate individuals"
Source: Julie Christensen's Instagram

Rasmus communicates like Julie through posts, reels and stories in Instagram and through his blog. Additionally, to that, he writes articles for a selection of food and lifestyle media. Also, he has like Julie different highlights from different destinations such as Lisbon, Paris, Brussels, Bad Ragaz or Moscow. Likewise, he has some highlights which are only from one particular restaurant, such as the Geranium restaurant in Copenhagen. Rasmus Palsgård's style of tagging in his posts as well as hashtags is also pretty simple. He often tags the restaurants in his posts, but unlike Julie Christensen, he also tags the chefs behind the dishes. In his hashtags he then writes what the dish is composed of and in which destination or even street he consumed it. Often the chef of the dish is shown as a hashtag or something like "worlds50best" or "finedining" is written. Rasmus puts a much bigger focus on food than Julie does in her posts. While Julie often also focuses on the location (like a packed street food market somewhere in Asia), Rasmus only photographs the plate. Mainly Rasmus's channel consists of one photo. The videos that can be found are accompanied by a song and show, for example, a loaf of bread being broken by (most likely) his hands, a poached egg being cut and the yolk spilling out or a spoon dipping into a soup. Very rarely does he show himself on his posts. People preparing the food are never shown. Only the hands of the person who prepares the food are shown in a video. In a few videos Rasmus cooks himself, but even then, only his hands are shown as he prepares the food.



416 likes

feinschmeckeren Carabineiro - the precious gigantic prawn of the Portuguese waters. It's equally juicy, sweet and firm in texture. At [@belcanto_joseavillez](#) they serve it with red curry sauce with an intense flavour of lime leaves as well as roasted cauliflower. A splendid dish showcasing some of the best Portuguese cuisine ingredients

#carabineiro #carabineros #prawn #shrimp #portugal #lisbon #lisboa #lissabon #belcanto #joseavillez #michelinstar #worlds50best

Figure 9: Simple way of showing a dish
Source: Rasmus Palsgård's Instagram (Influencer)



Figure 8: One picture of one "perfect" plate
Source: Rasmus Palsgård's Instagram

Rasmus is well aware that he is hardly ever seen on his content and says:

“Since my content is not very personal in the sense of posting a lot of pictures of myself, I have a sensation that many of my followers are slightly more distanced to me in the sense that they see my account more as a media than a person that they have a very strong relation to.”

The two Instagram accounts of Julie Christensen and Rasmus Palsgård could not be more different, as Julie often promotes cheap street food on her channels and wants to show travellers affordable but good food, while Rasmus Palsgård tends to promote only more expensive restaurants.

The different ways of staging food show that different things play an important role for the vast tourist crowd visiting Copenhagen. For some it may be the fact that the food they eat is local and sustainable, for others it is prestige or the experience while dining, for others it is important to combine food with travel and for others it is more about taste and aesthetics.

4.3 Sustainability in Food Tourism through the New Nordic Cuisine

Foodtours.eu works with partners who represent the New Nordic Cuisine, thereby supporting sustainability which is a big part of their tours. The ingredients are organic and from local sources. As Simon explains, in order to count as “local”, ingredients should not come from more than 30 to 50 kilometres. There are different definitions of what local sourcing means. Some believe that the food must come from within a radius of about 30 kilometers, others say 160 kilometers (Brown, 2019; Ellis, n. d.). Local therefore lacks a clear legal definition. Varied municipal authorities have varied requirements and rules for local food (Ellis, n. d.). The 30 to 50 kilometers mentioned by Simon are therefore completely within the bounds of the term “local sourcing”. However, he also adds:

“So, it is basically as many local ingredients as possible, but they [restaurants in Copenhagen] are not dogmatic about it, they will use an Italian wine when it pairs better with the fish, or they, you know, will make Kimchi but using Danish vegetables but Korean chili paste. So, they do things like that.”

Thus, people who book a tour with Foodtours.eu must be aware that "local sourcing" does not mean an absolute local sourcing and that different parties follow it differently strictly. FOOD also considers sustainability in its projects. This applies not only to the products and packaging used by restaurants and bars, but also to tables, chairs, signs, and so on used at events. They try to reuse decorations and other materials from events as much as possible. Additionally, these items, as well as leftovers from guests, can be taken home or donated to homeless centers or kindergartens. *Madkulturen* also works with sustainability, but Hannibal claims that they do not always make a big deal about it. However, in their projects they try to use more vegetables and other greens. Like FOOD, they try to improve the quality of food and use organic ingredients that is in season and do not use meat in their projects. Additionally, they try to teach young people and kitchen workers in schools or cafeterias how to create more sustainable menus.

Cofoco is also aware of its significant impact on the external world and therefore strives to take sustainable paths. They try to minimize food waste and also use raw materials from the Nordic Cuisine. This again shows local sourcing, as New Nordic Cuisine prefers "slow food" from local farms (Leer, 2016). In addition, they use solar energy, have planted trees in Tanzania and Mexico, and support local organizations and initiatives. Sustainability is very important to Rasmus and he is therefore part of the 360 Eat Guide, which is the only sustainable restaurant guide in the world that showcases restaurants that not only serve good gastronomy but as well organic and local ingredients (360 Eat Guide, 2022). In the 360 Eat Guide, it can be seen that five of the 15 restaurants in Copenhagen that held at least one Michelin Star in 2022 are listed as a result of their good sustainable performance; including Noma and Geranium (360 Eat Guide, 2022; Denmark.dk, n. d., Visit Copenhagen e, n. d.).

ALL	DENMARK	FINLAND	NORWAY	SWEDEN	EVALUATION
ooo	KADEAU			Denmark	91-95P
ooo	LYST			Denmark	91-95P
ooo	MOMENT			Denmark	86-90P
ooo	TÈRRA			Denmark	76-80P
ooo	ALIMENTUM			Denmark	76-80P
ooo	ARK			Denmark	76-80P
oo	NOMA			Denmark	96-100P
oo	GERANIUM			Denmark	96-100P

Figure 10: Gastronomical and sustainable top-notch restaurants in Denmark
Source: 360 Eat Guide, 2022

“[...], you would never see me advertise for industrial beef or similar products. I take my role as an influencer very seriously.”

Rasmus comments, adding that he often visits restaurants that serve New Nordic Cuisine. Julie is the only one of the interviewees that does not put a great emphasis on sustainability, citing the fact that she flies too often. Additionally, to that she promotes frequently cheap street food. This honesty and thus sympathy, which she shows through this statement, is also shown in the netnography when looking at her Instagram account. However, she says that she at least tries to use trains while traveling, when possible, does not eat meat since she is a pescetarian, and tries to support local chefs. In the latter case, the concept of local sourcing is also evident (BWL-Lexikon, n. d.).

4.4 Collaborations

Foodtours.eu cooperates with online travel agents, such as Tripadvisor, GetYourGuide, Viator, and other boutique travel agencies to promote itself. Online one can find them on the mentioned three platforms and see directly that Foodtours.eu is rated very well (GetYourGuide, n. d.; Tripadvisor, n. d.; Viator, n. d.):

5.0 ●●●●● 545 anmeldelser

Fremragende 464
Meget godt 57
Gennemsnitligt 10
Dårlig 10
Frygtelig 4

Samlet bedømmelse

4,8/5



baseret på 129 anmeldelser

Figure 13: Foodtours.eu Tripadvisor review (as of May 2023)

Source: Tripadvisor, n. d.

Figure 12: Foodtours.eu GetYourGuide review (as of May 2023)

Source: GetYourGuide, n. d.

★★★★★ 427 anmeldelser | Udmærkelsesmærke | København, Danmark

Figure 11: Foodtours.eu Viator review (as of May 2023)

Source: Viator, n. d.

Simon says, due to the large number of people who want to join his tours – which is usually even greater in the summer:

“In fact, the joke kind of is that we almost don’t want any more people right now because it is almost a burden with too many people wanting to join the tours that making the shift plans for our guides can be quite a logistical puzzle which is one of my jobs as well [Giggles].”

This comment of Simon is again showing that food tourism in Copenhagen is growing steadily (Okumus, 2021). FOOD according to Agnete organizes “interesting, fascinating and magical” food scene events in public to attract people in as well as outside of Copenhagen. They also invite chefs from other countries, host dinners, open pop-ups and give talks. To promote their events FOOD arranges press-tours, support local restaurants and producers and do collaborations and networking with social media, the press and newsletters. *Madkulturen* figures out the potentials as well as challenges of Denmark and shares this with suggestions for improvement of the culinary experience for tourists. Sille mentions the collaboration with Wonderful Copenhagen and Visit Denmark, which send journalists, media and important guests to their restaurants, as a way to attract food tourists. Cofoco is also part of Wonderful Copenhagen's "Meetingplace" community, which holds international conventions and meetings. She also mentions her Instagram channels. Julie shares the following about her Instagram channel:

“For me it’s just being truthful and honest. I just post things I find interesting, and if something is bad it won’t make it to my feed.”

So, through her Instagram, she just wants to help people not wasting their time and money on food that she does not think is worth it. Julie pays for any food herself and says that she is usually not invited which through I sympathizes with her. I associate automatically personal connection and likability with her when I look at her Instagram profile. This is because it shows her personality and not only the beautiful views (like a beach where she slurps from a coconut) but also the other sides that can happen when you travel (like eating supermarket noodles with two toothbrushes because you most likely have no cutlery but are hungry).



Figure 15: Coconut slurping Julie
Source: Julie Christensen’s Instagram



Figure 14: Toothbrushes instead chopsticks
Source: Julie Christensen’s Instagram

So, the personal reference in her Instagram is outstanding, which makes me believe in her taste, recommendations and stories. This points to what Brown & Fiorella (2013) say that the influence from people who are sympathetic to one, convince people easier to buy. Additionally, as Leung & Palmatier (2022) mention people are more likely to follow and thus believe those people who have a similar background. These people then often have similar

interests and tastes. That Julie recommends places she really likes and does not get paid for it is therefore immediately believed by me.

The exact opposite happens with Rasmus. When checking Rasmus Palsgård's Instagram, one of the first things I notice is that his Instagram account is not for low-budget restaurant seekers. The dishes he showcases all look beautiful and expensive. Since he also shows so little of himself on his Instagram content and at the same time only presents very "ostentatious" food, which not everyone can afford, he is not perceived as particularly likeable by me. In addition, he also does other advertising on his channel, such as for Tissot watches. Reasons for my scepticism towards him are that he only shows this "perfect food" and "perfect life" without giving his followers the story behind how he can afford to eat in these eateries or the bad sides of eating at these places.



Figure 17: Ostentatious food of Rasmus
Source: Rasmus Palsgård's Instagram



Figure 16: Ostentatious life of Rasmus
Source: Rasmus Palsgård's Instagram

While Julie's Instagram content makes one reminisce one's years as a broken backpacker in Asia or look forward to one's next vacation, Rasmus' Instagram makes me think of posh people who are too chic for ordinary people like you and me. It feels like you have to eat (like one of

his captions) "Trout roe and kohlrabi infused with ginger and turmeric served with caramelised kefir sauce" or "potato, caviar, grilled cream and cavolo nero oil" on a daily basis to be able/allowed to follow him. Most of the descriptions probably only tell people who work in the industry or have enough money to visit such restaurants something. The Instagram account seems a bit unappealing to me, as I rarely get to "see" "the real" Rasmus Palsgård and only see the high exclusive dishes, which don't mean much to someone like myself. That Rasmus does not show himself too often in his account might seem for some unappealing but on the other hand, for others it could be exactly this focus on food on his Instagram channel that they are looking for. Perhaps these people are also interested in this kind of food but cannot afford it. Rasmus has, not like Julie, collaborations with brands, through which he promotes this food. But he also wants to save his followers the money they would spend in bad restaurants. He comments:

"[...] many of my visits are based on invitations but I only accept invitations from restaurants that are working on a high level. If I am not happy with a meal, I simply do not recommend the place. I am privileged to be invited by some of the best restaurants in and outside Copenhagen but I care a lot about my reputation so I would never recommend a bad place regardless of if they invited me or not."

However, for me as an outsider this is difficult to believe. I can hardly believe that if he is invited by such expensive restaurants, dares to give a bad review about the food that is being served for free to him.

4.5 Trust in Collaborating

Simon from Foodtours.eu is open to influencers but is also sceptical due to bad experiences with fake influencers and he also thinks that they deliver too little but expect too much. Foodtours.eu therefore relies more on influencers who were recommended through contacts or through Wonderful Copenhagen and who are well-established with a fixed audience. They also always sign a contract that specifies exactly what the influencers are expected to deliver like for example a story of six to seven pictures. Simon explains that visitors of his tours also rarely say that they book tours because they heard about foodtours.eu from influencers, but rather because they were recommended by a family member or friend which is showing the

traditional word-of-mouth marketing (Brown & Fiorella, 2013). Simon also mentions that Foodtours.eu does not have too many competitors and works very well with their travel agents, Tripadvisor and GetYourGuide. He also emphasizes that this is the main focus of their online marketing and that reviews are also important to them. Agnete from FOOD says that they are happy to invite influencers if it makes sense for their events, but it is still a fairly new matter for them. However, they have had positive experiences with influencers unlike Foodtours.eu. Cofoco only works with local influencers to attract locals, as they prefer to work with journalists and press for the international market, where they get included in travel guides. They also try to promote their restaurants to tourists through partnerships with hotels and a good partnership with Wonderful Copenhagen. Cofoco prefers authentic influencers that are in Silles words not too "commercial" and would not want to pay influencers for working together. For example, Hautala (2019) also claims that trust and distrust have become increasingly important concepts in social networks. Due to the large amount of content that is produced every day, users have to assess for themselves who and what to trust (Hautala, 2019). *Madkulturen* on the other hand does not work with influencers at all since they see no point in it. In general, therefore, it can be said that cooperation with influencers is viewed rather sceptically among the interviewees. This scepticism is based either on bad experiences, a lack of experience or a bad reputation associated with influencers. Leung & Palmatier (2022) also show that there is still a lack of knowledge about how much influencers contribute to the success of a company and therefore if they actually contribute to a place's tourism. That is due to the fact that it is difficult to tell out of which reason people are attracted to something.

As mentioned, Foodtours.eu works with Wonderful Copenhagen. Simon mentions that they do not work very closely together, but it is as good as it is for the given time. However, Simon thinks that Wonderful Copenhagen does a great job promoting the food of Copenhagen and thus, trusts them. FOOD also works with Wonderful Copenhagen as the idea of the Copenhagen Cooking festival came initially from Wonderful Copenhagen. Cofoco also has a very good partnership with Wonderful Copenhagen. *Madkulturen* had previously cooperated with Wonderful Copenhagen but does not have a cooperation at the moment. Rasmus has also had contact with them, but no collaboration has yet been established. So, for example, one can find Foodtours.eu or also Cofoco on the Wonderful Copenhagen website. There the companies are introduced and recommended. In addition, one can find the contact details of

the companies and they are linked to get directly to their website. There is also a link to Tripadvisor at Foodtours.eu and to Facebook and Instagram at Cofoco to follow the company (Visit Copenhagen b, n. d.; Visit Copenhagen d, n. d.).



Figure 18: Wonderful Copenhagen reference to Foodtours.eu
Source: Visit Copenhagen d, n. d.

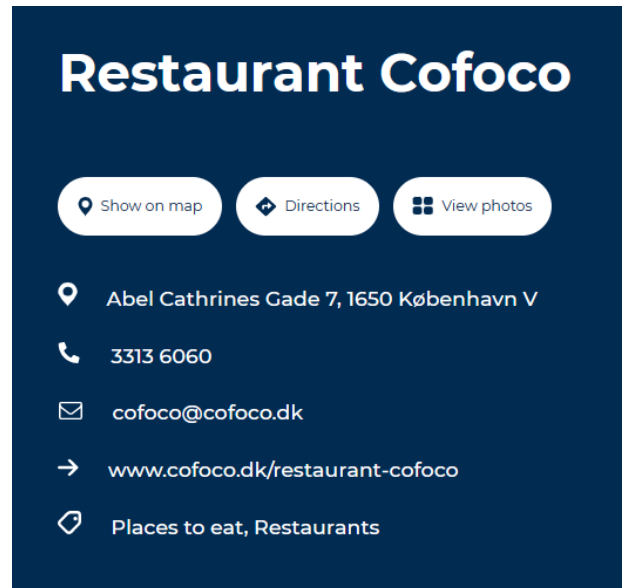


Figure 19: Wonderful Copenhagen reference to Cofoco
Source: Visit Copenhagen b, n. d.

Julie tells, on the other hand, asking about Wonderful Copenhagen:

"I have actually not heard of this particular brand, but it definitely sounds like something I would like to work with yes."

Already how Julie talks about "a particular brand" when it comes to the destination management organization of Copenhagen – Wonderful Copenhagen, shows she really has no idea what the organization is about. However, after my explanation, she seemed very keen and would like to collaborate with them. The comment from her shows among other things how food actors work together – or simply do not. This can be relevant if the desire to expand in the creation of sustainable, distinctive and competitive food experiences and thus in the food tourism industry is there (Ellis et al., 2018; Meyer, n. d.; Ooi & Strandgaard, 2017).

5 Discussion

The interviewees of this Master thesis are sure that the food tourism in Copenhagen is growing, and they also think to contribute to it with their tours, projects, restaurants or Instagram accounts. Even if attracting travellers is not the main goal for some, food can still be a big pull factor for tourists. Hence, these stakeholders attract tourists although that is not their priority, which still makes them a reason for increasing food tourism in Copenhagen. This growing gastronomic scene in Copenhagen ranges from the famous expensive restaurants to the small bakeries, all of which play an important role in the overall picture of Copenhagen's food scene. Despite this, a lot of people think only the "big fish" of the food scene have the responsibility for tourism in Copenhagen. This is also the most obvious for many, as 15 restaurants in Copenhagen had 24 Michelin stars in 2022 – with Noma and Geranium leading the way. The New Nordic Movement, which originated in Denmark, is considered responsible for the high standard of Danish cuisine. Through this, the cuisine of Denmark becomes versatile, attractive, and last but not least sustainable. This leads to restaurants like Noma, which are booked weeks in advance and tourists who book their restaurant reservations before their hotel accommodations. Only a small number of tourists will ultimately be able to afford to visit such a type of restaurant, as places like Noma have been crowned the best in the world several times and thus a visit costs a lot of money. Therefore, it seems interesting that the kind of restaurants contribute to a country like Denmark getting such a great attention for its food scene, which however only a small number of people can afford. The majority of average tourists are more likely to find themselves in a bakery tasting a Danish *Wienerbrød*. So, the food scene in Copenhagen is highly diverse and so are the tourists who visit it. The explanation for this is that Copenhagen is being visited by a large number of tourists as a foodie destination, but these tourists do not necessarily pursue the same food-related goals. At the same time stage the different stakeholder food quite diverse. For many great value is placed on the experience in the hospitality and tourism sector due to the fact that food tourism is considered to be "entertaining" and therefore is building an experience as such. This could be a reason why, for example, the restaurant Noma is visited. Therefore, it is important to give tourists, whether it is by visiting the best restaurant in the world, a food tour or a visit to a food workshop, a kind of "unforgettable" experience in connection with their food. Sustainability is also becoming an increasingly important element. That's why more attention is being paid to "slow food" from the New Nordic Cuisine, a meat-less diet and local

sourcing, whether it is about where the goods come from or supporting more "passionate individuals", as the influencer Julie Christensen explains. Influencers like Julie Christensen and Rasmus Palsgård also share their food experiences in different ways, but in their unique style. While Julie for example shows herself and her entire food experience (with the people preparing the dishes or the destination with the food environment), Rasmus often only shows a photo of his plate. So, the often slightly chaotic and diverse environment is often reflected in Julie's posts and plates, while Rasmus' almost too perfect plates reflect his visits to restaurants like Geranium. The two influencers analysed in this Master thesis could not be more different in their style of sharing their food experiences with their followers. This again shows how diverse food and tourists traveling for food can be. Thus, I do not think that people who are interested in Julie's food journeys are also interested in Rasmus' food experiences. This is because people are different, and they associate food with various things. Whether it is with travel, as in Julie's case, or with Rasmus' food: prestige. These different links to food can also already be seen by looking at the different names for food tourism such as tasting tourism, culinary tourism or gourmet tourism or tourists participating in food tastings, farm tours, culinary trails, wine or beer trails, cooking classes and so on. For me for example personally, Julie's way of staging food is more likable as I can better put myself in her shoes since she also shows her personality through her Instagram. This personal connection makes her more credible to me at the same time. However, those who want to marvel at rather ostentatious food are better off with Rasmus. For me, nevertheless, the portrayal of that perfect life with expensive food and Tissot watches seems unapproachable and therefore unappealing. Therefore, Leung & Palmatier (2022) state that by the fact that people are more likely to follow influencers that they are similar to, companies also choose this segment of influencers that they want to attract customers. Additionally, can people that are sympathetic to one, better convince people to buy. For this reason, companies give influencers a lot of freedom, as the content created by influencers should match their profile. Collaborations with influencers, whether it is between food tours, food projects or restaurants, were mentioned by the interviewees in this Master thesis rather with scepticism, because either bad experiences were made or there is simply a lack of experience. This could be explained with the fact that the literature shows that there is still a lack of knowledge concerning how much influencers really contribute to one's company. In general, the issue of trust or distrust in social media is very relevant, as a large amount of content is produced on a daily basis and

users themselves need to estimate whom to believe or not. But also, the stakeholders themselves work together in differently close cooperations. However, cooperation with travel agents or Wonderful Copenhagen, for example, is appreciated by most of the interviewees.

For further studies, which could be linked to this, it would be interesting to look at more stakeholders of the food scene such as other food tours, food event organizers, restaurants, influencers, who do not consider themselves part of the tourism industry. In addition to the stakeholders mentioned, others could be considered, such as locations like Reffen, the *Torvehallerne* or even Tivoli, which also offers its guests countless dining options and is very popular among tourists. Accordingly, further literature should be considered, which does not specifically refer to food tourism, but only to food. This is because many of the mentioned may not seem part of the tourism industry, but as seen in this thesis, they are still part of the food scene of a city that attracts tourists with it which makes them at the end also responsible for the tourism in the city. In addition, it would be interesting to take a closer look at the role of an "authentic influencer". What makes an influencer trust her or him and want to work with her or him? Here it would be interesting to give transparency to the topic and to see how to better build trust towards social media. Perhaps a survey with various stakeholders and influencers would be interesting, whereby one could see to what extent the self-assessment of the influencers is reflected in the opinion of the stakeholders. This would be particularly exciting because the interviewees in this master's thesis expressed many doubts about the reliability of influencers. This would help influencers as well as companies who would like to work with influencers but are still in uncertainty about it.

6 Conclusion

This Master thesis with the research question "How do different actors in the Copenhagen food scene stage food to the public?" and the corresponding sub-question "How does this contribute to the food component of the tourism industry?" focused on the present food tourism in Copenhagen, Denmark and some of its actors that are staging the food scene. This was accomplished through interviews, netnography, and analysis of secondary literature.

The food tourism in Copenhagen is growing. Stakeholders interviewed within this Master thesis also contribute to the tourism industry with their tours, projects, restaurants, or Instagram accounts although they would not all particularly say that they are part of the tourism industry themselves. If small bakeries or expensive restaurants the food scene in Copenhagen ranges from the "small fish" to the "big fish". This means that not only the 15 restaurants in Copenhagen, which held 24 Michelin stars in 2022 and of which most of them are representing the New Nordic Movement, are to blame for food tourism in Copenhagen, but also the bakeries that average tourist actually can afford. As determined in this Master thesis, both represent an essential part of the diverse food scene in Copenhagen, and it is this mix of exclusivity and simplicity that leads to Copenhagen being seen as a foodie destination. This very diverse food scene accordingly also brings with it diverse tourists, each of whom pursues different food goals. Therefore, it is to no surprise that the stakeholders of the food scene present food very differently. One focus is on entertainment that is, the experience itself. Food should not just be seen as food but should be associated with an experience. Additionally, sustainability is becoming increasingly important, which is also supported in the New Nordic Cuisine. Influencers like Julie Christensen and Rasmus Palsgård, who were analysed in this Master thesis through netnography, also portray the food scene very differently. While Julie portrays food more in a chaotic context, Rasmus shows the elegant and prestigious side of food. However, these different representations, which were seen in this Master thesis, are completely valid because people associate different things with food. Some associate with food tourism tasting tourism, culinary tourism, gourmet tourism, participating in food tastings, farm tours, culinary trails, wine or beer trails or cooking classes. Thus, the term "food tourism" is quite broad. Since the two analysed influencers in this thesis represent food tourism in a different way, they also attract other segments of tourists, about which the companies that have collaborations with them are aware of. Nevertheless, companies that

were interviewed in the context of this Master thesis tend to ask themselves twice whether they want to collaborate with an influencer. Scepticism is still relatively high and the question of whether the influencer can be trusted is not yet clear, which is why future academic literature must increasingly examine what constitutes an "authentic influencer" and how the threshold of uncertainty can be crossed. This Master thesis has thus shown, among other things, that the cooperation of the stakeholders in the field of food tourism in Copenhagen could be improved among each other to create more sustainable, distinctive and competitive food experiences and to do better marketing to finally attract more people to Copenhagen. On the other hand, this thesis showed that even though food actors do not always and optimally cooperate, a foodie destination like Copenhagen is still being created.

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Appendix

Interviews

Interview with Simon Presley – Manager of Foodtours.eu

MM: Tell me a little bit about yourself. What are you doing exactly?

SP: So, my name is Simon. I am the manager of Foodtours.eu specifically of the Copenhagen branch and I am kind of the overall manager of the company as well. I also deal with my colleagues in Oslo and Stockholm who manage our tours there. And when I'm not doing admin stuff I work as a guide as well for the company if there is a need and we don't have guides that are available on the given day or if it is a special tour or maybe for a VIP client or something like that then that falls to me basically. I started working as a guide for this company about three years ago. I worked as a guiding manager for a competitor before that and now I've been the manager for a little over a year. My brother's sister went on maternity leave, and she then first extended her maternity leave and then decided not to come back so I was offered the position after that, and I accepted.

MM: What is your impression on the current food tourism in Copenhagen? Do you think people travel to Copenhagen especially to try the food?

SP: Ooooh yes, they do. Copenhagen is one of the premier culinary travel destinations right now in the world, I think. Very strange for me as someone who grew up not in Copenhagen but near Copenhagen to see that. This is not a place you would go out to eat when I was a kid. 20 years ago, you would basically just go out to eat for special occasions. Birthdays, weddings that sort of thing and you know we didn't have much of a café culture or anything like that but that's something that's very much like a kind of thing because of the New Nordic culinary movement. It really made everyone interested in food. First in Copenhagen then in the rest of the country and it kind of forced everyone to opt their game. Which is why you have so many offerings right now in Copenhagen and the level tends to be very high you know. Copenhagen can compete with a lot of other food cities out there especially in Europe. Because of that it attracts a lot of travellers. I think Covid has also helped Denmark quite a bit. There was a period where Denmark was one of the few countries in Europe with relatively few restrictions where it was easier for tourists to travel. So a lot of tourists discovered Copenhagen during that time and they told their friends, they told their family and as a result you have had a bunch of people coming in last year and this year as well.

MM: So, can you see the growing number of food tourists since you started working for Foodtours.eu three years ago?

SP: Oh yeah, oh yeah. Definitely. We have more people on the tours. The tours are in more demand. In our company we work with a maximum of normally 12 people per group because we like to keep things kind of small and a bit more you know intimate. But basically, we have more tours that sell out than we did before. And like for example we just did a calculation that shows us that this month we have four times as many tours as we had in March last year so if this trend keeps up during the summer it's going to be a very good and very busy summer. Hight season is basically May to and including August or even September if the weather is good as well as maybe October if it is a very good season

but not like super busy. And then December tends to be very busy as well. So it's really only November, January, February and March and to some extent April where things kind of calm down.

MM: What is your particular role when it comes to promoting food in Denmark?

SP: So, I mean we're promoting in the sense that we offer people a kind of culinary overview of Danish cuisine our primary product is a tour we call the "Culinary Experience Tour" and it lasts four hours and it's a walking tour and people get to try a lot of classics of Danish food. It includes cheese, it includes spread salads – *Pålægssalater* in Danish – it includes *Smørrebrød* – the open-faced sandwiches – we have beer of course, we've got hotdogs – we do gourmet versions from *DØP den økologiske pølsemand* – and then we do traditional hard candies. And then we finish with some chocolate. And we also have liquorice we give out on the tour as well and there's even a little stop for honey at the botanical gardens. So, people get nine different things during the tour. We tell them to come hungry but not everyone does, and they deeply regret it if they don't.

MM: How do you work with sustainability?

SP: We do, and we do it through the partners we work with. Basically, all of our partners are people who tend to follow this New Nordic Cuisine. They work a lot with organic ingredients, and they work a lot with local sourcing. New Nordic manifesto how it is called says that it should be ideally 30 to 50 kilometres of the place where the food is being served so most of them will source the stuff on *Sjælland* or they source from southern Sweden, or you know the islands south *Sjælland* instead. So, it is basically as many local ingredients as possible but they are not dogmatic about it, they will use an Italian wine when it pairs better with the fish or they, you know, will make Kimchi but using Danish vegetables but Korean chili paste. So, they do things like that.

This is a part of the concept of the tour that not only wanting to introduce people to Danish food but also to the New Nordic Cuisine in a way that is more approachable than having to commit both timewise and financially to a dinner at Noma or something else because not everyone can do that obviously. This is something very accessible for most people at least.

MM: Are you sometimes changing your partners as well for returning customers?

SP: We have different tours, and they can also order a private tour and we can change things a little bit up. We also have different partners for Mondays because as you might now a lot of businesses are closed on Mondays in Denmark. So, we need a separate provider of beer for Monday, and we also have a separate provider of *Smørrebrød* for that day of the week as well. So, we can change some thing a little bit up. We do have aside of the "Culinary Experience Tour" we have a tour in *Kødbyen* – the Meatpacking district – where we have our own set of providers there and this year, we're starting a tour in *Østerbro* – eastern Copenhagen – along *Århusgade* where we're gonna work with some people out there as well. And we also do an evening tour on Thursdays during the summer as well.

MM: Did you ever think about how tourists could be attracted through your organization?

SP: So, I mean we don't really attract them ourselves. What we do instead is we have OTAs – online travel agents – and for us that is primarily Tripadvisor and Viator which is the

same business as I understand and GetYourGuide which is a major journal site and a bunch of other smaller ones as well like boutique travel agencies you know destination management companies for cruise kind of ships that kind of thing. They all provide guests for us. So, we are not really actively trying to get more people. In fact, the joke kind of is that we almost don't want any more people right now because it is almost a burden with too many people wanting to join the tours that making the shift plans for our guides can be quite a logistical puzzle which is one of my jobs as well. [Giggles]

So, this year for example we have just hired a new assistant agent I'm actually going to be doing her first day of training tomorrow and she's going to learn about all her logistics running the company and all the things that are related to the suppliers and things like that. And then the idea is that she's also able to guide because she has a guide education herself and she will be able to assist me which is essential. We are currently 10 guides, one of them is also working with our accounting as well she's actually the boss's daughter but she wanted to use both guiding but also her education. She has a business high school education. So, she's been getting into invoicing for private tours which is kind of a separate part of the business. And then we have me – doing management – the new assistant management and then there's Peter who is the founder and boss of the company. So, 13 people in total!

MM: What is the specific role of organizations like yours when it comes to promoting food in a destination?

SP: So, I mean I guess we are promoted in the sense that we offer an activity that a lot of people include in their itinerary. And that we kind of become a major aspect of the food aspect of their trip. We basically help to promote smaller food businesses as well and various gourmet experiences. You know our product is something that I would say is accessible to most ordinary people but I'm not going to lie and tell you that we aim the slightly more high-end market. Because we do work with some very skilled suppliers that are kind of in the higher end price range the things we do. So, for example we work with Aamanns by chef Adam Aamann. They are part of a group of restaurants all over Copenhagen that specialize in Danish food. They originally got famous for doing *Smørrebrød* with their location in Østerbro that is where we go as well. And if you buy Aamanns *Smørrebrød* you're going to get something excellent, but it doesn't come cheap. We are focused on that segment of the market. We have all kinds of people who join the tours you know. They save up for it and then it becomes a kind of luxury food experience they can have. We're basically around maybe a fourth of the costs in comparison with going to Geranium or Noma. So that's why it is more accessible to other people. I went to Noma with a colleague of mine and it was the most expensive restaurant I've ever gone to, but it was a very nice restaurant experience. Not necessarily the best food I've had but it's in my personal top five. The experience was amazing.

MM: What is the specific role of influencers when it comes to promoting food in a destination? Are you working together?

SP: I think many companies like us are open to the idea with working with influencers, but we don't expect much from it. We are also kind of on guard and a bit sceptical whenever influencers support us because we have had experiences in the past where we had supposedly an influencer on the tour and then it turns out that they are fake. Or they are, you know for real, and they do something for us, but you know it is maybe one or two pics of the trip. And the main reason they do it is because they want something for free for

their friends and family that they bring along for example. So, we are more restrictive with how you know many people we're allowed to bring and do tend to be, if they are not brought through someone, we know we can trust like Wonderful Copenhagen for example, we do make certain demands on them in terms of what they are going to produce at the end of the tour because otherwise we don't think it is worth it basically. Right now, for example I have a request for next week which is a British influencer who is apparently blind. That's going to be an interesting challenge. Because we need to do a private tour for her so she can have her guide dog and her boyfriend along with her. So yeah, this one has come in through someone we know we can trust basically. So, it's about finding out how that will work but you know we do really much want to show especially with someone like her that our tours are largely for everyone although there is the limitation of if you can't walk very well, that might be an issue because it is a walking tour basically. Copenhagen isn't really well designed for cars, our timing doesn't work well out with cars either. There's a lot of logistics and all. I also had a good friend in university she was in a wheelchair, an electric wheelchair, so she had a lot of little challenges getting in and out of places and things like that. Stairs of course were a major obstacle for her. It's a tricky city sometimes for disabled people.

A collaboration with an influencer doesn't really work for a business like us. Let's say you have a product that people buy consistently: makeup for example, right? It makes sense to have a collaboration with an influencer for example. Because you know every time someone has to buy an eyeliner or whatever they can see "oh that influencer recommends that makeup". People don't go on food tours all the time. So you know a travel influencer can certainly help some people to pick us for their trip but they are probably going to be traveling all over the place anyway they will also want to, because it makes sense for their branding and their business that is themselves essentially, to you know go to different places and work with different people so it doesn't make sense for them to have one very strong relationship with one agent. Like let's say we offer tours in lots of different locations around Europe then it would make sense. Because then we could say to them "hey if you're going to Berlin, Madrid, London, whatever do a food tour with us, and you get it for free and promote us and all that".

MM: But you also have food tours in Stockholm and Oslo, right?

SP: We do but they are essentially run as kind of their own separate entities. Which means that they basically franchised it from us so any like strategy they want to do is essentially theirs. Now if we change that setup or if we franchise more to other cities maybe then it would make sense but for the time being with all of the potential pitfalls and things like that, we don't really feel it makes sense at the moment. We choose that kind of influencer like the British one because that tends to feel like we get the most out of. But you know it's difficult to measure the success because you know we very rarely hear someone say: "Oh I saw you on this instagramers profile". Usually what we hear instead is: "My friend went, or my family member went, and they told me it was awesome and I had to go as well". Or: "I saw one of the places I could see you go on a travel show and that looked really cool, so I wanted to go on a tour that we go there as well." So that are the kind of things that tend to give us more customers.

Stockholm is doing very well. We've been very surprised how quickly it recovered actually. It was doing quite poorly for a while again just Covid and things like that.

And in Oslo we had replace our manager there because things didn't work out with the previous one. But the new one seems to be doing well. She's getting loads of private tour

requests and her regular product seems to be up and running smoothly. I actually have a lot of friends in Norway so I talked with Peter about you know that next time I go to Norway I should check on her and try to go on a tour myself and see how it works. He's done that himself as well. I might do that.

MM: What are your demands on an influencer?

SP: So I would say if we're going to be serious about it with someone we need to say that they have a fairly well established profile. There's no clear-cut definition of that but we want to feel that they are not someone up and coming who is you know potentially someone who is doing that to see how far this influencer gig goes and they get whatever they can out of it while it's still you know a relatively new thing. We want them to be you know fairly well established to the point that they have a fixed audience, and we get some actual outreach out of this. And in terms what they have to produce for us: We usually say it should be a series of at least a few pictures. So, maybe a little like story of six or seven pics or something like that. Ideally something which is covering a big variety of the tour so don't just take one of the start and one of the end and call it a day. Focus on the food - also very important. This is going to sound wrong but it's not the people who work at the places we go to that are the star here it's very much the food. That's what attracts the people at the end of the day right? Not that our people are not great people who are not very passionate about what they do but they are not the main thing here – the food is. So they have to focus on that in the content they do.

That the influencers tell where the tour goes is kind of a risk, but we can't prevent regular guest from doing that either. Our regular guest will likely have social media themselves that they can post things on. You know if anything we sometimes do hear: "Oh I went to DØP cause I had a friend who went on a food tour and I saw a picture of it! Are we going there today?", "Yes we are" "Oh great I can try a new one, right?". It happens anyway. That part we're not that concerned about. And you know we often get something there are a few places we get a fixed menu we get every time but for example at the Smørrebrød place people get different types every time. So, there's a bit a surprise build in there as well. And if anything, the advantage of doing it with us is actually it is cheaper with doing it with us. Even though you pay for a guide because we're paying less per person cause we have a good deal with these places. If you go, there just as an ordinary tourist and you had to buy the same amount of food it would cost you more. So, you are paying more in the sense of you have to pay for a guide, but you don't have the problem of finding the way there yourself, you will have a reservation when you arrive, and you have someone who can help you out with the food and select that works for you. So, we're fairly confident that the advantages of doing this with us should be apparent to anyone.

MM: Why did you choose this particular way of online marketing?

SP: I think the main thing for us is that you know the company has existed for a about a little over 11 years now which makes us without a question the most experienced company in Copenhagen doing this kind of thing. We don't really seem to have many competitors actually. We have a new one now that is kind of competing with us on the private tour. And then we have others where food is part of the thing, they do but it is not the main thing. They might do bike tours and then it has a food element at the end or something like that. So, because of that we feel that we are still getting a very satisfactory amount of interest and exposure through our you know travel agents and Tripadvisor and GetYourGuide. That means that we don't really need to focus that much more on like

online marketing. You can always discuss you know should we maybe make some search optimization with Google or something like that. With the help of certain key words. We're probably going to do that for Østerbro that we're launching this year. But other than that, the best way of attracting people is actually reviews. You know every five star review we get somewhere is a new way of getting new guests essentially. We pay our guides a bonus, 200 kroner, every time they do a tour where it gets a least one five-star review. And our guides are good in this. It is almost every tour that gets a five-star review now which is not how it used to be back when I was a guide for example. I think we had less of a focus on it back then. It is something I've been working very close and trying our guides so that we get this extra exposure through that. That is something that definitely works.

MM: You mentioned Wonderful Copenhagen: Do you want to work together with them or are you already working together?

SP: We do work with them already. So, they do occasionally approach us with you know VIP clients they want to do a kind of tour for, or they want to mention us in like packages they do for certain kinds of groups of guests essentially. So, it's not a super close collaboration but it doesn't necessarily have to be in order to be profitable for us either. So, we do occasionally work with them.

I would say that they promote food well in Copenhagen. We do get enough food tourists. I think it isn't just you know about having well known restaurants like Noma and Geranium. That's a very specific demographic that they target. And the demographic of people who would go on a food tour, dedicated food tour, is also a very specific one. So, when you meet other tourists who say that they might not go on a food tour to one of the really well-known restaurants, but they still enjoy the food, and it is one of the things they come for then I think it shows that they have been promoting it pretty well. Because it is definitely becoming one of the whole marks of Copenhagen as a tourist experiences. If it had some kind of benefit to us, I would also like to work closer with them. But for the moment I think our relationship is fine how it is. I think we work well together when we do, and I don't really know if we could do much more at the moment.

MM: Do you think there is something else which you could tell me that would be helpful for me? Are there other people that I should not forget to include in my Master thesis?

SP: Maybe one thing you could look into is how this whole trend with green eating is affecting the food scene. Because we are seeing more and more vegetarian options. And vegan is also kind of getting a thing as well. But Danish food culture is not really prepared towards that. It is extremely meat heavy, so I think it's going to be interesting to see how we do that transition here. We're fortunate that we have some suppliers that can generally work pretty well with that. Places where you would expect a lot of meat on our tour, actually have a lot of vegetarians and vegan alternatives. But we actually don't do vegan tours specifically because it is not all of the places that can do it yet.

I actually had a chat with one of the suppliers in the meatpacking district if we should maybe start thinking about doing a vegan tour. I think it's a little too early for it now for the amount of interest we're getting for it. But if it keeps up, yeah, we probably have to by necessity. It's going to be interesting what we put together there.

And in relation to your Instagram/Influencer theme I think there are a lot of those influencers like vegan influencers or vegetarian influencers that might play a role in some of these transitions as well so yeah might be worth looking into.

**Interview with Agnete Malene Boye – Project manager and communication advisor of
Copenhagen Cooking and Food Organisation of Denmark**

MM: Tell me a little bit about yourself. What are you doing exactly?

AB: I am the lucky person being responsible for all communication and press in relation to the food festival Copenhagen Cooking. I am also working as communication advisor for the organization Food Organisation of Denmark – FOOD.

MM: What is your impression on the current food tourism in Copenhagen? Do you think people travel to Copenhagen especially to try the food?

AB: I am sure that some or actually a lot of tourists are visiting Copenhagen especially because of our reputation, our rewarded restaurants and the history of the Nordic cuisine as a very important part of our food culture.

MM: What is your particular role when it comes to promoting food in Denmark?

AB: The organization FOOD is always working to promote, help and support the Danish restaurants and the food scene in general. When we are not doing food festivals, we are always working with projects that are promoting food in Denmark. For example, we are behind a concept called “The gastronomic and green travel team”, where some of the best Danish chefs are driving around visiting restaurants in Denmark who wish to raise the quality of food and the amount of green courses on the menu at their restaurant. Another example is a project called “The plant promise” where we gather more than 1’000 people who are all working in public kitchens to offer them masterclasses, tools and knowledge to use more seasonal vegetables, fruits and so on, in the kitchen.

During the summer season we are behind four different festivals called Copenhagen Beer Week (in May), The Food Public meeting/*Madens Folkemøde* (in June), Copenhagen Cooking (in August) and Food Festival (in September). The festivals are very different in their form, focus and content, but they all serve the main purpose to support local bars, restaurants, chefs, and food people.

Copenhagen Cooking specifically aims to be the festival for exceptional food experiences in, for, and with Copenhagen. During ten days in August we transform the city of Copenhagen into one big food celebration when we are inviting every hungry and curious people to take a seat at the table at our iconic long table dinners, picnics, workshops, talks and much more. Every restaurant, bar, cultural institution and so on can be a part of the festival – the only expectation and demand is that they are looking to find people to work with, that they are making an effort to use quality products and that they offer something unique (that’s not just their everyday menu).

MM: What kind of food and drinks are you promoting?

AB: We are promoting and supporting almost all kinds of food and drinks. You can attend dinners with the finest gastronomy or be a part of the street party’s and long table dinners, where the food is served rustic, but made with love and passion. At our own events we are offering sodas, juices, water, wine and beers from some of our partners. But at many of the events people are encouraged to bring their own service and drinks.

MM: How do you work with sustainability?

AB: We are always thinking in ways to expand our ways to be sustainable. Both in relation to the products we (and the restaurants, bars and so on) are using while making food, but

also in relation to use of materials such as benches, tables, signs, fire from the grill and so on.

MM: Could you give me a good example about how you work with sustainability?

AB: During one of our biggest events – the *Frederiksberg Høstfest* – where more than 1'500 people are put together in one communal dinner taking place at a long table outside – we are serving food of local ingredients in sustainable packaging while expecting the guest to bring their own service and we always re-use whatever possible in relation to decoration, merge, signs and so on. We have local deals to minimize waste and we always offer our guests to bring home what they can of the leftovers (food, flowers, herbs, balloons, decorations and so on), while also having these local deals with the homeless centers, nature kindergartens and others of interest.

Recently it was decided that it is no longer allowed to use one-time plastic service in Copenhagen, and we are of course following the guidelines. Prior to all of our festivals, projects and events we always ask the participating partners to consider their needs, use and leftovers in relation to others and the individual festivals.

MM: Did you ever think about how tourists could be attracted through your organization?

AB: We are always thinking in ways to make of events interesting, fascinating, magical and memorable for all of the guests – also the ones that are not living in Copenhagen or also the visitors from other countries. Our main focus is to make gastronomic events and promote the food scene of Denmark and most of our events are located in the public. On our website guest can of course read about the different events in English and they can also choose to only see the events that are “fit for English speakers”, if they wish to make sure, that the event is translated into English as well. The events that we are maybe most known to arrange is the social communal dinners – often taken place outside and these dinners seem to be very attractive to tourist as well as guest who are living here.

MM: Which methods are you using to attract food tourists?

AB: We aim to attract tourists in numerous ways, but it is not our main purpose since we are focusing on the Danish products, producers, land and restaurants. But we try to combine the best of all parts of the world – inviting chefs from other countries to host dinners, do pop-ups, talks and much more. At the same time most of our events are held outside in very public places, being accessible to everyone who has a ticket or happens to stop by.

In my memory the events that are of interest for most tourist is our so-called international events with top chefs visiting from other countries – and our communal long table dinners. Let me show you some examples and have you imagine being a tourist in Denmark, just passing by this:





MM: What is the specific role of organizations like yours when it comes to promoting food in a destination?

AB: We arrange press-tours, support and raise the local restaurants, producers and food people, make network and industry events to create collaborations and then we are of course communication in all matters possible; both on social media, press and newsletters.

MM: What is the specific role of influencers when it comes to promoting food in a destination? Are you working together?

AB: We are working together when possible and when it makes sense. We aim to invite some influencers to be a part of our festivals, our beer celebration and our special events, but we never expect anything other than mutual respect and interest and we are of course happy if we get our messages to new crowds through influencers.

MM: Why did you choose this particular way of online marketing? Why did you choose these particular influencers? Since when are you working together? What are your demands on an influencer?

AB: It is relatively new for us to use influencers and bloggers. We had great experiences last year during Copenhagen Beer Week, where multiple beer bloggers agreed to try our festival beer before it was released. It was a great beer, and everyone was excited and in short – I was surprised how much noise it made on social media that someone else was tasting, writing and recommending this beer.

We don't have particular demands on influencers though. We collaborate with influencers and sponsored partnerships, when it makes sense in relation to support and raise the quality and knowledge of Danish gastronomy, but we don't have specific demands – nor concerns when choosing to work with influencers. For now, we have only been working with influencers, who has shown personal interest in the food scene and our festivals, which have made it super easy. We acknowledge, that influencers may possible be the new marketing way, but for now we collaborate, when it makes sense due to the form of the event and the people evolved.

We see more and more restaurant using influencers to brand their restaurant and so on, and of course that makes sense. But for now, we still keep focusing on making magical dinner experiences for people to explore, share and enjoy.

MM: Have you ever heard of Wonderful Copenhagen? Do you work together with Wonderful Copenhagen?

AB: Copenhagen Cooking as a festival and concept was born under Wonderful Copenhagen and today, we are working closely together when arranging international press tours to Copenhagen and so much more.

MM: Do you think there is something else which you could tell me that would be helpful for me? Are there other people that I should not forget to include in my Master thesis?

AB: If you haven't talked to Wonderful Copenhagen, I think you should. Let me know, if you need me to reach out.

Interview with Hannibal Hoff – Research and Communication Manager of *Madkulturen*

MM: Tell me a little bit about yourself. What are you doing exactly?

HH: My name is Hannibal Hoff and I'm head of research and communications at *Madkulturen*, an independent organization within the ministry of food. We do a lot of research and studies on food culture, food habits and practices in Denmark. We do both large-scale population surveys as well as smaller more specific studies on specific parts of the population, specific themes and so on.

MM: What is your impression on the current food tourism in Copenhagen? Do you think people travel to Copenhagen especially to try the food?

HH: Yes, I think a lot of people travel to Denmark and specifically Copenhagen to try some of the best restaurants in the world. And this is something new in a Danish context. Since the New Nordic manifesto the culinary scene in Denmark and Scandinavia in general and Copenhagen in particular has become much more interesting, versatile and attractive to visit as a food tourist.

MM: What is your particular role when it comes to promoting food in Denmark?

HH: In *Madkulturen* we fight for “better food for everybody” so on an organisational level we try to improve peoples skills in terms of cooking, knowledge of different foods and also improve commensality – how we eat together.

MM: What kind of food and drinks are you promoting?

HH: That's the question. Because what is “better food”? We think that people should be able to make their own food – but we don't expect or envision that people eat homecooked family meals every day. But we know it's better for you, people enjoy it more and so on. At the same time, we know that we must eat less meat and much more vegetables, legumes and other greens.

MM: How do you work with sustainability?

HH: It depends on who we are working with and why. Sometimes we are very explicit about the food being sustainable, if that's what the project is about, but other times we just work with food that's sustainable without making any fuss about it.

MM: Could you give me a good example about how you work with sustainability?

HH: For instance, every year at Roskilde Festival we have a huge event called *FoodJam*, where young festivalgoers can come and cook food with the help from other young people. They can choose from a wide variety of different food products but it's all organic, in season and there is no meat. In this case we want to inspire young people to cook food and cook food that are sustainable.

Other times we teach kitchen workers in schools, cafeterias or other places to turn their menus in a more sustainable direction. Here it is important to be very explicit about sustainability, what it is, why it is important and so on.

MM: Did you ever think about how tourists could be attracted through your organization?

HH: Most of the times we don't work with the end consumer in focus. So, we are rather looking at how this momentum for the Danish or better said Copenhagen culinary scene

can be translated and transferred into more delicious and sustainable everyday cooking in the homes in Denmark.

MM: Which methods are you using to attract food tourists?

HH: We have mapped out the potentials and challenges with smaller specific areas in Denmark as part of a strategy for that region to attract more tourists – or rather to improve the culinary experience for tourists visiting the region. Here we look at the local culture, local history, looking through old archives and tales and the local environment and terroir.

MM: What is the specific role of organizations like yours when it comes to promoting food in a destination?

HH: Not much really. We have had some projects where we put focus on a specific area's terroir or food culture though.

MM: What is the specific role of influencers when it comes to promoting food in a destination? Are you working together?

HH: No, we are not working together so I don't know about their role when it comes to promoting a destination.

MM: Have you ever heard of Wonderful Copenhagen? Do you work together with Wonderful Copenhagen?

HH: We don't work with them at the moment. I think we have had some cooperation in the past if I remember right.

MM: Do you think there is something else which you could tell me that would be helpful for me? Are there other people that I should not forget to include in my Master thesis?

HH: Have you talked to Mikkel from MAD Academy? I think they could contribute with interesting insights.

Interview with Silje Dallmann – Head of communications & PR of Copenhagen Food Collective

MM: Tell me a little bit about yourself. What are you doing exactly?

SD: I'm handling PR and communications for all Cofocos restaurants – so the Copenhagen Food Collective – and our two hotels. It's a maternity cover for my colleague, and before this I was head of sales and booking for all Cofocos restaurants.

MM: What is your impression on the current food tourism in Copenhagen? Do you think people travel to Copenhagen especially to try the food?

SD: Yes, I think so – very much! I believe sometimes the guests are even making their dinner reservations before finding a hotel. I have experienced that with our restaurant *Høst*, where tourists tell us when they book that this is the first thing they are booking for their upcoming trip – sometimes up to a year in advance. The Copenhagen food scene is very internationally renowned due to our many top restaurants such as Noma, Geranium and so on, making it a great destination for food tourism.

MM: What kind of food and drinks are you serving?

SD: We have different restaurants each with their own style and gastronomic direction, ranging from Italian, French and Mediterranean to Japanese and Latin-American, and of course Nordic Cuisine. Our Nordic restaurants – *Høst*, *Vækst* and Restaurant Cofoco – are the most popular among tourists.

MM: How do you work with sustainability?

SD: Since Cofoco includes many different aspects and we receive a lot of guests, we know that we have an impact on the outside world. Of course, also a negative one. We also try to have a positive impact with sustainable, social and economical solutions. We want to help create sustainable solutions and therefore use for example solar energy or have planted trees. We have done this from 2018 to 2021 in Tanzania and Mexico. As the New Nordic Cuisine says, we also use raw materials that we know where they come from and try to minimize food waste. We are also committed to local sustainability by supporting organizations and initiatives to support local communities. Also, we are part of REGA – the Danish New Industry Warranty – and this means we try to be for human rights and against corruption. It also means that we protect the environment.

MM: Did you ever think about how tourists could be attracted through your company?

SD: We believe that we are contributing positively to the Copenhagen food scene, and thereby helping branding Copenhagen as a great food tourism destination, also in terms of being a sustainable destination. We are working with other tourism actors in Wonderful Copenhagen to tell the story about Copenhagen and trying with that to attract more tourists in the future.

MM: Which methods are you using to attract food tourists?

SD: We work with partners such as Wonderful Copenhagen and Visit Denmark, and we are using our own channels on Instagram to reach a wider audience.

MM: How exactly does Cofoco work with Wonderful Copenhagen and Visit Denmark?

SD: Wonderful Copenhagen and Visit Denmark regularly send journalists and media to our restaurants, and they visit our restaurants when they have important guests that they are showing around in Copenhagen. In return we always offer them a favorable rate at our restaurants.

We are also part of Wonderful Copenhagen's different communities such as "Meetingplace" and participate in events and meetings arranged by them. "Meetingplace" Wonderful Copenhagen has approximately 123 partners within the congress and meetings industry in the Greater Copenhagen area. The strong collaboration within the membership is strengthening Copenhagen when it comes to international meetings and conventions.

MM: Are you also working with influencers on your Instagram channel? Or don't you think they have a specific role when it comes to promoting food in a destination?

SD: We are currently only working with local influencers to target a local market. For international marketing we prefer to work with journalists and press who can include us in travel guides and so on.

MM: Why don't you also try to attract tourists (so the international market) with influencers?

SD: Our target group is mainly locals, so we are speaking to locals through our own channels. This is also why our main language is Danish. We have chosen other ways to attract tourists, such as having a strong cooperation with hotels in Copenhagen. This is also one of the areas where we rely on our good partnership with Wonderful Copenhagen and others to help promote our restaurants to tourists and international media.

MM: Why did you choose this particular way of online marketing? Why did you choose these particular influencers? Since when are you working together? What are your demands on an influencer?

SD: We only work with people who we find authentic and not too "commercial". We never pay influencers to promote our restaurants, instead we rely on a strong relationship with a group of influential personalities who we regularly invite to VIP events and so on. We are lucky enough to have a group of people who actually really like our restaurants, and therefore want to recommend it to their followers by their own wish.

MM: Do you think there is something else which you could tell me that would be helpful for me? Are there other people that I should not forget to include in my Master thesis?

SD: Best of luck for your Master Thesis!

Interview with Julie Christensen (julie.b.christensen) – Influencer

MM: Tell me a little bit about yourself. What are you doing exactly?

JB: I am a food and travel micro influencer who aims to inspire people to try new destinations, dare to go solo and stop waiting for others to travel, and also enjoy the best food. I write about to be social and staying safe while solo traveling and sharing all kinds of tips and fun facts about destinations, as well as share from my everyday life. I use Instagram and Tiktok, and recently also YouTube shorts. I work online in my own company where I help restaurants and travel agencies with social media and anything they need from me.

MM: How did you start with your account?

JB: I started posting about local restaurants to support the industry during Covid in March 2020 and when the world reopened, I transitioned into travel content.

MM: How long have you been an influencer?

JB: I think I got my first 5'000 followers in around 6 months, and it has grown slower but still steady from there. I am not a big influencer, but I have my community of around 11'000 on Instagram and currently also grew over 3'000 on Tiktok, which I started using more actively now the last months.

MM: How do you communicate with your followers?

JB: Through DMs and the comment section.

MM: What is your impression of the current food tourism in Copenhagen? Do you think people travel to Copenhagen especially to try the food?

JB: Yes absolutely, at least the people I see in my current network. Copenhagen has the best restaurant in the world, they have some amazing vegetarian restaurants and also some of my favourite bakeries in the whole world. I personally go at least once a year just to eat the cardamom buns from Juno!

MM: Why are you promoting these particular cafés, restaurants, etc.? What are your criteria's for selecting?

JB: I love finding small independent gems, run by hardworking passionate individuals, rather than the big chains. For me to post about it, it has to be truly an experience I wish for other people to have when they travel.

MM: What kind of food and drinks are you promoting?

JB: All kinds of food I find memorable (but I don't really eat meat, so I rarely post about that). I do not post that much about drinks either.

MM: How much of your account is you and how many places do you communicate to the public due to the fact that you are invited?

JB: I can't remember the last time I went to an invited thing, I did it sometimes in the beginning because it was new and exciting. I still might do it if I know the owners or the concept and it's something I want to support for them for free. I usually pay for it myself.

MM: How do you work with sustainability?

JB: I don't have a big visible focus on this that shows in my channels. I take too many planes to start talking about this subject. I take trains when possible, and do not eat meat, as my small contributions. I also try to support the chefs that are for example growing their own food and so on.

MM: What is the specific role of influencers when it comes to promoting food in a destination?

JB: For me it's just being truthful and honest. I just post things I find interesting, and if something is bad it won't make it to my feed.

MM: Did you ever think about how tourists could be attracted through your posts?

JB: Yes, I hope they find them so they can enjoy good restaurants and sights when traveling. It is such a waste to spend time and money on something that is not good, and that's what I wish to help people avoid.

MM: Have you ever heard of Wonderful Copenhagen? Wonderful Copenhagen is the official tourism organisation of Copenhagen and aims to develop and promote business and leisure tourism for the public (including food tourism). Do you work together with Wonderful Copenhagen/ Could you imagine working together with Wonderful Copenhagen?

JB: I have actually not heard of this particular brand, but it definitely sounds like something I would like to work with yes.

MM: Do you think there is something else which you could tell me that would be helpful for me? Are there other people that I should not forget to include in my Master thesis?

JB: You could try Feinschmeckeren or Skitgott! Great food writers in Denmark and Sweden. And of course, good luck with your thesis!

Interview with Rasmus Palsgård (feinschmeckeren) – Influencer

MM: Tell me a little bit about yourself. What are you doing exactly?

RP: I am a 34-year-old Copenhagen-based journalist by profession. I run my own company of which a part is to administrate my Instagram account. Apart from that, I write articles for a selection of food and lifestyle media in and outside Denmark as well as on my own blog.

MM: How did you start with your account?

RP: Like many, I just registered an account when Instagram started to become a thing. There was no big strategy or even an idea about how to monetize stuff like that. Slowly but steadily, my account started to grow.

MM: How long have you been an influencer?

RP: I started my blog back in 2011 so I guess that was where it all started. Along the way, Instagram became a part of that. In the sense of earning money directly from Instagram, I've been doing that for the last 3-4 years.

MM: How do you communicate with your followers?

RP: Mostly through posts, reels and stories. Since my content is not very personal in the sense of posting a lot of pictures of myself, I have a sensation that many of my followers are slightly more distanced to me in the sense that they see my account more as a media than a person that they have a very strong relation to.

MM: What is your impression of the current food tourism in Copenhagen? Do you think people travel to Copenhagen especially to try the food?

RP: Most certainly, yes – that is also proven by various statistics, surveys and so on. A lot of the tourism is built on our vast food scene in Copenhagen.

MM: Why are you promoting these particular cafés, restaurants, etc.? What are your criteria's for selecting?

RP: I would not say that I promote the restaurants as such. Surely, a positive post about a place where I've eaten serves as a promotion, but I do not get paid by any restaurants to promote them. My most are more to be considered as my personal recommendations for places to go. It is based on my life-long passion for food which I love to share with other people.

MM: What kind of food and drinks are you promoting?

RP: Whenever I have a collaboration with a brand, the most important rule I've made to myself is that I only work with products that I was likely to buy anyway. I do not promote products that are of low quality or that don't fit with my overall profile of promoting high quality products.

MM: How much of your account is you and how many places do you communicate to the public due to the fact that you are invited?

RP: There is a clear overlap here. Surely, many of my visits are based on invitations but I only accept invitations from restaurants that are working on a high level. If I am not happy with a meal, I simply do not recommend the place. I am privileged to be invited by some of the best restaurants in and outside Copenhagen but I care a lot about my reputation so I would never recommend a bad place regardless of if they invited me or not.

MM: How do you work with sustainability?

RP: I have been a part of the sustainable restaurant guide 360 Eat Guide since its inaugural edition four years ago. Sustainability is an important topic to me. Therefore, you would never see me advertise for industrial beef or similar products. I take my role as an influencer very seriously.

MM: Could you give me a good example about how you work with sustainability?

RP: I try to highlight local, organic ingredients, whenever this is in a restaurant or whenever I am making a recipe. And as I mentioned, I have played a leading role in running 360 Eat Guide which I have also promoted on my own channels.

MM: What is the specific role of influencers when it comes to promoting food in a destination?

RP: That is very much up to every individual influencer. I mainly focus on fine dining restaurants whenever I am travelling, whereas others focus more on food markets, street food and so on. For me, it is important to highlight places where they have a strong focus on sustainability and a good work environment.

MM: Did you ever think about how tourists could be attracted through your posts?

RP: I can only hope that it inspires them to visit the places I have recommended. I would much rather like them to spend their money in a great restaurant than a random mediocre one.

MM: Have you ever heard of Wonderful Copenhagen? Do you work together with Wonderful Copenhagen?

RP: I know them, and I have been in contact with them from time to time. That said, they do not spend a lot of energy on Danish writers/influencers. I have offered my assistance from time to time but they prefer to handle foreign press in-houses.

MM: Do you think there is something else which you could tell me that would be helpful for me? Are there other people that I should not forget to include in my Master thesis?

RP: Good luck and all the best with your thesis!