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Generation Y Tourists' Foodways: Food Behavior and Preferences at Home and on Holiday



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ABSTRACT

The existing literature emphasize the motivational role of food tourist and destination attractiveness in travel choices but little research has been done in the foodways of tourists for whom food may be not primary motivation for traveling but who still are interested in food. In addition, there is no research on Generation Y tourists in relation to food. Therefore, the thesis attempts to explore Generation Y tourists' foodways and tries to uncover the relationship between their food choices on holidays and when at home.

The exploratory study takes a constructivistic stance involving a qualitative multi-method approach and it employs a two-step collection and analysis of the empirical data. The first step includes netnography in form of blog reviews about food and travel and unstructured exploratory interviews as well as a literature review that formed the conceptual framework of the thesis. The second step is 20 in-depth interviews. Even though the netnographic research of the blog reviews and exploratory interviews were made first and helped to create the interview guide the analysis combines all collected data in one. An interpretative and semiotic position was followed in data analysis and interpretation. Further, all the findings were analyzed within the conceptual framework.

The biggest findings are that it seems that even though Gen Y tourists do not choose a destination based on food and is not food tourists, while at a destination they will travel around in the area for special food-related experiences that friends and locals recommend. Also, when they are back home they tend to cook the local dishes they tried at a destination as it extends the holiday experience and by doing it they change their foodways by expanding their range of food and acquired tastes.

The analysis also reveals that Gen Y tourists' foodways on holidays very much depend on their past travel and food history: the more they travel and taste different food the more their food habits change. Furthermore, the findings also suggest that positive food experiences at a destination make Gen Y tourists more open-minded about new foodways in next trips and at home, whereas negative ones may hold back their intention to try unusual dishes for a while relying on their habitual taste. The findings highlight that across the different individuals changes take different time and happen to a different extent, and they support the importance of cultural and demographical factors. Moreover,

socialization with others and the nature of the trip may affect Gen Y tourists' food behaviors at home and across holidays.

Keywords: food, foodways, Generation Y, tourism, holiday, home, variety-seeking, experiences, hybrid consumer patterns, identity, culture, habitual behavior, motivation, personality traits, involvement, memorabilia.

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1. INTRODUCTION

People eat not only when hungry; people also eat for comfort, pleasure and for the thrill (Quan and Wang, 2004; Steinmetz, 2010; Theriksen, 2012; Mak, Lumbers and Eves, 2012a). Therefore, food no longer functions only as nutrition but also as a means to discover and experience new food, ideas, dining rituals, culinary concepts and cultures (Godfrey and Clarke, 2000; Cohen and Avieli, 2004; Long, 2004 Everett, 2008; Gyimóthy and Mykletun, 2009; Kim, Suh and Eves, 2010). In the context of tourism, food is an indispensable component of the travel experience as eating is a compulsory activity for every tourist (Richards, 2002; Quan and Wang, 2004; Blichfeldt and Theriksen, 2010). Nevertheless, consuming food during traveling is not only something tourists have to do but may also qualify as a unique form of tourist activity that may affect consumer experiences through all five senses (Pine and Gilmore, 1999; Hjalager and Richards, 2002; Kivela and Crofts, 2006).

Tourism organizations seem to recognize the important role of food and apply a range of promotional strategies targeting tourists interested in food consumptions for attracting them to a specific destination. Already ten years ago Hall and Sharples (2003) noted that tourists can spend up to one-third of the whole travel budget on food. Today, with experience economy this share is probably not smaller as tourists may be ready to spend considerable amounts of money to have meaningful experiences (Pine and Gilmore, 1999; Boswijk, Thijssen and Peelen, 2007). Therefore, many researchers state that some food experiences not only boost tourism but also make vacations meaningful and memorable for tourists (Quan and Wang, 2004; Hall and Mitchell, 2005; Everett, 2008; Hall and Sharples, 2008; Gössling, Garrod, Aall, Hille and Peeters, 2010; Lee and Arcodia, 2011; Mak et al., 2012a; Mak, Lumbers, Eves and Chang, 2012b).

Addressing the significance food plays in the motivation for travelling, Hall and Mitchell (2005, pp.74-75) define different food importance levels in travel motivation, see Figure 1.

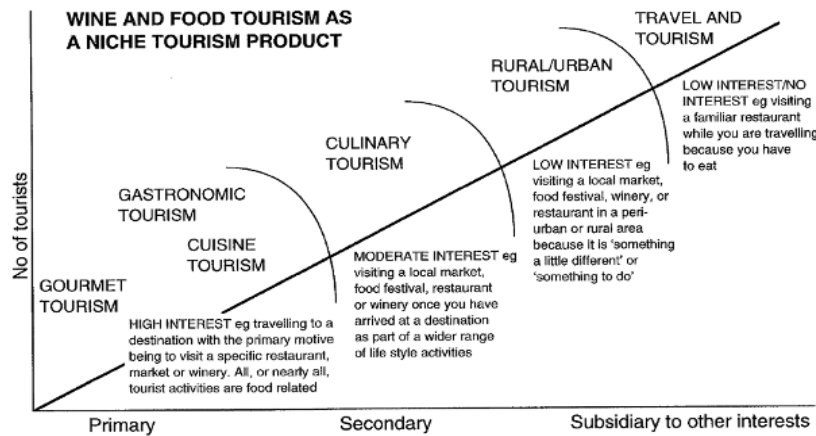


Figure 1. Importance of a Special Interest in Food as a Travel Motivation.
(Hall and Mitchell, 2005, pp.74-75)

The levels range from high interest (gourmet, gastronomic, cuisine tourism) over moderate interest (culinary tourism) and low interest (rural/urban tourism) to low/no interest (travel and tourism) in food. The model also states that the more interested tourists are in food, the fewer people share that level of interest, and it implies that most tourists do not care about food at all. A shortcoming to the model is that for the last two groups of tourists, even though food is not a primary or secondary motivation of the holidays, they may still have a high interest in food it just does not have much influence over the chosen destination.

Long (2004) argues that food tourism in all its forms can be described as travel with focus on enjoying meals, preparing them, attending culinary courses at cooking schools, visiting wineries, restaurants and festivals. It seems that the definition is lacking as not every restaurant experience on holidays can be regarded as food tourism, but at the same time tourists enjoy food experiences, and the cuisine is possibly the primary motivation for a restaurant visit. From another side, food tourism is not always the result of interest in cuisine as visiting a winery might be a matter of prestige, and visiting a local market can be a way of socializing with friends. Therefore, there may be a difference between tourists for whom food is just a part of the travel experience and those who plan their holiday based on their interest in food.

Long's (2004) description of food tourism seems broad because she does not make a clear distinction between tourists who have high motivation to travel to a destination in order to participate in food-related tourist activities and others who do not see food as a primary motivation for a trip.

Furthermore, Long, more or less implicitly, neglects the issue that those who do not travel for food may nevertheless have memorable experiences with food during the holidays. An alternative definition comes from Hall and Mitchell (2001, p. 308) who state that food tourism is:

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

As Long, Hall and Mitchell also emphasize food as primary travel motivation. However, tourists eat regardless of whether food and great food experiences are the main content of the holiday or not, but nonetheless, Hall and Mitchell's definition only includes deliberate food tourists (travel focused primarily on food and beverages) who according to the World Food Travel Association (Prohaska, 2013) account for about 10% of all travelers. So the question remains: what about other people for whom food is important or becomes so during their holiday even though food is not a primary motivation for travel? Is it not important to find out what attitudes to food the other 90% of travelers have and what food in trip means for them? In order to address these questions, this thesis is dedicated to the study of food in tourism, not food or culinary tourism.

The majority of studies on food and tourism are dedicated to culinary and food tourism and local food as tourist attractions for different destinations (Getz, 1989; Long, 2004; Andersson and Getz, 2009; Henderson, 2009; López-Guzmán and Sánchez-Cañizares, 2012; Lee and Arcodia, 2011; Yurtseven and Kaya, 2011; Kim and Eves, 2012). Another essential aspect of these works is that most of them examine food in tourism from the marketing and holiday destination perspectives with the aim of branding places by means of local food. Furthermore, several scholars agree that for some segments of tourists certain foods and the experiences surrounding it are very crucial motivational factors in their choices of holiday destinations (Getz, D., 1989; Hall et al, 2003; Reichel, Fuchs and Uriely, 2009; Kim et al., 2009; Blichfeldt and Therkelsen, 2010; Therkelsen and Blichfeldt, 2012; Halkier, 2012). Also, the topic of authenticity in food remains to be widespread in the investigation of the relationship between food and tourism (Reynolds, 1993; Wang, 1999; Chhabra, Healy and Sills, 2003; Gyimóthy and Mykletun, 2009; Henderson, 2009; Steinmetz, 2010; Lee and Arcodia, 2011; Therkelsen and Blichfeldt, 2012).

The review of current literature on tourist behavior found a large number of relevant studies (Cohen, 1972; Peace, 1982; Holt, 1995; Murphy, 2001; Cohen and Avieli, 2004; Noy, 2004; Maoz, 2005; O'Reilly, 2006; Blichfeldt, Chore and Milan, 2012; Paris, 2012) but not much research has been done specifically on food behavior and habits of different tourist types. There is some recent work that studied a specific tourist segment, empty nest families, from the perspective of food tourism (Blichfeldt and Therkelsen, 2010) but other segments are overlooked in this research area and specifically nothing was found about comparing young travelers' food habits at home and on holidays. The fact that their food preferences are omitted is strange, especially while tourists in their 20-30s are considered a powerful group that can transform the tourism industry (Nordin, 2005; Glover and Prideaux, 2008; Benckendorff, Moscardo and Pendergast 2009; Moscardo, Murphy and Benckendorff, 2011; Bassaler, 2012). This implies that such research is especially needed as tourists of this age group is the next big generation and an important market segment that according to Ang, Yee and Seong (2009) can generate business worth trillions of dollars worldwide.

The above explains the inspiration for selecting the problem area for this paper as most of the studies on tourism and food are dedicated to culinary tourism and only one niche segment, empty nest families, in food tourism context, while not investigating food preferences of other types of travelers. Therefore, the project will focus on foodways of a complex tourist group.

Long (2004, p. 22) defines foodways as “*network of activities and systems – physical, social (communicative), cultural, economic, spiritual, and aesthetic*”. This refers to the whole range of food habits, beliefs and taboos about food, attitudes, and meal systems as food touches almost every aspect of individuals' lives. For this study foodways cover food behavior, food consumption, food preferences and habits, food-related activities and eating practices. Therefore, to understand young travelers' foodways when on holidays, their foodways in their everyday life should be taken into account as it is an important context of their foodways when they are in unfamiliar environments.

According to the literature review, there is no research on food behavior of young travelers which makes it interesting to study. Within the segment of young travelers is the Millennial Generation, also known as Gen Y. Gen Y were born between the late 1970s to the early 2000s (Nordin, 2005; Macleod, 2008; Moscardo, Murphy and Benckendorff, 2011). This segment possesses some interesting properties for food-related research. They grew up with increased globalization which opened borders in geographical and virtual sense (Ang, Yee and Seong, 2009; Bassaler, 2012). Prohaska (2013) adds that the generation had the opportunity to start their travel career very early and experience exotic and unfamiliar food from all over the world and they are not satisfied with

fast-food only. In addition, Bowen and Clarke (2009) determined that youth prefers to gather information about the trip, compare prices, book accommodations and tickets through the Internet more than other tourists. Generally, they can be characterized by increased familiarity with communication, media and digital technologies as they grew up with it and rely on it. So, they are possibly familiar with different cultures through the various Internet sources even before the holidays. Reflecting on this, young people may represent a distinct group of consumers by their behavior in everyday life and particular in tourism. Due to Gen Y's lifestyles they seem to be more open and adventurous in trying new things. So, better understanding Gen Y's foodways may benefit various sectors like food and service producers, restaurateurs and health organizations to communicate effectively. Furthermore, as Gen Y tourists qualify as the tourists of the future, gaining knowledge on their relations to food in a globalized world may contribute with knowledge of critical importance to food in a touristic context in the future.

Gen Y tourists in this study comprise people between 16-36 years old. According to Bowen and Clarke (2009) Gen Y tourists do in most cases not live in the family home and have few financial commitments. The authors argue that the most called-for tourism product of youth is language schools, working holidays, volunteering and backpacking which may turn into flashpacking as they grow older (Bowen and Clarke, 2009). All those features can be explained by generation effects and relate to the historical background of the given generation. For instance, Gen Y's travel behavior is influenced by being heavily engaged with social media and they have in most cases concerns about sustainability (Pearson, Henryks and Rowe, 2010).

The study will be conducted among Gen Y tourists from Westernized countries as they have more resources to travel, relatively good Internet connectivity than the rest of the world and are considered to have a cultural background influenced by global trends (Mazzocchi, Lobb and Traill, 2006; Hartwell, Lugosi and Edwards, 2011; Mak et al., 2012b; Mak et al., 2012a). This minimizes the impact of travel and Internet accessibility and culture differences on the research results.

1.1. Problem Statement

The purpose of this study is to examine Gen Y tourists' food preferences while traveling and how it may relate to their food consumption at home. The research is going to examine such aspects as food choices made consciously and unconsciously, and symbolic, economic and social aspects to express preferences, identities and cultural meanings of Gen Y tourists. The main concepts that will be highlighted in the study are: food in tourism, foodways of Gen Y and factors that may affect food

behavior on holidays and at home; and the choice of concepts are elaborated on later. Given this theoretical field it is possible to formulate the main research question of the study as:

What characterizes the foodways of Gen Y tourists while on holiday and how does it relate to their food behavior and preferences at home?

This question is expected to show possible change in youth's self-identity for switching between their food behavior in their routine life at home and their food preferences when they are out exploring the world. To ensure deeper understanding of the research area the question will be answered partly through a theoretical discussion, partly by analyzing empirical data.

During the research different circumstances like economy, type of travel, people traveled with, culture and background, age and gender, as well as accumulated travel experience and identity issues will be considered as they may influence the foodways of Gen Y tourists. Therefore, it is interesting to investigate how their food behavior may vary depending on different factors that characterize the trip itself.

Answering the question will initiate the exploration of the problem that was omitted in existing literature and will help to construct knowledge of Gen Y foodways and food experiences. This can in general contribute to the theoretical foundation in tourism and may provide insight on behavioral characteristics on the examined tourist group without limiting the study area by studying destination attractiveness based on their authentic cuisine. The result of the study may give an idea about what food means to Gen Y tourists, revealing reasons for different choices and highlight the more important and manifested factors influencing their food behavior. Also, it will build knowledge on the social aspects of food consumption in tourism and how it may help construct the identity.

Gaining deeper knowledge about Gen Y tourists' food habits and behavior can contribute to destination development in terms of gastronomy, and better promote certain local food businesses that may support these habits. This way, the businesses that offer food at destinations will be updated about food preferences regarding tourist types because knowledge of tourists' food behavior could be a key success factor for businesses. As representatives of Gen Y might be too demanding tourism-related organizations need to keep up with them.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

During the extensive literature reviews, a vast amount of research on food tourism, tourist behavior in general and Gen Y in particular and food choices of individuals was identified. This chapter will critically discuss the selected theories and concepts that were found most relevant in order to address the RQ, with the purpose of composing a model that will assist in analyzing Gen Y tourists' foodways when comparing travel and home settings.

The theories will help identify the various characteristics and facets that can be essential to investigate the similarities in Gen Y as a group and also what may be unique for each of the interviewees. For instance, because of the large age range it is possible that the individuals have different economy and travel and food preferences.

The literature reviews showed that there are no detailed works on eating practices of tourists especially on Generation Y (Cohen and Avieli, 2004) but there are works that look at the foodways of tourists in general, and also research on the ordinary foodways of Gen Y. Combining these derives a holistic understanding of the general characteristics of the group, Gen Y tourists' foodways. In this way the literature will help to construct knowledge on the similarities within the group. To support the constructivist approach the factors that influence food behavior will be added to include individuality in the conceptual framework. Therefore, the relevant research on foodways of Gen Y tourists can be grouped into three overall concepts which have been depicted in Figure 2: foodways in tourism, foodways of Gen Y, and factors influencing tourist food consumption.

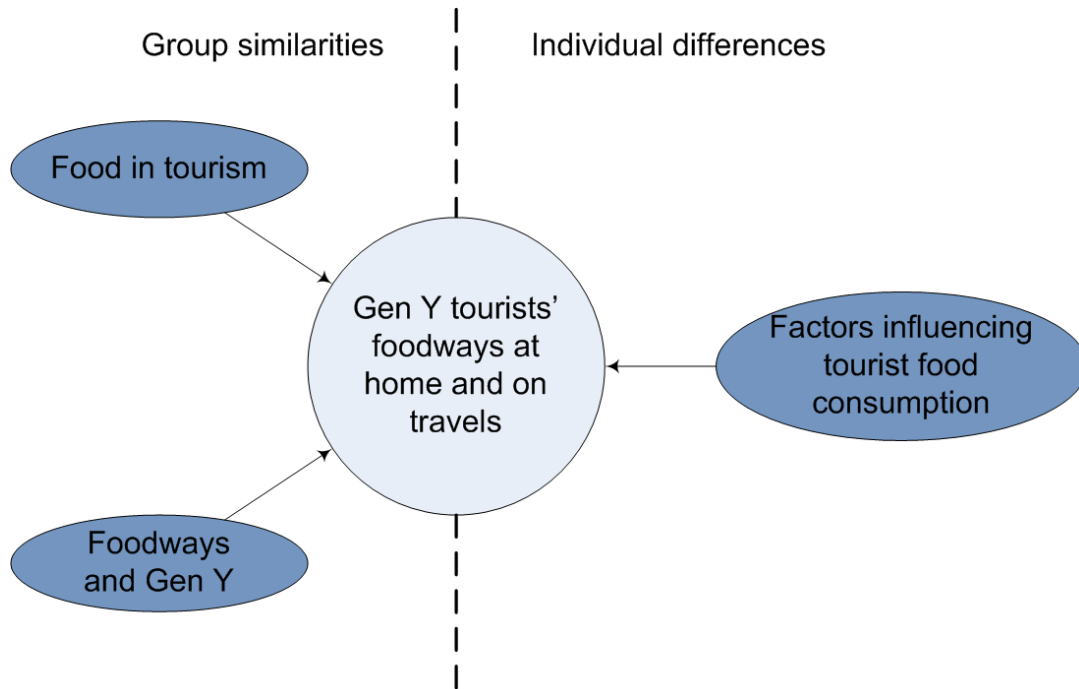


Figure 2. Overview of the Conceptual Framework.

The factors will express the differences of the foodways within the Gen Y tourists and support the view that they will construct multiple realities when it comes to their foodways. This will provide a personalized view of every individual in different circumstances that is necessary for this exploratory study.

2.1. Food in Tourism

Cohen (1972) argues that tourists travel for novelty and strangeness but most of them enjoy their experiences if they get some familiarity, which he calls “environmental bubble”, of their known home environment. Applying the concept of familiarity and strangeness to the sociology of food in tourism Fischler (1988) presents two tendencies in taste, neophobic and neophylic. The terms show the distinction between individuals' attitude to food, where the first is disfavor to unknown dishes and the latter is inclination to look for and taste new strange food (Kim et al., 2010). Similar idea presented by Giddens (1984) states that food consumptions on holiday can serve as an extension of the “ontological comfort of home”. It means that daily routines and food habits can create a

comfortable environment and feeling of safety in an unfamiliar environment. Nevertheless, when people travel their food consumption does not remain absolutely the same as their daily food preferences as well as their daily food choices vary from time to time. What the authors above have in common is that they, with their different terms and concepts, all point to a duality in tourists' relations to food in the sense that they are both being drawn towards the exploration of strange food and towards the safety of familiar food. Therefore, because of the research question it is crucial to try to understand this duality from the interviewees' perspectives and given the constructivistic position of the thesis to understand when and under which circumstances tourists are drawn towards new and familiar food, respectively.

Apart the new/familiar duality is the concept of peak, supporting and daily routine experience, which can also help to understand the relationships between foodways of Gen Y tourists while traveling and at home and their need to extend their familiar environment through their foodways. This is because some researchers claim that studies on food consumptions in tourism do not give a clear understanding about the role of food in tourism, and in particular, disagreements among researchers seem to focus on whether it is a peak experience or just a supportive experience (Hudman, 1986; Hjalager and Richards, 2002; Quan and Wang, 2004; Morgan, Lugosi and Ritchie, 2010; Blichfeldt and Therkelsen, 2010). The limited understanding of the tourist experiences led Quan and Wang (2004) to develop the structural model of the tourist experience where all dimensions, namely peak touristic, supporting consumer and daily routine experiences are integrated in a whole (Figure 3).

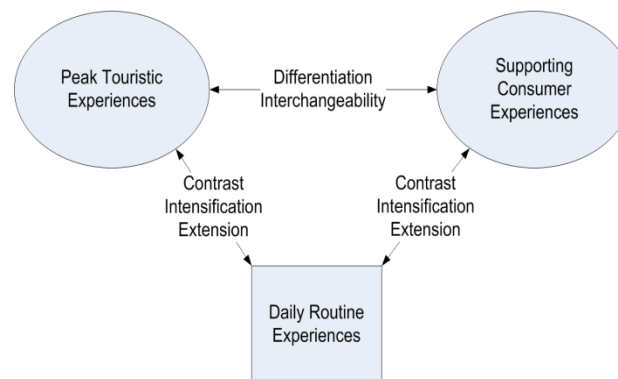


Figure 3. The conceptual model of the tourist experience (Quan and Wang, 2004, p. 300).

Quan and Wang (2004) argue that the majority of the works in tourism literature cover the contrast between the peak touristic experience and the daily experience and relating it to food consumption in tourism it seems that tourists eat more unusual and unfamiliar food while in trip compared to their daily food consumptions. Relating the model to the literature reviewed, it was found that the contrast between home and destination settings when it comes to foodways is not fully applicable for all tourists as it contradicts some works that provide examples of food behavior of some conservative nations (Pizam and Sussmann, 1995; Cohen and Avieli, 2004). This is because food behavior is socially constructed and therefore people's neophobia and neophylia are influenced not only by biological factors but also by culture (Cohen and Avieli, 2004; Kim, Kim and Goh, 2011; Mak et al., 2012b). So, coming to a strange place in quest of novel experiences some tourists frequently keep their habits and preferences, including their food consumption, maintaining an environmental bubble of known food. Another critical aspect of Quan and Wang's (2004) theory is the interchangeable nature of food experience in tourism, in other words some supporting experience may suddenly become a meaningful peak experience. Applying these ideas on Gen Y tourists' foodways it might result that they may change depending on different individual conditions. At the same time it contradicts with Cohen and Avieli's (2004) tourist food behavior division based on tourist typologies, presented below, which seemingly does not give many details and groups tourists purely by their food habits.

Based on the phenomenology of tourist experiences formulated by Cohen (1979), Cohen and Avieli (2004) gave an account of the food habits of recreational and experiential tourists as they seemed to be more distant from each other regarding food behavior than other modes of tourists. Applying Pine and Gilmore's (1999) concept of experience both types of tourists seem to possess contrasting features of behavior, escapist and educational, and they allow themselves to change their behavior and habits while on holidays to different extents (Urry, 1990; Thouvenot, 1978; Pine and Gilmore, 1999; Cohen and Avieli, 2004; Boswijk, Thijssen and Peelen, 2007). This shows how pivotal the degree of the environmental bubble can be for tourists. Given the research question it is therefore interesting to try to find out how the interviewees balance between maintaining a familiar environment while still having new food experiences.

With their study Cohen and Avieli (2004) aimed to incorporate food notions with tourism sociology as the role and meaning of food in tourism did not find much attention in previous tourist literature in relation to sociology. They presented a link between the behavior of tourists by general typology and their food behavior, however it does not give the whole picture which can assist to answer the main research question. First, the study deals only with Western tourists' perception of Asian cuisine and

does not take into account the age of the tourists so it is difficult to say where Gen Y tourists really belong in Cohens' typology of tourists. Second, there are only two types of tourists discussed and the discussion does not provide detailed analysis of the types and sub-types of tourists, instead giving just an overview. Third, emphasizing on tourists' special food preferences in trip there is still a gap between food behavior when at home and travel food behavior. Finally, it is possible that within the same type, tourists have discrepancies in food behavior. Therkelsen and Blichfeldt (2012) found that some tourists may have hybrid food behavior and their food preferences differ across holidays or within the same journey depending on personality, social, contextual and other factors.

Based on the above theories and concepts, this study should examine some of the nuances they describe, both when the examined individual is at home and at a destination. The interviews should therefore investigate the individuals' perceptions on consumption of strange and familiar foods, their feelings and requirements to the environment in which it occurs, and how inclined they feel to try unfamiliar food. In addition, the researcher should investigate how the type of trip and the individual's tourist self-identity affect the food choices and the level of willingness to be immersed in the local atmosphere. Also, what the food choices are based on, e.g., quality, variety, taste, smell, and visual appearance, should be uncovered. Another interesting aspect to investigate is their view of what eating and food means to them and if and how it differs across travel types.

2.2. Foodways of Gen Y

Even though no literature was found on Gen Y tourists' foodways, related works deal with Gen Y's everyday food habits and choices and this may help give insights into their foodways on holidays.

Research on restaurants draws attention to Gen Y's perceptions of food consumption behaviors as symbolic and as a public demonstration of personal capital (Ritchie, Charters, Fountain, Kolyesnikova, Fish, Terblanche, Dodd, Thach and Herbst, 2011). Ritchie et al. (2011) emphasize the importance of socialization and togetherness in food-related behavior of Gen Y and how it may enrich their experiences and give them opportunities to share their food preferences with other people. The study also found that Gen Y has limited money and prices are an essential factor for them. Dining out and food consumption in a travel context are not identical phenomena but they are closely related from the sociological point of view as both activities deal with food choices in unfamiliar, or at least not at home, contexts. Applying the idea of demonstration of capital, prestige plays important role in self-enhancement and self-satisfaction when selecting certain food. Addressing food in the tourism context, Gen Y tourists sometimes take a picture of local dishes they

taste in holidays to share with friends. Fields (2002) explains it as a desire for recognition and attention from others. The main focus of their study is public drinking behavior of Anglophone Gen Y, which is strictly a component of foodways, but it does not concern their habits at home at all. In addition, Richie et al. (2011) take the marketing perspective and therefore treat Gen Y as a segment, thereby generalizing over for instance Gen Y's economic situation and the perceived symbolic meaning of food consumption. For the purpose of finding relevant key issues in foodways to examine in the interviewees the study still gives insights despite its shortcomings.

The symbolic demonstration of food preferences is supported by Stead, McDermott, MacKintosh and Adamson (2011) who hold the view that foodways play a crucial role in creating identity and belongingness to a social group of society for young people and that their food behavior has social consequences. This reflects Newman, Lohman and Newman's (2007) theory that people's food preferences help them build strong social connections with peers. In another case, young women showed their concern about eating healthier to create a more positive social identity (Antin and Hunt, 2012). The studies deal with young people a bit younger than 20 which are part of the thesis' target population, but the rest of Gen Y may not exhibit the same patterns as older people may feel more confident with themselves and therefore not rely so much on external approval. Also, this discussion raises the matter of the social factor of food consumptions what apparently is not least important in the tourism aspect as Gen Y tourists often travel together with their partners and friends (Therkelsen and Blichfeldt, 2012). As a result these social issues should be reflected in the interview guide to ensure the interviewer explores them for getting a deeper understanding of how peers affect the individual's foodways both at home and on vacation.

Blichfeldt and Gram (2012) take another view on Gen Y's food consumption arguing that it is influenced by their transition from living with parents to independent life. They found that most of young individuals to some extent exhibit the food-related practices they were brought up with, and students who continue with this habitual food consumption have less difficulty transitioning. With time students develop new habits and preferences in relation to food and the study investigated the personal decisions and life changes that form those food habits and make them meaningful (Blichfeldt and Gram, 2012). Therefore, the study can be applied to the tourism food consumption aspect and moving from home can find it's parallel with the change of habitual environment and food practice when on holiday. Even though the study was conducted among Danish students and was not longitudinal, the central idea of habitual behavior and identity change may be useful to examine possible changes in young travelers' foodways and identity at home and while in holidays. The idea

that both habitual behavior and transition may be a critical element in regard to Gen Y's foodways is also closely related to the central idea behind this thesis, that it may not be sufficient to study foodways during one holiday only, but that it may be a better approach to investigate the foodways both at home and while away in order to try to understand how the different life stages affect the foodways of Gen Y tourists.

Applying the concepts mentioned above, it is clear that some Gen Y tourists may prioritize food based on its nutritional qualities, whereas others may consider social implications when practicing their foodways, or that nutritional qualities are prioritized in some contexts while social implications might be more important in other contexts. In other words, the respondents need to tell about their views when it comes to reasons for specific foodways, whether it for instance is based on prestige, price, is otherwise socially anchored and if, how limited it is by their economy. Also, changing the habitual environment from home to some destination can mean different levels of difficulties for an individual and it may depend on how the foodways from home are maintained and how well they cook. Therefore, the interview needs to investigate the interviewees' perception of their own cooking skills, their loyalty to the traditions of their family home foodways and of their own foodways developed after leaving the family home. These aspects may give suggestions to their readiness to adapt to unfamiliar environments, e.g., a holiday destination. How they share their foodways with their peers also shows their level of their interest socializing around food and how they may consider foodways as demonstrating prestige. Likewise, according to the Gen Y is very influenced by their friends' opinion it also should be investigated to see how their foodways depend on their peers' foodways. Therefore, the phenomenon of collective influence should be investigated further because it is possible that identities related to food behavior may explain important personal characteristics of food choices among Gen Y tourists.

2.3. Factors Influencing Tourist Food Behavior

The two previous sections focus on the foodways of Gen Y tourists as a group with similarities. However, the literature reviews also revealed a number of theories that try to explain individual differences in foodways, and therefore they may help show potential commonalities and discrepancies within the studied population's foodways at home and in trips and uncover which circumstances may affect it. Mak et al. (2012b) combined many different studies in tourism and sociological research to identify what factors influence tourists' food consumption (Pizam and Sussmann, 1995; Hall and Mitchell, 2002; Richards, 2002; Hjalager and Richards, 2002; Fields, 2002; Long, 2004; Quan and Wang, 2004; Cohen and Avieli, 2004; Tse and Crotts, 2005; Ryu and Jang, 2006; Kivela and Crotts, 2006; Kim et al., 2009; Chang et al., 2010; Chang et al., 2011). They

identified five socio-cultural and psychological factors that affect tourist food consumption: cultural and religious, socio-demographic, food-related personality traits, exposure effect and past experience, and motivational factors. Their factors will be taken into further discussion and compared to alternative views and other studies.

2.3.1. Culture and Religion

Many authors consider culture and religion the main determinants that affect food consumption (Pizam and Sussmann, 1995; Hofstede, 2001; Cohen and Avieli, 2004; Crotts, 2004; Nam and Lee, 2011). Culture and religion define what food with what qualities and what foodways are acceptable (Khan, 1981; Chan, 2006; Mak et al., 2012b). It seems that some of the given views tend to generalize based on nationality of tourists (Pizam and Sussmann, 1995; Hofstede, 1997; Kozak, 2002; Soares, Farhangmehr and Shoham, 2007). Thus, the practice to use nationality or country of residence was criticized by Dann (1993) who advocates that country of nationality of tourists may differ from the country of origin, not all people with the same nationality and country of birth have the same culture. It should be kept in mind that important aspects like globalization and the Internet might blur the cultural peculiarities of food consumption, just like the atheist movement that especially affects the Westernized Gen Y relaxes the religious factors (Mak et al, 2012a).

To get an understanding of how culture and religion may affect Gen Y tourists' foodways, the interviews should enlighten how the interviewees believe their national culture, religion and how precisely they practice it reflects on their life. This includes their preferences for food ingredients, cooking techniques and flavor principles. This thesis targets only Westernized individuals and this may mean that they will have more alike cultures (Pizam and Sussmann, 1995). Still it is possible that some individual details caused by culture may be uncovered in the interviews. In addition, as a tourist travels abroad and is removed from the home culture and into a different culture, the culture of a tourist destination may influence the foodways as well. In other words, the destination culture should be highlighted in the interviews and taken into account in the analysis.

2.3.2. Socio-Demographic Factors

Age, gender, marital status, education, occupation and income indicate the socio-economic and demographic status of individuals. Those factors seem to affect food behavior and are therefore important aspects in studying differences in foodways (Khan, 1981; Furst, Connors, Bisogni, Sobal and Falk, 1996; Bäckström, Pirttilä-Backman and Tuorila, 2004; Marshall and Bell, 2004; Kim, Eves and Scarles, 2009; Mak et al, 2012b). Given a sociological point of view certain foods mean

tradition, modernity, masculinity, femininity, and superiority which tell that food sometimes reflects the social status and self-identity of an individual (Mak et al., 2012b). The socio-demographic factors should therefore be taken into account when analyzing the interviews in this research, as they can affect the answers and background of their foodways. Because the thesis studies a specific generation, discrepancies caused by age may not be apparent in the study as they are influenced by the same cohort effects (Bowen and Clark, 2009). Still the gap between 16 and 33 should prove significant differences, especially in maturity and independence from the family home.

2.3.3. Food-Related Personality Traits

Another factor that influences food-related behavior of individuals is food-related personality traits (Pliner and Hobden, 1992; Tuorila, Meiselman, Bell, Cardello and Johnson, 1994; Raudenbush and Frank, 1999; Henriques, King and Meiselman, 2009; Kim, Suh and Eves, 2010; Barrena and Sánchez, 2012; Mak, Lumbers, Eves, and Chang, 2012b; Yamada, Kawabe and Ihaya, 2012). The literature identified a number of food-related personality traits. One view of the earliest food-related personality traits in tourism literature is food neophobia and neophylia (Fischler, 1988). Cohen and Avieli (2004) added that the trait suggests local food at a destination can be more of an impediment than an attraction to many tourists. Quan and Wang (2004) also allocate two types of food neophylia, routine variety-seeking and novelty-seeking. The first refers to rotating food ingredients over time, and the latter describes people's eagerness to eat food they never tried before. In general, such variety-seeking behavior often relates to hedonic aspects of consumption (Bäckström, Pirttilä-Backman and Tuorila, 2004). Bell and Marshall (2003) developed another close food-related personality trait, food involvement. This trait refers to the level of importance of food in an individual's life and vary across people (Bell and Marshall, 2003; Kim et al., 2010).

Another view expressed by Tuorila et al. (2001) and Ritchey et al. (2003) challenge those theories arguing that familiarity of food is not a cultural but an individual experience which can be very crucial in the case of Gen Y tourists as they might become familiar with unknown cuisine by communicating with peers and by means of the Internet.

It seems that the reviewed literature quite often accounts food-related personality traits to the nationality, culture, gender and social representation of individuals, factors that therefore help form the individual's food personality (Pliner and Hobden, 1992; Pizam and Sussmann, 1995; Hofstede, 1997; Tuorila, Lahteenmaki, Pohjalainen and Lotti, 2001; Ritchey, Frank, Hurstic and Tuorila, 2003; Quan and Wang, 2004; Bäckström, Pirttilä-Backman and Tuorila, 2004; Woodside, Hsu and

Marshall, 2011; Kim and Eves, 2012). This potential dependency between the five factors is of some concern as the study tries to uncover the individual circumstances that form different attitudes to food, as similar age and culture may imply more similar personalities. This may imply that this exploratory research may not uncover all the detailed discrepancies in personality of Gen Y tourists and its effects on their foodways.

Applying the food-related personality traits to the study the interview guide needs to ensure that the investigated individuals' own perception of their neophylic and neophobic levels are revealed, in other words how keen they are to try unfamiliar food. How they are inclined to change their routine foodways both at home and at destinations. Also, the interview needs to uncover the individuals' perceptions of food as impediments and attractions at home and at destinations and what other food related barriers that individuals may have. Understanding the interviewees' meaning of food, interest in food and cooking skills can hint to the relationship between their level of food involvement and their foodways.

2.3.4. Past Experiences

Based on different researchers Mak et al. (2012b) reasoned that past experiences with a food can also affect a tourist's food behavior (Bisogni, Connors, Devine and Sobal, 2002; Tse and Crotts, 2005; Pearce and Lee, 2005; Ryu and Jang, 2006). Barker (1982) found that an individual's past experience with a food creates food memories, which are closely connected to Tung and Ritchie's (2011)'s discussion on sensory attributes of the food emphasizing the essence of memorable experience in tourism context. There is a view that the travel career forms patterns (TCPs) that represent all experiences of a tourist (Ryan, 1998; Pearce and Lee, 2005; Filep and Greenacre, 2007; Smed, 2009). Additionally, increased exposure to different cuisines is also attributed by globalization (Hall and Mitchell, 2002; Kim et al., 2009; Bardhi, Bengtsson and Ostberg, 2009; Kim et al., 2011; Mak et al., 2012a; Mak et al., 2012b; UNEP, 2012). With the growing influence of globalization food has become more international, there are more and more ethnic restaurants for tourists to find at home as well as readily available information about foreign cuisines on the Internet (Cohen and Avieli, 2004; Nam and Lee, 2011). This way, tourists have chances to become familiar with a variety of foreign cuisines even before a trip to a destination. Therefore, the interviewer should explore how ethnic restaurants and the Internet influence the interviewees' interest in ethnic food at the destination and at home and how trying some unfamiliar food change their tastes and inspire them to cook differently at home.

The main critic to the theory of TCP and past experiences is that it is difficult to get significant results and to see the patterns in food behavior because there are big differences in the accumulated

amount of past travel experiences to different countries. In other words, different individuals do not accumulate comparable travel and food experiences. For the purpose of this study, this is less of a problem as the examined individuals' past experiences are only used to understand each individual's particular relation between their own pasts and current foodways. The TCP and past food experiences of individuals may have influenced their current food preferences and identities, and therefore the interview needs to get an account of the interviewees' travel careers as well as get an understanding of their past food experiences, e.g., ethnic restaurant visits. It makes it possible to assume that rich food experiences, feelings and memories about them will encourage tourists to continue getting acquainted with new foods and foodways and developing knowledge about new cuisines and cooking techniques. Therefore, the interviewees' feelings about some important food experiences should be uncovered. To enable the interviewees to open up and share the feelings with the researcher, it would be beneficial to have memorabilia of the experiences in front of them. In addition, for the study, individual perceptions on food-related activities and experiences accumulated over time are important to the Gen Y's identity construction, which may be useful in analyzing and interpreting the interviews.

2.3.5. Motivational Factors

Mak et al. (2012b) classified the motivational factors of tourist food consumption into five dimensions; symbolic, obligatory, contrast, extension and pleasure. The symbolic dimension refers to the symbolic meanings of food as a tourist's main motivation. Finding correlations with the works mentioned above this dimension covers interest to local cultures, authentic experiences, learning and education, prestige and status (Mak et al., 2012b). The obligatory dimension includes the nutritional function of food and health concerns omitting exciting experiences of new food exploration which is opposite to the motivation to seek a contrast to the tourists' daily routine experiences presented by Quan and Wang (2004). The extension dimension implies seeking food experiences that extend the tourists' daily routines by maintaining their core eating behavior. Last, the pleasure dimension involves the motivations to seek pleasure from food experiences emphasizing such factors like sensory appeal and togetherness. This dimension has similarities with Bell and Marshall's (2003) food involvement concept and relates to pleasure from food and sharing food-related interest with other people as discussed previously.

One of the problems in how Mak et al. (2012b) identified the motivational factors is that it was mostly based on research that focused on motivation for travelling and destination choices, where food was a main parameter (Hjalager and Richards, 2002; Long, 2004; Yoon and Uysal, 2005; Hall

and Mitchell, 2005; Therkelsen, 2012). They found only a few sources that were focused on motivational factors for foodways where food is not necessarily the main attraction for a destination (Fields, 2002; Kim et al, 2009; Chang et al., 2010), and as mentioned previously the thesis do not focus on gourmet tourism. In addition the multi-dimensional features of motivation focus on tourists only and do not necessarily reflect the motivations that are present in home settings, motivational differences between home and abroad in the foodways of Gen Y tourists may not be properly reflected.

Applying the motivational factors to the study the interviewees should be encouraged to disclose what food means to them, why they choose to eat certain dishes and certain ingredients. Also, as some of the findings of Mak et al. (2012b) investigated the motivation for destination choices, it can be beneficial to understand the interviewees' destination choice motivations and expectations in relation to food and in general.

2.3.6. Understanding Individuality

The above helps understand the factors that affect individual tourists' food consumption to form personal foodways. Unfortunately, the factors do not give detailed account of change in food behavior comparing holiday and home choices. Some factors are more static between home and at vacation destinations than others, and some are more static over time, for instance people do not change gender, whereas age changes continually, and motivation for food may change between vacations and everyday life and even from meal to meal. Therefore, to give full characteristics of food behavior of Gen Y tourists' personal values, attitudes and behavior patterns, all factors should be taken into account as they affect each other.

2.4. Analytical Framework

The discussion above aims to construct a theoretical understanding of the food-related behavior of Gen Y tourists and reasons for its variety. The related theories were critically discussed and further developed. The key points of each concept are highlighted and are going to be used as guidelines for collection, prioritizing and interpretation of data during the empirical study. Furthermore, the three theoretical concepts, food in tourism, foodways of Gen Y and factors influencing tourist' food behavior, form the analytical tool used for analyzing the collected data. Figure 4 offers a visual representation of the analytical and conceptual framework that is the end result of the literature review and therefore, the theoretical foundation for this thesis.

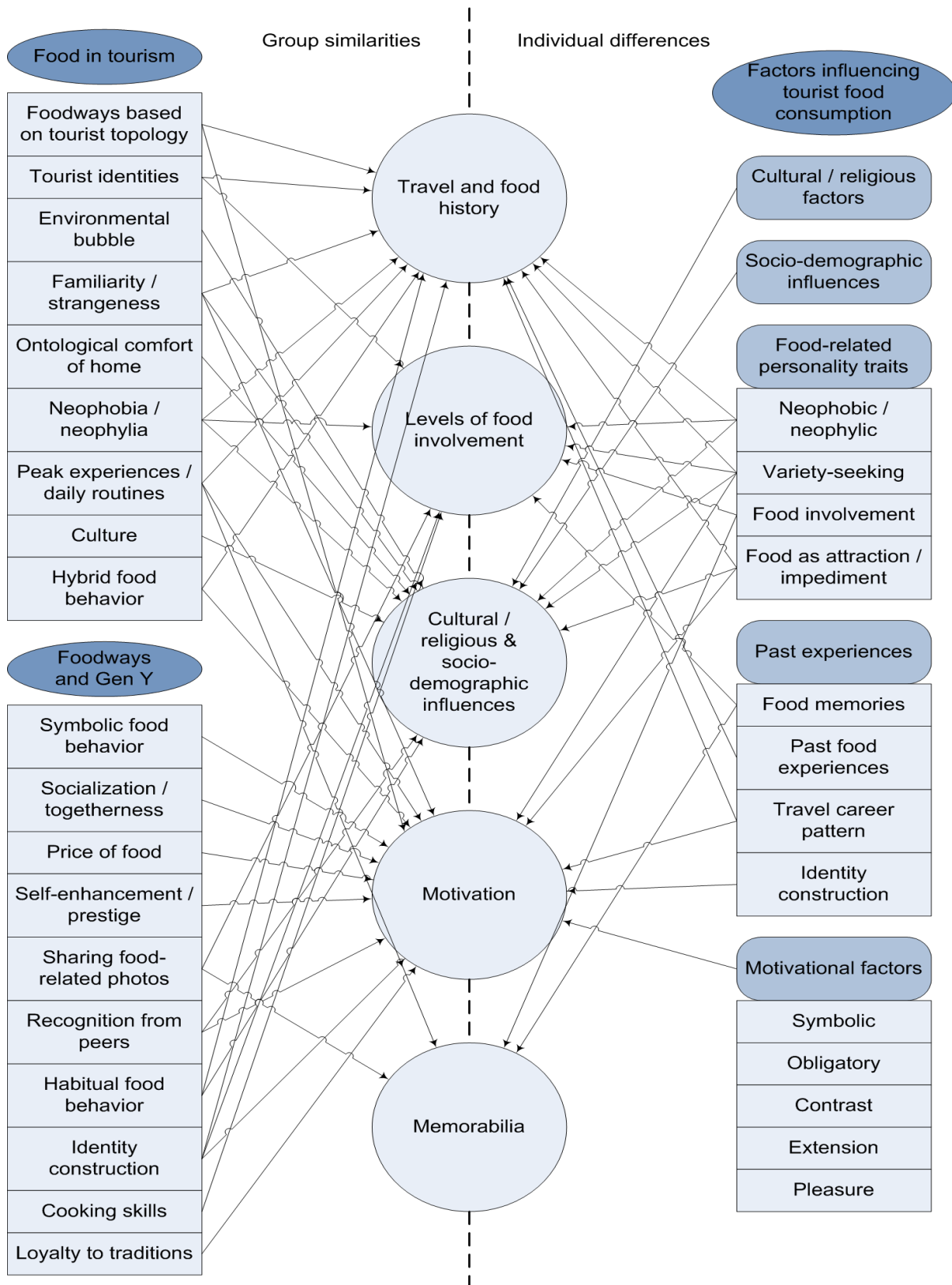


Figure 4. Detailed view of the Analytical Tool.

The analytical tool expands on Figure 2 where the various theories used are included and brought together to form five distinct themes that the interview guide and the analysis will be based on. The five themes are: travel and food history, levels of food involvement, cultural/religious and socio-demographic influences, motivation, and memorabilia.

The link between the theories and the themes are intermediated by the key points and nuances found in the discussion above. This means that the various nuances may overlap and therefore different theories may contribute to one theme and one nuance to many themes. For example, the notion of strangeness/familiarity has been introduced through the food in tourism concept and variety-seeking from the food-related personality trait factors.

Figure 4 visualizes the theoretical foundation of the thesis and thus this framework is both the basis for the interview guide (Appendix C) and the framework that guides the analysis of the hopefully rich qualitative data to be generated. As a result, this figure closes the theoretical part of the thesis leading up the presentation of the research process, and in the forthcoming sections, the methodology behind the research (Chapter 3) and the findings (Chapter 4) on what characterizes food behavior and preferences of Gen Y tourists while on holiday and how it relates to their food behavior and preferences at home are presented.

3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter introduces and discusses the philosophy and principles behind the research and determines the framework for the study process and reasoning behind the choices made while collecting data and selecting and combining various theoretical concepts. The chapter begins with the presentation and justification of the methodological considerations of the thesis and continues with an elaborated explanation of the choices for the research design. Finally, the reasoning for choosing a qualitative approach, the data collection method and procedure is explained in depth.

3.1. Methodological Consideration

The aim of the thesis is to gain an understanding of Gen Y tourists' foodways on holiday and while at home. Therefore, it is necessary to explain the applied approach in order to examine this phenomenon and answer the research question.

The thesis has an exploratory approach and the paradigm guiding the study is social constructivism. The central idea of constructivism is that human knowledge and phenomenon perceptions are individually and socially constructed, and individuals build new knowledge based on their perceptions combined with their understanding of the world (Somekh and Lewin, 2005; Blanche, Durrheim and Painter, 2006; Yin, 2011). It means that reality is subjective, situational, cultural changeable and ideologically conscious and cannot be seen isolated from the situation in which it is studied. Therefore, such concepts like subjectivity, multiple realities, interpretation and hermeneutics should be explained in detail.

For this thesis knowledge construction means that as there are no solid understanding and knowledge about foodways of Gen Y tourists it will have to be constructed. Given this position the researcher of this study and participants design the world together in conversations and social practices. It means that all what is known about Gen Y's food preferences while traveling and at home is constructed through language and interactions with other people. Young tourists construct their understanding of their own foodways while they experience things and discuss it with friends and family. Afterwards,

they share those beliefs with the researcher who in turn constructs her own perception of the Gen Y's foodways. Based on different conditions such as cultural background and past experiences participants of this study have individual unique perceptions even of similar situations.

This introduces another crucial idea, multiple representations of reality or subjectivity (Yin; 2011). It means that individuals classify objects based on their knowledge. According to Marvasti (2004), individuals create various social realities that guide their behavior and shape their identity. Thus, within the social constructivism paradigm it is the meanings that individuals give to phenomena and not the phenomena itself that are actually studied (May, 1997; Yin, 2011). For this study it means that for instance when tourists express their particular food choices, they share what they believe those choices are and mean to them and not merely accounts of different choices. Given the paradigm, there are no "correct" responses about foodways of Gen Y. It represents the multiplicity of possible points of view which can be understood differently depending on the personality of individual young tourists. Therefore, it should be noted that the research is considered from the consumers' point of view.

In contrast to positivism, constructivistic studies do not accept "objective reality" as the examined subject is not separate from the researcher (Gergen, 2001; Altinay and Paraskevas, 2008). For this study the researcher immersed herself in the community of people who provides her with the information, and it enables her to have close interactions with the representatives of Gen Y. This may show the authentic nature of obtained knowledge because young tourists voice their own opinions based on existent food-related experiences. The active role of the researcher implies that she, by her actions, (interaction with Gen Y tourists) co-creates a reality and through her language and choice of words with all its limitations and possibilities interprets reality, highlighting some of the issues and ignoring others. This means that the selection and interpretation of the phenomena, which in this case are the blog materials and the interview dialogues, will be affected by the researcher's background and life experiences (Bryman, 2008). According to Marvasti (2004) subjective interpretation within constructivism is not a source of bias. For this study it is more about exploring and having an open mind, which is important when trying to examine individuals' understanding of a relatively unknown phenomenon. All individuals involved in the study have their own understanding of food experiences they had, and particular standpoints and perspectives on why they prefer this or another foodway in

certain situations. As a constructivist the duty of the researcher is to include all the subjective opinions, feelings and beliefs in the analysis as multiple representations help to avoid simplification and represent the complexity of the examined phenomenon especially when the literature on Gen Y tend to give stereotypic features of behavior to all young people of this generation and treats this group of people mostly as marketing segment (Benckendorff, Moscardo and Pendergast, 2009; Bassaler, 2012).

3.1.1. Hermeneutic Phenomenology

The aim of this study is to understand Gen Y tourists' foodways and explore meaning constructions in the relations between the food preferences at home and in trips. According to Collin and K ppe (2008) a researcher's understanding is always influenced by already existent knowledge and individual background. It means that in the beginning of the thesis process the researcher has some, albeit often, limited pre-existing knowledge about food in tourism. While studying the problem area and reading relevant existing literature her knowledge is developed and the hermeneutic circle comes into play, implying that this newly developed knowledge can result in changes to research procedures (Phillips, 1987; Lavery, 2003; Bernard and Ryan, 2010). It means that the researcher continuously constructs individual knowledge during the process of the study on food in tourism in general and Gen Y tourists' food habits both at home and in trips, specifically. The collected blog data and three exploratory interviews give an impression of which aspects are important for Gen Y within the research. So, the researcher takes a look at the exploratory interviews and netnographical data and from them tries to find patterns and study relevant questions for the in-depth interview guide. Accordingly, the original framework of theories can be changed during the process, adding and removing theories and concepts.

3.2. Research Design

Many authors (Marvasti, 2004; Altinay and Paraskevas, 2008; Berg, 2009; Kumar, 2011) describe a research design as a step-by-step strategy of how research is done, reliable data is collected and sampling made. The study aims to explore a phenomenon which is little known about, and given the context of constructivism, it is interested in the discrepancies of Gen Y foodways more than

commonalities. To get a more holistic picture of young tourists' food preferences in different situations the research applies multiple methods for data collection. Kumar (2011) and Yin (2011) express the view that multiple method strategies give greater and deeper, multifaceted understanding of the problem area. In order to achieve it, three qualitative research methods are used in the thesis: netnography, unstructured exploratory interviews and in-depth semi-structured interviews. A step-by-step overview of the research procedure is offered in Figure 5 below.

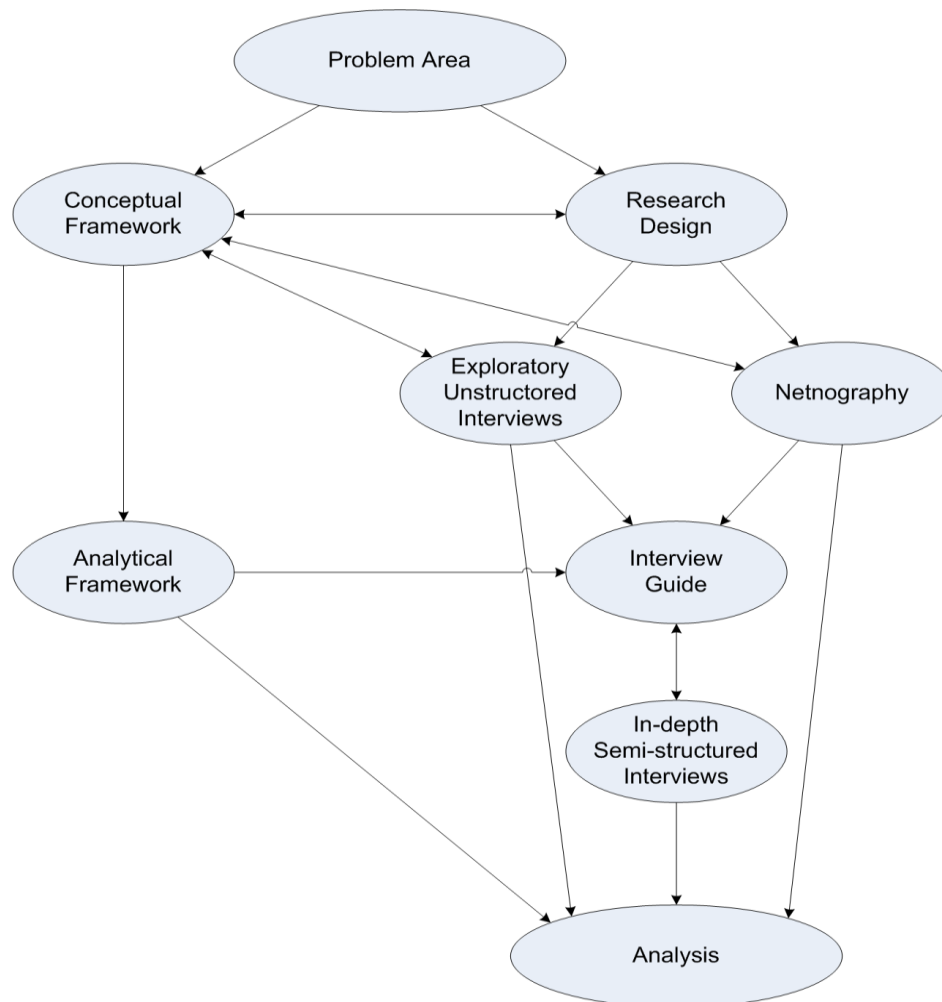


Figure 5. Overview of the Thesis Structure and Methodology.

The research begins with generating initial ideas about Gen Y foodways by means of netnography and unstructured exploratory interviews. The extracted themes from both research methods as well as key elements of the conceptual framework presented in Figure 4 (Chapter 2) create conditions to

develop the in-depth interview guide. Both the empirical data (from the in-depth interviews, blogs and exploratory interviews) and the theoretical foundation are the basis for the analysis.

3.3. Qualitative Research Method

The qualitative approach of data collection is chosen because the research area of Gen Y and their foodways is immature, and according to Marvasti (2004) such approach will help to provide detailed descriptions, quality and the substance of the human experiences. Similarly, Mason (1996, p. 4) states that qualitative research “*aims to produce rounded understanding on the base of rich, contextual, and detailed data*”. It correlated with the philosophical position of the thesis, and it means that the study by employing interpretation will, hopefully, gain a full and rounded understanding of how Gen Y tourists perceive and interpret their foodways through qualitative research.

Furthermore, the advantage of qualitative approach for this thesis is its flexibility while studying an unexplored area. At the same time, it should be noted that based on the social constructivism approach, where generalization to the large population is not the purpose, the thesis generalizes only within the chosen blogs and representatives of Gen Y selected for the interviews. The particular qualitative methods, namely netnography, unstructured interviews and semi-structured interviews, are introduced and discussed in details below.

3.3.1. Netnography

Today, the Internet is an important source of information for many tourists (Pring, 2012). Thus, one of the methods designed by Kozinets (2002), netnography, is used in the thesis and it allows for examinations of culture and individuals' behavior online. The author (2002) sees netnography as the equivalent of ethnography on the Internet. The master thesis regards the evaluation of the information available in online conversations in blogs as a source to get broad and relevant information about the different food habits of Gen Y tourists. This method was chosen primary because blogs provide readily available data which can be directly copied from the online community members, what is less expensive than traditional ethnography and less obtrusive than some other qualitative methods (Kozinets, 2002, p. 5). Plus, according to Gen Y's characteristics

mentioned in the Introduction they are more inclined to use social media for sharing their experiences.

Data Collection and Sampling

There are some challenges when studying foodways of Gen Y using netnography especially in finding accounts for relationships between their food behavior at home and while on holiday. First, most of the online reports are about singular food experiences at destinations or restaurants in form of advice or warnings for other tourists and visitors. Commonly, they do not compare what and how they eat at home with food habits while on vacation. Second, it is difficult to identify representatives of Gen Y as only very few blog users apparently fill out online member profiles with such information like age and county. Therefore, netnography in this thesis is used only as a very first exploratory step in the research. This means that time is an obstacle in getting in contact with members of the examined blogs to get the holistic understanding of their posted preferences. The observation was conducted in February, 2013. All of these issues do not seem to be a major problem for this thesis given its exploratory nature and a relatively less researched area because the main idea of the netnography in the thesis is to get an overview of Gen Y concerns within the topic. On this basis, the research follows an observational approach to the textual discourse which means that the researcher did not actively participate as a member of any blogs and data is retrieved from personal blog posts and online conversations between the members of the communities.

The research on Gen Y's foodways focuses on three blogs, with the main perspective on the consumers' point of view, TripAdvisor; Fodor's and The Guardian. According to Tuominen (2011) some blogs are considered extensive and have gained much popularity, which makes them a primary source for travel information. TripAdvisor was selected as it is the market leader in travel communities visited by hundreds of millions of travelers yearly (Tuominen, 2011). The Fodor's travel community is governed by the English language travel guide publisher of the same name and has been chosen based on its large number of food-related conversations between tourists (Fodor's, n.d.). The Guardian, a newspaper in England, gives its readers the opportunity to communicate through its homepage and give opinions on specific travel specific topics raised by the paper's journalists. It was chosen because the forum had detailed questions that the community discussed

together with the journalists, which produce multi-faceted views on specific food-related issues.

On account of a large amount of data the researcher directs the focus and observes only certain conversations. Bryman (2008) calls this sampling method purposive or judgmental sampling and Kumar (2011) explains that some online posts and opinions are more likely to be selected than others. For this thesis it means that only the public messages about food experiences that in the researcher's opinion might assist in gaining the most useful insights were selected. The weak sides of purposive sampling are that generalization of the findings is possible only within the examined sample group and the sample selection can be very biased (Altinay and Paraskevas, 2008; Berg, 2009) but its strength is in exploring problem areas that are not well researched (Xun and Reynolds, 2010; Kumar, 2011; Kozinets, 2012).

Interpretation and Analysis of the Blogs

The method of meaning condensation described by Kvale (1996) was applied when selecting related blog posts among the vast amount of raw data. It helped to identify patterns in food preferences contributing with key themes for the interview guide. Some issues were selected through the condensation process based on the individuals' concern about the issues voiced in the blog discourses, namely attitude to fast-food at home and while on holiday, authentic dishes, great food experiences on vacation, vegetarian food, safe food, bad and memorable food experiences, Asian food, uncertainty about strange and unfamiliar dishes, healthy food, new technologies in cooking, changing tastes with age_and ideas why people make pictures of their food. In total, netnographic data represents 120 entries which were analyzed and can be found in (Appendix A).

3.3.2. Unstructured Exploratory Interviews

The unstructured interview is completely unscheduled and described by Berg (2009, p. 106) as interviews without planned questions and "*located on the imaginary continuum*", and Marvasti (2004) adds that such interviews create more smooth interaction between researcher and interviewee. In this research, the purpose of these interviews is to explore and generate ideas and topics and develop and adapt questions as well as follow-up probes to various situations. Thereby, it is important that the relevant questions for the in-depth interviews arose from the interaction with three

representatives of Gen Y. The exploratory interviews were conducted in February, 2013, and the dialogue revolved around the participants' thoughts about their foodways at home and while traveling. Although, the exploratory interviews only lasted between 8-13 minutes, which is indeed a short duration, their free structure allowed the researcher to probe and find new and interesting issues that each interviewee is concerned with that had not been addressed by previous interviews. According to the hermeneutic approach of the study and immature nature of the topic the interviews helped to gain additional information about the examined phenomenon, which motivated additional literature review and focused the netnographic research. All three sources of insight contributed to the in-depth interview guide. The exploratory interviews also highlighted some issues that needed deeper examination in the in-depth interviews: interest in new food, cooking skills of the individuals, exotic Asian food and way of eating it, appearance of the local dishes, circumstances under which people choose unhealthy food over health and vice versa, social aspects and price for food (Appendix B).

3.3.3. In-depth Semi-structured Interviews

The in-depth semi-structured interview is another form of qualitative research which the thesis employs to reveal inner feelings and attitudes of the selected representatives of Gen Y tourists. According to Bryman (2008) this technique gives nuances to other findings, here findings from the netnography and exploratory interviews. First, delving into the respondents' deeper self may offer the researcher a better understanding as to why and how they behave in relation to food from their own points of view. Second, Marvasti (2004) emphasizes that the in-depth interviews can be mutually beneficial for interviewee and researcher alike as both will reflect during the interaction. It means that the technique, hopefully, uncovers respondents' hidden perceptions and feelings about the meanings and reasons of their foodways and at the same time during interviews the researcher becomes aware of her own attitudes to the topic. Third, the important point within the thesis' paradigm is that such interviews give a multi-perspective understanding of the study topic (Stake, 2010). In other words, in-depth interviews can unveil multiple and even conflicting views on the topic of foodways of Gen Y tourists. Finally, the in-depth semi-structured interview was chosen because it gives flexibility to raise extra questions and additional issues which might not be included in the original interview guide (Bryman, 2008; Bernard and Ryan, 2010). The standard steps for

doing interview-based research described and developed by Kvale (1996) were used in this study. Additionally, cross-checking between sources about interview development was done to eliminate misinformation as suggested by Neuman (2007) and therefore his standards were taken into account as well. The approach proposed by Patton (1990) was used to prepare a basic guide list that covers all relevant topics. Such a guide has the advantage to be flexible in exploring and allows in-depth probing while still keeping the interview from drifting away from the topic (Altinay and Paraskevas, 2008).

Construction of the Interview Guide

The interview guide was developed based on key issues that were extracted from the discussion of existing related theories, see Figure 4 (Chapter 2) and themes highlighted from netnography and exploratory interviews (Appendix A and B). The questions for the in-depth semi-structured interview are grouped under five main themes (Appendix C) that follow the presentation of the thesis topic, confidential issues and general information about the interviewees, and they are:

- Travel career and foodways,
- Levels of food involvement,
- Influences (cultural and socio-demographical),
- Motivations for food choices, and
- Memorabilia.

All the themes were derived in the theoretical presentation (Figure 4 in Chapter 2) and they represent a number of theoretical ideas that is transferred to questions for the interview guide, for a detailed understanding of the theoretical background of each of the questions, see Appendix C.

One shortcoming in constructing the interview guide is that it was not reviewed by any external expert.

In addition, as answers to questions may influence the answers of the following questions, the order of the questions is important. The question order was moved around to give a better flow of the individual interviews to provide better orientation for the interviewee. Finally, the interview guide started out with questions where the interviewee had to interpret the question before answering and

the answer would depend on their understanding and so intuitive inter-subjectivity could not always be assumed. Even though the interview guide was used in an experimental interview in some cases some of the questions were understood differently by the interviewees and therefore the guide was adjusted in the course of conducting the interviews with more and clearer questions.

Sampling

Sampling is the process of selecting a representative subgroup of individuals from a larger population (Payne and Payne, 2004; Altinay and Paraskevas, 2008). Bryman (2008) emphasizes that in qualitative studies the researcher may face difficulties with recognizing and selecting interviewees and defining the precise size of the population necessary for the study. Given the constructivistic stance of the research it should be noted that qualitative research tends to work with small samples of people and usually it is impossible to provide a preset size (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The qualitative sampling is usually purposive and in most cases cannot avoid the researcher's bias. The respondents of this study are people from a specific group, Gen Y, and thereby a random sampling is not relevant. Two sampling method were used to identify interviewees, purposive and snowball sampling.

The first method was used to select tourists according to their known characteristics such as age and Western culture (May, 1997; Kumar, 2011; Yin, 2011). It means that the researcher interviewed only those tourists who she considers sources of useful information and who are likely to be willing to share it. Kumar (2011) stresses that this type of sampling is more common in qualitative research and is particularly helpful while studying a phenomenon about which only a little is known.

The second technique is named the snowball sampling method and implies the use of social networks (Kumar, 2011). The earlier stage of the empirical data collection begins with the few interviewees selected by first sampling method. They were asked by the researcher to identify other representatives of Gen Y who could potentially contribute to the study. As Berg (2009) explains, the sample can snowball from a few to many subjects and the first few become the sources for further data collection. Thereby, there are 20 interviewees in total for the in-depth semi-structured interviews: 17 face-to-face interviewees and 3 Skype interviewees. Their age was between 23 and 36, which does not cover the entire age range of Gen Y, meaning that the youngest members of the

group is omitted and their views and foodways, that may be distinct, are not covered. In addition within the group of interviewees a concern is that many of them have dealt with the tourism industry in various ways; some are students within tourism and hospitality, others work or worked in those spheres of business. This may lead to their not objectivity, private interest while answering the interview questions. Finally, the interviewee sample is not balanced when it comes to gender and the reason for this is that women were more willing to participate in interviews, and so gender differences may impact the research conclusions. It is worth noticing that in spite of a relatively small number of conducted in-depth interviews compared to the population size they hopefully still uncover many of the characteristics of Gen Y tourists' foodways at home and at holidays.

The advantages and disadvantages of purposive sampling already mentioned in netnography (Chapter 3.3.1) are also relevant here, the interviewee selection has high bias and lack wide generalization but facilitates an exploratory approach. As for any qualitative study it is more important to go into depth the thesis analyzes Gen Y tourists' foodways in order to find unique and specific characteristics within this target group (Bryman 2008). The snowball sampling method has both advantages and disadvantages. Several authors (Kumar, 1999; Bryman, 2008; Altinay and Paraskevas, 2008) agree that the advantage of it is that one interviewee may involve others, introducing them to the researchers, which helps saving time in finding new respondents. In addition, the variation in the sample may be limited if the representatives belong to the same networks (Kumar, 1999; Altinay and Paraskevas, 2008), and this may reduce the chance of uncovering all nuances found within the whole population of the Gen Y tourists. For this research this weakness has been avoided by accessing multiple communities.

Conducting the Interviews

All in-depth interviews were conducted within two months, March and April, 2013, in private surroundings chosen by each interviewee: home of either interviewee or interviewer. Before the interviews all interviewees were introduced to the topic, purpose of the thesis and main themes of interview were explained. All interviewees were informed about anonymity in the final transcripts. The interviews lasted between 33 minutes to 110 minutes. In spite of the different durations, some of the short interviews were very informative and contributed with more relevant information than

some of the long ones. This simply could happen because of the difference in pace of speech or trouble with English wording as none were native speakers. Also, sometimes interviewees could repeat themselves or go adrift from the topic and additional time is spent bringing them back on track. For instance, it was problematic to conduct Skype interviews partly because of the low quality in Internet connectivity and sound, partly because it seemed that Skype interviewees did not have the same involvement in the process as they were not fully focused on the conversation or were disturbed by Skype friends and similar.

During the interviews questions from the interview guide were adjusted according to participants' responses to previous questions. The questions were structured but adapting them allowed exploring a more personal approach to each interviewee (McNamara, 1999). The interviews were conducted in English and can be found in (Appendix D). The interviews were recorded with a dictaphone what allowed the interviewer to concentrate on the interview process. Being a constructivist the researcher tried to spend more time for some questions encouraging interviewees to tell longer stories and asking questions building upon previous answers.

Another issue that should be mentioned is the ambience of the interview. Some interviews were disturbed by phones and doorbells, and some interviewees were perhaps due to their personal qualities more open and relaxed during the dialogue, whereas others looked tenser and were less inclined to commit to answers and give detailed multi-faceted answers. This also affected the researcher as in some cases the interview would feel as not going as smooth as it could.

It should be noted that for evaluating the in-depth interview guide, an experimental interview was conducted with a group of three individuals and held in a pleasant place with dinner to create a relaxed environment. The participants were selected for their similar background but their different personalities ensured that different perspectives on the topic would be illuminated. In order to encourage open and easy discussion and reveal feelings and thoughts (Berg, 2009) the researcher started with broad questions and at the same time following questions from the interview guide. According to many authors (Altinay and Paraskevas, 2008; Berg, 2009; Bernard and Ryan, 2010) such technique often helps to stimulate new ideas and create concepts, what is crucial within constructivism. This experimental interview had only the purpose of seeing how interviewees understood the questions and if the interview itself would assist in revealing interesting findings.

While interacting, the group members reacted on each other's' comments and the researcher gained a great number of ideas and detected issues that helped to improve the interview guide. Therefore, all drawbacks associated with collective thinking were not considered essential as it was just part of the in-depth interviewing process.

Transcribing and Analyzing the Interviews

The exploratory and in-depth interviews were transcribed verbatim from speech to text, which can be found in Appendixes B and D. It is one of the most time-consuming parts of the qualitative research done for this thesis (Hall and Hall, 2004). The transcriptions were used for the analysis where they were condensed and made meaningful. The methods of meaning condensation and meaning interpretation method (Kvale, 1996; Payne and Payne, 2004) were employed to analyze the interview contexts using theme coding (Patton, 1990; Bernard and Ryan, 2010). It allowed the researcher to identify the themes emerging from the raw data to identify patterns and contrasts and relate them to the conceptual framework. By using interpretation the interview answers are for the most part referred to in the analysis by their meaning and where it makes sense quotes are given as examples (Chapter 4).

Moreover, the interviewees' private images were analyzed based on what the depicted food-related experience means for them and not just what is on the picture. The images in this thesis were used as a way to eliciting interviews by telling ethnographic tales (Marvasti, 2004). Hopefully, such data can provide an additional angle and uncover another dimension to the data derived from the interviews. This method, called semiotics, allows the researcher to construct understanding from what is simply evident on the photo to its deeper meaning and symbolism for the interviewees and the research in general. This approach was chosen because it is considered as one of the unobtrusive measures (Lee, 2000) and what is more important for the thesis paradigm is that it is based on interpretive and hermeneutic understanding of cultural and social events in interviewees' life. However, analysis of images as any other method has some limitations. Lack of methodological rigor means that interpreting the interviewees' photos challenges the representativeness and replicability of the findings. Although, one of the side effects of the social research is bias, some attempts to reduce it were made. Thus, the interviewees were asked to comment on images in order to improve credibility, and those explanations were used as supportive opinions while analyzing photos.

The thesis employs a two-step collection and analysis of the empirical data. Even though the netnographic research of the blog reviews and exploratory interviews were made first and helped to create the interview guide for the in-depth interviews the following analysis combines both steps of analysis in one, having the five themes as focus points.

4. ANALYSIS

The analysis chapter is structured based on the five themes used for the in-depth interviews (Appendix C).

Travel and food history helps to understand how past travel experiences and past food experiences affect foodways of interviewees in their next trips, and what new experiences it might possibly bring in their everyday food routines. The theme uncovers in which way food systems of Gen Y tourists may change with time and what is more important for them today compared to earlier when it comes to food.

Levels of food involvement presents each individual interviewee's level of interest to everything that relates to food. How much they are interested in local food at the destination they are going to visit and whether they search for information about it before the trip, what role food has in their life, what cooking means for them and how far their food interest goes.

Cultural/religious and socio-demographic influences shows interviewees' perception about how culture and religion may influence their foodways. It is important to understand how food can be attractions and impediments for the interviewees. Also, some demographic factors are going to be discussed such as occupation and income of the interviewees as well as their gender and age. The effect of partners and friends on their food choices is going to be analyzed in the theme.

Motivation aims to construct knowledge about what vacation is for the interviewees in relation to food and to understand how and why the interviewees' food behavior may change in trip compared to while at home, and across different holidays.

Memorabilia is going to uncover what interviewees buy as food souvenirs at their holiday destinations and why. Also, through analyzing the interviewees' food-related pictures and supporting stories to get an understanding of what food-related moments they want to remember and why they are so important for them.

4.1. Travel and Food History

A central theme that emerged across all data is that as Gen Y's travel careers develop so do their foodways. Most of the interviewees stressed that in their childhood they used to travel with their families to the seaside, camping or visit family members and at that time the food part of trips was the parents' responsibility and was not a big concern of the interviewees. With age and due to the education and personal experiences, by their early 20s most of the interviewees started preferring to travel with friends or alone “*to explore different places to get to know the different cities, the culture*” (Tanja, 27, Bulgarian). Independent life and traveling in the early 20s seem to create new patterns in Gen Y's tourist behavior and for some interviewees even change their attitude to food completely, especially when they are on vacation (Mak et al., 2012; Blichfeldt and Gram, 2012). Tanja, who traveled a lot within Europe due to her education and job, relates to the creation of such new patterns as follows:

[...] due to traveling this much I have learned different tastes so now for example I no longer like so much the food at home, so I prefer different one and then, yeah. [...] it's like the more you try the better taste you develop, so now for example what I cook for myself has been really influenced by all the travels we've made and all the different places I've been living in. (Tanja, 27, Bulgarian)

Tanja not only has her range of food expanded due to her traveling, but traveling has also made her prioritize new foodways over what she used to have at her family home, and this was also stated by other interviewees. As mentioned before the TCP emphasizes the importance of travel experience on future preferences (Barker, 1982; Pearce and Lee, 2005; Filep and Greenacre, 2007). Adapting this view to Gen Y tourists' food preferences it is possible that rich food experiences, feelings and memories about it encourage tourists to continue getting acquainted with new food and foodways and developing knowledge about new cuisines, or as exemplified by Valery, who was scared by everything unknown in her first trips and now just loves to visit new places and try local food, has a similar view:

I think the more you try the more changes happening - there is something you like/don't like and some things you like to change just to feel different. (Valery, 24, Estonian)

Valery says that the more she tastes new food the more it changes her. It means that in the food consumption context individuals' perspectives on themselves are a result of activities and experiences accumulated over their life important to the identity construction. And if food experiences whether at home or while traveling is an essential part of general experiences it may also re-shape Gen Y tourists' identities and horizons (Bisogni et al., 2002). Therefore, food choices of interviewees can at least partially be explained by their past experiences (both travel and food-related), life stages and changing of their needs. For instance, 31-year-old Sandy has a big passion to cooking and interest in many food-related issues today but she remembers that it was not always so:

[...] since I was child I didn't consider so much food... It was interesting to see other thing. [...] And afterwards since I've traveled suddenly it became an interesting part to meet and see things, like restaurants. People do different things, cook differently. [...] At the beginning when I was a teenager I wouldn't consider... I would go to McDonald's, or... Just fast-food, just eat and have fun again. (Sandy, 31, Lithuanian)

Sandy wants to say that when she was younger food took time from more interesting activities when she traveled. It is difficult to say for sure if changes regarding Sandy's deep interest to food happened only due to travel or it came with age or other influences, but today Sandy definitely sees the differences. It shows how at different stages in life food habits and preferences may change and this finds support in Blichfeldt and Gram's (2012) views.

It is important to stress that for the individual interviewee the foodway development happened in different pace and to different extents. The reasons for people's intention to try more unfamiliar food, both at home and at destinations, are possibly their past food experiences, how much and where individuals traveled before (Cohen and Avieli, 2004; Pearce and Lee, 2005; Mak et al., 2012b). For instance, unpleasant food experiences apparently can restrain the interest to try some new dishes for some time. So, Rita, who sees herself as an experienced traveler and think that she tasted a lot of local dishes abroad, still remains a conservative to some extent:

It kind of held me back for a while, but yeah, I don't know. If you try something new like frog legs and you don't really like it that much it doesn't really make you that curious about other things, it's when

you need a little break. (Rita, 31, Dane)

Rita thinks that it is common that some unpleasant food experience can possibly demotivate people to try something unusual again and even make curiosity take a break for a while. Such experiences influence their food choices in the future and they become more careful and more relying on their habitual taste. On the other hand, Julian with Swiss, Danish and Austrian roots in his family and who believes he is a very experimental cook, says that he likes the influence of various cuisines but he prefers to choose himself which of them to practice:

“Well I am quite a connoisseur so to speak. I like to take influences with me from travel but not too much”. (Julian, 33, Swiss)

With this statement Julian shows his selective interest to the local dishes he tries out in his kitchen later. Perhaps, behaving this way he simply follows his personal taste preferences or possibly feelings of safety when it comes to very specific local food. Maybe the easier explanation of such attitude to food tried at destinations is Gen Y tourists' wish to control and balance their foodways. The same is voiced by Olivia, who for the first time met an Asian culture. After being in Japan for a few days and tasting a lot of local food, one evening she felt like taking a break and cook pasta in a common kitchen at her hostel:

I went to Osaka and I can say that couple of times I made myself, like Italian food in a hostel, because we were a little bit tired of consuming Asian food, but then again after having eaten, let's say, a pasta, the next day I really want to try again something really exotic and local. (Olivia, 24, Estonian)

She stressed that habitual behavior is still very crucial even when individuals are great fans of the exotic kitchen and traditions. Taking a break can mean that Olivia in her first trip was not prepared for such distinct food compared to her habitual food and she needed to accumulate her interest in order to continue her acquaintance with the new cuisine the next day to not get an overdose with new experiences and tastes. It can also mean that some interviewees more than others in the group have a need for “ontological comfort of home” (Giddens, 1984) and an “environmental bubble” that Cohen and Avieli (2004) claim may serve as a sheltered environment at host destinations. Therefore, for

some interviewees, food becomes a passion, whereas others by their 30s finally felt themselves brave enough to try more peculiar food. For instance, Karen, who spent five years working at a tourist destination where various local foods were exposed for tourists, says:

I lived in Spain few years, but for example, shrimps I tried first time this year, so I am really conservative. (Karen, 27, Slovak)

For her it took a few years before she tasted scrimps that is fairly common in general but not for her. However, showing her conservative nature and neophobic food-related behavior (Fishler, 1988; Quan and Wang, 2004; Cohen and Avieli, 2004), Karen still unveiled small changes that happened recently due to her travel experiences (Tse and Crotts, 2005; Pearce and Lee, 2005; Mak et al., 2012), albeit it took her more time and courage than for other interviewees. The last observation connects to food-related personality traits and this is with line with the Cohen and Avieli's (2004) suggestion that food is an impediment for some individuals more than for others.

Almost all interviewees that tried various foreign foods while meeting new cultures increased their interest in tasting local food in their next trips. The curiosity makes some Gen Y tourists more open-minded and enables them to include more new dishes and food ingredients in their menu at home but only to some extent as they for instance omit some ingredients, make it less spicy than the original version, and do not use raw fish and meat. In other words, dishes made by Gen Y at home are adapted to their habitual tastes. Another travel and age effect is that Gen Y starts to rotate their food routines at home and combine elements of different cuisines to compose their own recipes. Thus, Olivia and Tim share their enthusiasm about innovations in their foodways:

[...] the diversity of this food types is getting more and more important to me or, you know, it's more fun to change the menu's from day to day. (Olivia, 24, Estonian)

[...] you start combining some ingredients for example to put some into new recipes [...] to have a variety of choices. (Tim, 28, Bulgarian)

Here, they tell that they recognize the positive effects from the past travel experiences and they point

to the food-related issues that became important for them due to meeting new food cultures. So, going back to Gen Y's concern about ways to eat healthy, they realize that many things are changed and other things become more important for them than they were before. The most interesting point which was mentioned by the majority of interviewees is that they noticed that breakfast is back to their meal system and fresh fruits and vegetables especially from the local area are important to have on the menu. Julian, who often prefers to buy groceries on the markets and not in stores, states his choice:

I guess I am more concern having fresh vegetables and fresh fruits, and getting meat from the vicinity than I had before maybe. (Julian, 33, Swiss)

With this quote he voices his care about sustainable food consumption and stresses that before he did not put too much thought to such details like locally produced food. This interest to support local producers was expressed by Gen Y tourists and this may imply that many of them are concerned about sustainability in their food consumption. This finding brings new view in the Gen Y foodways that was not found in the literature in food context though Pearson et al. (2010) see that Gen Y is the most conscious generation when it comes to sustainability in tourism.

Another important finding is that individuals who spend some years living in various places due to job, education and personal interest with time developed a new taste mixing different cultures in their kitchen at home. They seem to be more curious in new foodways, the newest culinary trends, they care about variety of food both at home and at destinations but still prefer to keep it healthy. Among many is Sandy, who states her health concerns as follow:

Because I traveled and I tried and I think maybe you have changed during ... because of the age and stages, different stages of my life. So it also has an effect... Because also now at home I try to cook healthier, do cook at home a lot actually at the moment. (Sandy, 31, Lithuanian)

Sandy stresses that with traveling and growing older she started cooking a lot at home and what she cooks is healthier comparing to what she did before. She shares her thoughts about those changes:

I think it's positive because this way you also growing like a tourist. You have a chance to... how to say... you have a chance to explore more also like... not only museums, parks, atmosphere but also you have chance to explore food in different restaurants, try something different. (Sandy, 31, Lithuanian)

She tells that those changes in food preferences and attitude to food in general change her as a tourist and give her extra opportunities to explore the world. It seems that interviewees see those changes in their food behavior as a positive thing that benefits their daily life and travel experiences. This view introduces the new idea that the relationship between travel and food is bidirectional and constantly developing. It is difficult to say if past travel experiences of Gen Y influence their foodways or vice versa.

Moreover, Clara and Ulia among some other interviewees share the idea that by cooking dishes they tried on holidays, like very spicy ones, repeatedly at home their taste can be changed and people become more and more inclined to try something new. This shows that travel can indirectly affect Gen Y tourists' foodways over time even when they are back in their familiar environment.

4.2. Levels of Food Involvement

In accordance with extant theory (Hjalager and Richards, 2002; Cohen and Avieli, 2004; Lee and Arcodia, 2011) the interviewees generally take an interest in local food while traveling, contend that food is part of their travel experiences and search for food-related information prior to the trip. However, they simultaneously argue that food does not play a key role during the planning stage, or as 31-year-old Mark phrases it:

I wouldn't say that it [food] plays a role. Experience, but not necessarily related to food, also because it's so globalized, food that if I want to have good Thai food I can even get it in Aalborg or if I want to have sushi as well, and of course, eating it in the original place might give you a different feeling but still I wouldn't say that food is choosing where I am going. (Mark, 31, Italian)

Mark questions effects of food on travel decisions because he (due to globalization of food trends) can satisfy his needs for different kinds of food experiences by getting any desired ethnic food in many places at home. As the majority of the interviewees Mark does thus not see food as a main

reason to travel. The accessibility of different cuisines at home voiced by Gen Y concurs with the views of authors such as Hall and Mitchell (2002), Kim et al. (2009), Kim et al. (2011) and Mak et al. (2012a). The large variety of ethnic restaurants in the interviewees' home contexts thus seems to reduce the role of food as a reason to go even though they do point to some exotic food served at home restaurants tasting differently than the original, exotic dishes. As an example, Clara, 25 years old Dane, who lives in Berlin, argues that she is glad to have many Turkish and Arabic restaurants in her neighborhood as follows:

I think it's nice, because if you have something very exotic back home it means that you don't need to go somewhere far away. You just can have like something very traditional which is made from the people where they come from. (Clara, 25, Dane)

Clara sees an advantage in having exotic cuisine at home, especially if it is prepared by people according to their national traditions. This is one of many examples, in which interviewees point to their vast opportunities to vary their food experiences at home. These examples echo Quan and Wang's (2004) model of tourists' food-related experiences, meaning that also in the interviewees' everyday life contexts there are going to be some special ethnic places to eat at and it seems to be a contrast to daily routine food experiences. This blurs traditional dichotomous understandings of everyday life, and also everyday food, as trivial and familiar and food in trip as exotic and exciting. Therkelsen and Blichfeldt (2012) touch on this issue when they argue that for some people, eating out is a way to escape everyday cooking, even if the food itself is not the main issue. Instead, the main issue is that eating out, or perhaps also ordering take-away, becomes the peak experience, not the actual food. The interviewees voice identical thoughts about food during their traveling, providing examples of interests in new food experiences, but not so much in the food itself.

When interviewees were asked about their own cooking skills and what cooking means to them a few patterns appeared from their answers. Some interviewees noted that they do advanced cooking when they have the time or mood for it. For instance 24 years old Valery from Estonia said:

I love cooking, but really need to be in mood for that (laughing). Also, I do not like cooking for myself. So, whenever there are family, friends coming I'm always up for it. At weekends when I have more

time I love to experiment on new dishes. (Valery, 24, Estonian)

This quote shows Valery's selective involvement in cooking. It means that usually interviewees such as Valery do not like to cook for themselves because they see it as a waste of time, so simple salads and snacks are the main food they get. For some of the interviewees the need to impress their guests with homemade food is a very positive experience. Having a different attitude to food and calling herself a snack eater, Kristine at the age of 23 became a vegetarian due to her deep involvement in yoga culture. Now she usually does not bother herself with cooking warm food, but when she is together with friends she makes exceptions such as exemplified below:

[...] when I have 10 good friends to visit, especially when I'm home in Estonia and I see all my old friends then I want to make something or offer them something. Because I'm happy to see them but that's, that's something else I'm cooking for people I'm cooking to make someone else happy just you know it makes me happy (Kristina, 23, Estonia)

In this example, Kristina tells that she prioritize cooking for other people as it makes her happy. It seems that the food itself is not the most important issue. Instead, she uses food as a prop to make her friends happy and her time with them successful. Therefore, an interesting finding is that most of the interviewees prepare more or less complicated dishes and dedicate 100 percent of their cooking skills to the process only when they have family and friends over. This aligns with Ritchie et al.'s (2011) suggestions about symbolic food consumption and public demonstration of personal capital of Gen Y. The phenomenon deals with socialization and togetherness which may improve food-related experience when it is shared with other people. Another explanation of such attitude is that appreciation for the cooking skills plays an important role in self-enhancement and self-satisfaction. This view also backs Stead et al.'s (2011) idea, that getting recognition from others based on ones demonstrated food behavior might re-shape Gen Y tourists' identity and create a stronger connection and feeling of belongingness between them and their friends.

Regarding what cooking means for interviewees their opinions differed slightly. For instance, for Olivia in her 24, cooking is a continuous learning process:

Well, I like to get new skills, let's say, and I like people's appreciation, I don't know... Plus, I like to eat myself (laughing). (Olivia, 24, Estonian)

Olivia is glad that every time when she cooks she acquires additional knowledge about food. It supports previously mentioned view about interviewees' needs to have an appreciation from others. Finally, Olivia emphasizes her hedonic attitude to food which shows the level of importance of food in her life (Bell and Marshall, 2003; Bäckström et al., 2004; Kim et al., 2010). A different answer was given by Clara who, like many other interviewees, checks information about dishes on the Internet:

I think it's relaxing, its experiencing, its sometimes as well to get to know if you try something new about the culture because then you like "oh, this is traditional food from Tuscany they have it normally at confirmation time, wherever" you know? So, you learn as well something, because when you read about this you search about different recipes on Internet, you make your own from it. (Clara, 25, Dane)

Clara notes that besides the new knowledge, cooking gives her relaxation and positive experiences. Interpreting the interviewees' opinions it seems that for the most of them cooking is fun, pleasure and enjoyment. Sandy underlines another for her important detail when she cooks:

I think it's part of living. It's who I am and its actually... since I am cooking at home I think it's important that all family members are around the table and talk and enjoy food instead of, I don't know, buying some frozen pizza. (Sandy, 31, Lithuanian)

She cannot see her life without cooking as for Sandy this daily activity is part of herself and an additional benefit for her is family eating and talking together at the dinner table. For Sandy making food is an opportunity of self-expression, and homemade dishes is a guarantee that family members spend more time together which is in line with the view of Ritchie et al. (2011) about social meaning of food.

It was found that far from all interviewees are aware about the latest culinary trends, new food

technology and innovative ways of preparing dishes, but most of them confessed that they have some more or less advanced kitchen equipment like, for instance, a steamer. So, Rose, who considers herself open-minded regarding food, shares:

We are open for all new gadgets what we can use in the kitchen and we are using lots of them. That saves our time. (Rose, 36, Lithuanian)

Rose notes that she appreciates the help of various kitchen machines as it saves her time. This and many other examples show that interviewees are very interested in new technologies even if they did not try food prepared using them. Such interest of Gen Y was already explained by Bassaler (2012) who claimed that Gen Y is the most progressive adults. For instance, due to work in a very innovative restaurant Lise got familiar with molecular gastronomy and she says:

[...] they [cooks at the restaurant] study exactly what vegetable needs what temperature to be cooked in order to save everything [vitamins] and they invent like new ways of preparing them so to save as much as possible. And I think it's very good because it combines technology and food and also helps to invent ideas. (Lise, 26, Bulgarian)

Lise here shows her interest in new advanced food techniques as a way to get more healthy food. Therefore, she uncovers her high level of involvement in different food-related topics and thereby supports the view suggested by Mak et al. (2012b) that food involvement influences people's intention to eat more healthy food.

Another characteristic relating to the level of food involvement is interviewees' intention to share opinions and photos related to their food experiences. Here, the answers differ again. For instance, Anna and her friends can spend a few hours talking about food, “*because everyone has something to contribute with*” (Anna, 25, Czech). Sandy, who due to her cooking experience always has something to share with others, has another approach to this topic:

Sometimes it's again matter of people, friends [to have food-related talk with], because some of them don't really understand like "what you are talking about, what the difference between this and that", and some people are really interested. So I try to talk to some people who are interested. (Sandy, 31, Lithuanian)

Sandy notes that she has food-related chat only with people who really are interested in food, otherwise people just do not understand what she talks about. This again indicates that there are individuals with different levels of food involvement which has been voiced by Bell and Marshall (2003). It seems that representatives of Gen Y with higher level of involvement are more inclined to have food-related hobbies like for instance, 34-year-old Tom who has a small chili plantation in his basement, and some other interviewees collect recipes and are fans of exotic dishes.

Another issue that the majority of the interviewees agreed on is that they are not really loyal to any food brand. Lise, who due to different circumstances spent six years living abroad, voices the idea shared by many interviewees:

Maybe I'm used to [some brands] but sometimes when you are traveling and you cannot find what you are used to have at home then you try something else... (Lise, 26, Bulgarian)

Lise claims that sometimes she cannot keep the same habits and buy the food brands she used to just because they are not available in all the countries she lived. Some other interviewees show their indifference to any particular brand, and at the same time almost all interviewees demonstrate their involvement in organic food products believing it is a healthy choice. Overall, it was found that the interviewees expressed little brand loyalty, and the brands they did mention are very different, Mark mentioned a high quality pasta brand and Ulia has an affinity for a supermarket-owned low-price brand. This is in alignment with Nordin (2005) and Benckendorff et al. (2009) who think that Gen Y tourists are less loyal to marketing brands than other generations and thus are more unpredictable in their consumer behavior. This phenomenon is explained by the interviewees themselves, Gen Y spend more time in different environments due to study, work or traveling and realize that they cannot have long-term loyalty to all the products they like.

4.3. Cultural/Religious and Socio-demographic Influences

Across all the interviews it seems that many of interviewees are open to try some unfamiliar, sometimes strange food but with some limits. Thus, no interviewees could image themselves eating weird foods, such as insects, dogs or sheep heads and it is found to be more apparent among men. As Olivia, who traveled with her brother, says:

Well, actually when we were in Japan, we were looking for a place, where we could eat a snake. I don't... I am not afraid of snakes, but my brother is, so we were, like, a bit challenging and, you know "Oh, you won't do it", "Yes, you will", "No, you won't". You know, it's just a "dare" kind of thing, as a game, so it was... it was pretty fun. (Olivia, 24, Estonian)

She tells that she was eager to taste snake but her brother was not fond of this idea so for her it was like a challenge. For Olivia it is fun to test her readiness to try dishes uncommon for her culture and it seems like the new experience is what matters, not the dish itself. The idea that young experiential tourists have a great interest in the authentic aspect of other cultures was presented by Cohen and Avieli (2004). Curiosity leads them to sample unknown ingredients and taste local strange food. Many interviewees display predominant neophylic food behavior and perhaps such behavior is primarily based on their desire to be closer to new cultures and not only because they want to enjoy unfamiliar food.

Another view that a few interviewees address is the appearance of dishes. Anna likes to try dishes from another cuisine:

I try to taste everything, but if it doesn't look nice, then I'm probably not going to try that. (Anna, 25, Czech)

Anna states that she does not mind to taste every new dish as soon as it has an appealing look. It means that appearance of food is an important factor for her when choosing foods. The importance of visual and aesthetic experiences was studied by Urry (1990) and Pine and Gilmore (1999) and at the same time Nordin (2005) stressed that visual senses dominate in Gen Y tourists' experiences.

An opinion presents an example of the social aspect of food, age affect and great concern about healthy way of eating that was already mentioned above in connection to traveling, and supported absolutely by all examined Gen Y tourists. Poul is actively involved in sports and think that what he eats is important because it reflects his level of activity and with age it becomes more crucial:

[...] when I was younger I didn't focus that much on eating healthy. When I was abroad I always went to Burger King or McDonald's because we knew it, and it's quite sad but every time we were hungry "let's try something new", "no, let's go to Burger King". [...] but now I'm thinking a lot about what I'm eating. So I'm not getting fat. (Poul, 29, Dane)

He underlines that his earlier food behavior was based on habits and collective thinking and influences by his friends. This can be because Poul just did not want to feel different from his peers and it was important for him to eat the same that his friends did. It can also be explained by the assumption that identity is socially constructed and caused by the surrounding environment and the individual personality, and it seems that collective influence is a powerful factor when it comes to food choices among young travelers, which echoes Stead et al. (2011) views about Gen Y belongingness to a social group, that the choice of unhealthy food is sometimes the result of fear from not being accepted by other young people and from harming their image. But at Poul's present life stage he prioritizes how he looks and feels more, so thoughts about healthy foodways and trying "something new" are more important now than when he was younger and had mostly fast-food in trips. It seems that as they become older Gen Y tourists care more about eating healthier what according to Antin and Hunt (2012) is one of the ways to create a positive social identity.

Another aspect that was uncovered during the dialogues with Gen Y tourists touch upon their food habits formed under the influence of traveling which are significantly different from those that they were practicing at the interviewees' family homes. Mark describes the differences between his own and his parents' foodways:

...we have some things in common of course, but I would say that I'm a bit more experimental than my family. I don't think my family eats much which is not strictly Italian food. Well, when they are abroad, yeah, then they do, but for example anything which is like Asiatic or maybe South American or more

African, I don't think my family is so much into that. (Mark, 30, Italian)

He says that he is more experimental when it comes to some specific national food and his parents prefer more common traditional cuisine. It seems that traveling impacts food habits and makes interviewees more open to new cultural traditions and ways of cooking. Clara stresses that her cultural identity does not play a big role in her life since she started traveling a lot and compares herself with her dad:

...my parents don't know that much food because they traveled but not that much like I had. Especially I can see the difference between my dad like "I don't know it that is why I don't want to try it", I think it's because he didn't get to know this and if you travel a lot as a child you are more opened, because its normal for you, but for him... (Clara, 25, Dane)

Clara sees the difference in attitude to food as a consequence of traveling. It gives the impression that most interviewees due to the different cultures they met in their life have really different foodways from what they used to have as children. Clara gives the same explanation as Mark did: her parents did not travel that much so their boundaries with cultural traditional food are stronger than the interviewees' as parents did not experience that many influences from other cultures. According to theoretical work of many authors (Pizam and Sussmann, 1995; Chang et al., 2010; Kim and Eves, 2012) there are age related differences in food preferences. Therefore, it seems that Gen Y in comparison to their parents may not see foreign cuisine as a risk and they are more likely to appreciate unfamiliar food. The idea extended from Cohen and Avieli (2004) may explain that while on holiday interviewees show neophylic tendencies being more inclined towards new food experiences which may affect their food routine in everyday life at home.

As all interviewees have different occupations they give different perceptions on how it affects their foodways. For instance, Sandy is sure that it is not only about money, it is also about time. Tanja, who worked in the hospitality sector before and is now a student, echoes her as follows:

For example when I used to work, normally, you have one of the foods like during the day at the working place so you have it with colleagues so the food does not depend so much on you, it depends

what they cook and so on and then you have less time to cook for yourself. Now as a student I have more time to really care about what I actually eat and think before just buying something, so when I have more time it's healthier. (Tanja, 27, Bulgaria)

Tanja says that before she did not have so much free time to cook all her meals herself but now when she is a student she can carefully select what to buy and what to prepare. It means that she can control her foodways and concentrate more on her healthy preferences. It shows a more thoughtful approach in foodways. Income is also a crucial factor for the interviewees when it comes to food consumption. Poul who worked before and now has different financial situation as a student says:

[when he works] I take the expensive food and I take the organic food because I can afford it. Yeah, things like that, and I eat out more often. I'm not eating out every day, not at all, but I'm eating out more often than if I didn't earn money, yeah. Yeah, because I don't think about the money that much as I do now. Now I search for the cheapest raw materials. (Poul, 29, Dane)

Poul shows the different consumption behavior in relation to food depending on his financial situations. It is obvious that for most of the interviewees to have bigger income and more free time enables them to eat healthier and choose higher quality ingredients, and also eat out more often. It is in line with Ritchie et al.'s (2011) views about Gen Y economic situation when it comes to food products and the prestige in eating out.

The next factor that characterizes Gen Y tourists' food behavior was defined as their spending on food during their trip in comparison to home food expenses. Most of the interviewees hold the thought that when they are on holiday they spend more than usual, or as Tim phrases it:

[...] when you travel you are prepared to pay more and if you try anything new, you visit some restaurant or any other establishments so I would say that I also spend more when I travel. (Tim, 28, Bulgarian)

Tim stresses that he knows in advance that expenses on food at a destination are high as he expects to eat out often to try more new food. Most of the interviewees agreed with this view and explain that it is part of planned budget as it is not very often they have an opportunity to cook abroad. Some other

interviewees noted that food expenses in trip depend very much on the destination. Bob, who traveled to India, was surprised and tells that he would never be able to spend the same amount of money on food there like in Denmark as everything is so cheap in India. Sandy confirms his idea, giving an example of her trip in Spain where she and her husband spent not more than in Denmark stressing that they dined in restaurants every day.

An interesting issue was found in relation to Gen Y couples who live together and their influences on each other's foodways at home. Sandy, who has been together with her husband more than seven years, sees that their foodways more or less became the same:

As I understand it was actually his effect affected my habits regarding healthier food. Because I cook a lot, a lot of cakes. [...] it's no need to cook that [something that is comes with a lot of butter and whipped cream] because I know he is not going to eat and he is part of the family, so I respect his choice and that's why I maybe also I became more healthier (laughing). (Sandy, 31, Lithuanian)

Sandy acknowledges her husband's influence on her own foodways and respects his preferences. For some other interviewees in relationships it is also accepted as a natural process that after few years together partners find common grounds in their views on food. An opposite case of Sandy is Ulia, who came from a different food culture than her husband. She says about her and her husband's foodways:

He [her husband] likes more stable or well-known dishes. He will, if he travels, he will choose burger for safety, so he is less adventurous. [...] I have to adjust when I'm cooking or I have to be prepared that he will not touch this salad or this dish. (Ulia, 28, Russian)

Ulia here gives an account of the influences from her husband's food behavior. She also tells that sometimes she still cooks meals she used to have in her home country but she cannot expect that her partner will be enthusiastic about it. It should be noted that even after a few years together Ulia's husband still shows strong neophobic food-related behavior and remains loyal to his cultural food traditions. This phenomenon echoes with Fishler's (1988) theory about food personality traits and supports views presented by Quan and Wang (2004) that for some tourists familiar core food

behavior is always in priority.

Final observation here is that people with stronger food culture and higher level of food involvement influence their partners more. And in most of the studied situations people with certain beliefs in relation to food and with specific diets more often are women. The exception is Mark, who has strong food traditions in his family and for whom food routine is always an important part of the life both at home and in trips. Additionally, female interviewees seem in general more adventurous about new dishes than the male interviewees and care more about healthy foodways.

4.4. Motivation

It was found that food may play different roles for interviewees while on vacation. They all agree on the nutritional function of the food as an obligatory motivation for food (Mak et al., 2012b), but some of the interviewees voiced deeper opinions on this account. Most of them agreed that vacation in relation to food is an opportunity to try local dishes, and Lise is one of them:

[...] when you go on vacation you don't usually expect to cook, because that is the point of the vacation, to escape from the routine to change your way of life for a little bit, [...] every time is a different experience so when you are at home more or less you have the same environment every day... (Lise, 26, Bulgarian)

This quote shows that Lise sees vacation as a time when she has a break from cooking, as well as from her habitual environment, because this time should be dedicated to new, different experiences. Many interviewees expect that holiday trips will change their food routines with regards to food served and places they eat. Thus, Kristina explains her interest to food while in vacation:

I try to look for these more local places, and then it's not so much about the food, and usually it's just so happens that the food is usually better in this local places, because it's the real deal, you know, like what you get is just real pure, authentic, you know, local food, but yeah, but it is a lot about the people around me and the environment. (Kristina, 23, Estonian)

She underlines that food itself is not that important for her but more the unique experience that she

tries to look for in local dining places. Kristina agrees with other interviewees that food in such places is usually even better but her main interest is the people and the environment she want to experience. This can possibly be explained by some interviewees' desire for authentic experiences, to share the life that local people live and their culture. Both Lise and Kristina are examples of interviewees who look for experiences that are contrasts to their daily life, which was explained by Quan and Wang (2004) as variety-seeking food-related behavior and peak touristic experience. The interviews allow concluding that such food behavior is inherent not only in open-minded Gen Y tourists but also in conservative ones but probably only to some extent.

Pleasure from food plays an important role in trips. Clara says that when she is on vacation she tries to have a different food system:

I try like treating myself with food there (laughing), like getting really something nice for breakfast, like really nice yoghurt with fresh fruits which you normally don't get at home; stuff like that, something really nice. (Clara, 26, Dane)

With this Clara stresses that she on purpose search for something she does not usually eat at home. Food in this case play a hedonic role and vacation becomes a time of pleasure and new experiences which aligns with Bäckström et al.'s (2004) suggestion that tourists at destinations are more inclined to demonstrate symbolic food behavior.

Another argument to Cohen and Avieli's (2004) idea is that some tourists have distinctive food behaviors when comparing their holiday and home foodways. It reflects in changes of food routines when interviewees go on holiday: some of them show non-habitual food behavior like skipping lunch, having warm food at dinner which is not practiced at home, swapping eating time, etc. But the real difference in home and travel foodways is that mostly all interviewees confessed that on holiday they allow themselves to have a bit relaxed diet and go more for desserts and fast-food, what they usually do not do at home. For example, many interviewees realize that they have different needs when on a vacation compared to when they are at home, one of them is Lise:

[...] when I'm on vacation usually there it is sophisticated prepared like chocolate mousses and so on

and I will not do this at home. First, it is difficult to make them and then it's a lot of trouble and it's not so good to have it so often, so once in a while it's ok to have it or if you go out somewhere, you can have some special dessert, but not all the time (Lise, 26, Bulgarian)

Lise here explains that she tries to taste something special from the sweets that she cannot find at home and perhaps cannot make at her own kitchen due to a complicated recipe. At the same time interviewees themselves do not approve such behavior and allow themselves to do it not often. This observation about tourists' behavior while at home and while on holiday was not covered by the existing literature. To understand such changes in food choices of Gen Y tourists, Poul, who is very busy in his everyday life with study, work and training, gives an explanation of his situation:

[...] because I train so hard and I control myself in everyday life so at least having a week or 14 days where I forget about the fitness center and where I forget about my daily obligations, where I don't think about gaining weight or something. It's just like free roam. (Poul, 29, Dane)

It seems that for Poul food on vacation is about escaping routine, daily obligations and freedom. Poul, as well as Lise and many other interviewees, lets himself eat differently than at home. This aligns with Mak et al. (2012a), Cohen and Avieli (2004) and Quan and Wang (2004) who all state that people search for variety in food when they are on vacation.

As an argument to Therkelsen and Blichfeldt's (2012) idea that some tourists have hybrid food behaviors, a few interviewees pointed out that their food behavior at destinations depends on what the type of trip they have. Therefore, when Clara plans her holidays she also plans what and how she is going to eat:

I have to say it depends on which kind of trip I do. If I do like a city trip it matters if I do a lot vacation trip it doesn't matter. But if I am in a city trip I am really like to go like in food vacation than its really important and I go In Internet and try to find where are nice restaurants in this area, where are the nice cafes and where is good place to eat breakfast. As a long vacation I do backpacking, so then I look for the money. (Clara, 26, Dane)

Clara differentiates her priority to food based on the vacation she is taking. She says that for a long

backpacking trip food does not require so many considerations like a city trip where she really wants to enjoy food experiences and she even checks the Internet for possibilities before going. This example shows the hybrid food behavior (Therkelsen and Blichfeldt, 2012; Therkelsen, 2012) of an interviewee across holidays and exemplifies the contrast of food behavior of the same tourist depending on the nature of the trip. So Gen Y tourists may be more interested to have food for pleasure when they are on cultural city trips, where they really can challenge their food preferences (Bell and Marshall, 2003). On the other hand, primary physical need while being a backpacker acts as obligatory food consumption (Cang et al., 2011; Mal et al., 2012b). Thus, Gen Y tourists may change habitual food-related behavior to what suits more to the particular situation.

4.5. Memorabilia

In order to remember the moments they experienced on holidays the interviewees often buy food memorabilia and take pictures. In this way they become active in creating long last memories. A similar stance is taken by Boswijk et al. (2007) who indicate that co-creation can lead to a meaningful experience only if the individual plays the role of co-creator. This means that interviewees can take a role of designers of their experiences by sharing photos and food memorabilia with others.

Thus, most of the interviewees established that they buy food and beverages at the destination and bring it home for themselves and their friends and relatives. Depending on interviewees' interests they buy local alcohol, cheese, chocolate, tea, spices, special olive oil, spaghettis, and other local delicacies. For example, Karen, who spent a few years in different Spanish touristic destinations, shares her thoughts about food souvenirs, as follows:

[...] in Grand Canary there is special honey rum, which is not the same as in Slovakia, so that one I bought for them, and many people buy this special thing like "Mojo Rojo" from Grand Canary, but... as I don't eat them, then I don't buy them, because I wouldn't buy something for somebody if I don't like it. (Karen, 28, Slovak)

Karen stresses that she buys something very local and traditional to the place she was visiting. She also points out that if she does not eat some food herself she does not buy it to others. It can be

interpreted that interviewees buy some food memorabilia as a reminder about pleasant times on the vacation and give a glimpse of it to their friends. Tasting it later at home may help them to re-live feelings and possibly the atmosphere they had during their vacation. According to Boswijk et al. (2007) tourists may bring some things home which remind them about their travel experiences and the ambiance of the moment they had when they tried the food and drinks in the original place. This goes in line with Barker (1982) and Tung and Ritchie's (2011) suggestion that past experiences with a food create food memories which may also mean that by eating food from a vacation Gen Y tourists become closely connected to the time of their earlier tourist experience.

Almost all interviewees agreed that they do not buy any inedible food-related souvenirs as they see them useless items just standing on the shelves. The exception is refrigerator magnets which relate more to the country than to its food.

Furthermore, interviewees make memories in form of pictures to visualize the experiences about trips and food. The food-related images that interviewees shared during the thesis research can be divided into a few topics according to the meanings they may represent for the interviewees. So, it was found that interviewees value memories about food traditions at their home country, local and authentic food (like common Indian way of serving food on banana leaves, Rose) or the environment at the destinations in which food was consumed and the special atmosphere while eating (great camping table in the middle of the mountains, Mark). For instance, when Anna bought her first macaroon in Venice she wanted to depict this moment as they were very local to the area and she could not buy such sweets at home. It means that she wanted to have a memory about special things that are not that common everywhere. Therefore, many interviewees try to save those rare moments and get a reminder from time to time and show them to others. Tanja explains her motivation for making pictures related to food experiences like this:

Oh. For me those pictures are something very important. I LOVE taking pictures. It's my way to remember the places I go, to have memories. Because afterwards I like looking at the pictures and just remembering. So for the food it's something similar, it's like this unique thing you just tried. I always try to take picture maybe also to show to other people, to friends, family. (Tanja, 28, Bulgarian)

Tanja shows that except for her passion to photography she likes to just go through her pictures to

remember other things about the place. And she does not mind to share those unique experiences with other people for instance on Facebook, like the chef slicing a crispy fried pig simply with a plate in front of the restaurant visitors. This is also in line with Pine and Gilmore's (1999) suggestions that memorabilia for individuals are visible proofs of their experiences.

Another topic that was found among the interviewees' pictures is dining with their friends and family. Sandy, for instance, says:

This photo made in 2013 in Lithuania, we were invited to be Godparents. And I'm baking cake in the husband's brother's kitchen. [...] To bake the cake for me it was very important, I wanted to do it. That way I show that I take seriously the responsibility to be Godmother. (Sandy, 31, Lithuanian)

Sandy explains how it was important for her to show her willingness to become a Godmother to her friends' kid. It seems that she was very worried about that moment and maybe therefore this picture means a lot to her. Obviously, it is not much about the food it is more about the atmosphere this food experience carries (Quan and Wang, 2004; Blichfeldt and Therkelsen, 2011). Another example is given by Karen who shared a romantic time with her husband:

[...] when my husband prepared some meal for me. Usually, you could see candles because it's romantic thing [...] he made this shapes like from rose petals and he put it like heart and it's not a special occasion at all, it's just... (Karen, 27, Slovak)

Karen's picture shows the romantic dinner and she stresses that food itself does not play a big role here the atmosphere does. These examples represent the importance of various unique moments where food was a secondary experience that supported the peak experience (Quan and Wang, 2004).

The social side of an experience is seemingly very important to interviewees as they make a lot of images which represent different social events with family and friends. Togetherness and socialization while having a meal can also be linked to Ritchie et al. (2011) theories that say that pictures are demonstrations of Gen Y's food habits in public. Some younger interviewees post

pictures of their extraordinary experiences to provide proof to impress their friends, or as 24-year-old Olivia about trying snake meat in Japan formulate it:

“Oh, I did this, you know, and you haven’t” [about eating snake]. That would be something really unusual to share with, you know, as a story. (Olivia, 24, Estonian)

Olivia does not hide that she likes to provoke other people by asking with her pictures if they also had such unusual food experiences. It means that sharing such experiences possibly is even more important than the experience itself. It can be assumed that together with curiosity to the dish when taking a picture the interviewee might think about her friends' reaction and anticipate the time when she can share the stories about the weird food she tried with them.

It was found that the older the interviewees are the more they have a tendency to take pictures not just with plates of food which was noticed among younger interviewees but to depict some deeper meaning behind the picture. So, some of them were inclined to take pictures only if they have some extraordinary food-related experience or if they like a composition or design of a dish. As an example of the first 28-year-old Mary showed her unusual experience in one restaurant where in order to read the menu visitors were supposed to wear 3D glasses. This is not a common thing and she definitely wanted to show it to her friends. Another example was given by 31-year-old Mark:

I don’t take so many pictures of them. I sometimes take pictures of good compositions when I’m at restaurants, but not for sharing, mostly for me, for remembering it, because I really have an aesthetic pleasure in food so if I see a well-made plate I really give credit to the chef. (Mark, 31, Italian)

Mark emphasizes that usually he does not take pictures of food but he appreciates the good ideas of serving a dish because it makes him more interested in food. The idea of aesthetic joy of the experiences also reflects Pine and Gilmore’s (1999) views about importance of senses in experiences. And some of the interviewees stress that for them the visual aspect of the food is very critical. A similar example is represented by Lise, who is interested in pictures with food that has a story

behind them:

It's a salad and on the bottom you have black olive crust or something that represents soil and then you have different like leaves and roots that represent the plant, so it's like garden. [...] I like to find something more behind the things not just what you see, to have a meaning. I don't know it just matches with me... (Lise, 26, Bulgarian)

She explains different techniques restaurant chefs use for arranging food. It means that for some interviewees, food experience is not only about tasting a dish but also to see the food arrangement as an art that gives an additional meaning to the food itself.

Finally, some interviewees take pictures of food prepared from their own recipes, like Clara who likes to experiment in the kitchen:

I love to take pictures of my food and write down my own recipes. I will remember the recipes better. I also want to see how I can make the food look the most delicious. (Clara, 25, Dane)

Clara says that pictures of her own food help her to remember how to make it, and next time to make it look even better. She means that she can learn from her own previous cooking experiences and improve a dish in the future by having pictures of it. Therefore, one of the conclusions that can be stated is that some interviewees make pictures in order to remember experiences long time after the experience itself took place. Some other interviewees do it also because it is important for them to learn from earlier experiences and re-create the pictured food: what didn't work, what did work and why? This aligns with Boswijk et al. (2007) and Mak et al.'s (2012b) arguments that pictures from past experiences may help create better experiences in the future.

4.6. New Insights

The findings show evidences that some interviewees after they come back from vacation want to experiment and cook some of the local dishes they tasted at the destinations. Choosing a new destination every time for her vacations Rita notices:

I think that when you come home from a trip you get that, I don't know, you kind of want to expand the holiday experience a little, so that's definitely a way you can do it, and then when you travel and see things you want to bring some experience with you home to your everyday life not just, you know, the postcards but something more... and food is a way to do that. (Rita, 31, Dane)

The quote shows that Rita considers food as a part of her trip and by cooking it back home she extends her holiday experience. Similar view is voiced by Clara, age 25, who seems to be a very experienced traveler as she lived and traveled in very different places like India, Thailand, Canada and almost every country in Europe:

Because I think I connect with the food something positive, my experience there [...] if you like eating something which you had on your holidays it's like memories coming back – it's in the beginning, and after your taste buds get more used to different kind of food and you become more open-minded about it. (Clara, 25, Dane)

Clara tells that she wants to keep her memories from holidays and food may help to do that. Here comes another new finding that seems to be an opposite concept to the Giddens' (1984) “ontological comfort of home”. It can be explained that many interviewees stressed the importance to bring their vacation atmosphere with them home and they do this by cooking dishes from the vacation. Possibly, in this way interviewees try to re-create and extend the holiday experience in their own home which contrasts the intention to create “environmental bubbles” and feel comfortable with known dishes at destinations. This finding also gives another angle to the Quan and Wang's (2004) view on the relationships between the peak touristic and daily routine experiences depicted in Figure 3. The model introduces only one side of those relationships, namely that a food peak experience for tourists in comparison to their home daily routine can be contrast, extension and intensification. Based on the interviewees' answers the theory can be extended as Gen Y tourists apparently see their daily cooking and eating routines as extension of their touristic experiences. This observation links Gen Y tourists' foodways at home to their foodways on holidays.

One of the examples of food as an impediment presents the situations that occurs to people with some specific foodways and was not addressed by the reviewed literature. For instance, Kristina, a vegetarian, expresses her unpleasant feelings that sometimes are connected to food:

I think maybe as impediment mostly it would be linked to some social situation [...] because usually I'm the only one who is a vegetarian in the bunch, and then they have to find a place that I could be happy with as well, and then I..., sometimes I even feel I would rather just stay home and you guys go, because I hate to see them go through all this hassle just because of me. (Kristina, 23, Estonia)

Kristina explains that she is the only vegetarian in her group of friends and sometimes she even prefers to stay home to not bother others to look for a dining place that is suitable for her. She understands that her eating habits affect everything around her but really cares about what she eats. This finding uncovers a new aspect where social situations related to food can be seen as a mental barrier for some Gen Y tourists, when their special diet restricts the peer group's food choices.

One of the interesting issues most of the interviewees agreed on is that their culture and religion does not affect their foodways. Sandy noticed some influences only when her family celebrates something:

...but I think it's just when it comes to some celebrations, for examples like Easter, Christmas, when you know you have these big-big events in the family. [...] if we have this Christmas dinner with our Lithuanian friends we would always cook Lithuanian food; and even if it's needed we sometimes order online or ask some people to send us some ingredients we need in order to have this meal. (Sandy, 31, Lithuanian)

Sandy in her everyday life cook dishes from a mix of cuisines but for big family holidays she prefers to have food from her own culture. Possible reasons why she wants to put more efforts for such dinner is that national food reminds her about her home country and family. In his case, food for interviewees is a bridge that links them to their childhood and reminds them about their moms' food

providing “ontological comfort of home” (Giddens, 1984) at the new place she moved to. According to Pizam and Sussmann (1995) tasting familiar food creates a memory and gives people a feeling of safety which is very important when all family gather for a big event at home.

There is a contradiction between what the interviewees say about cultural effects on their food consumption as their behavior says different as illustrated above. This implies that despite what they voiced, having ties to the cultural roots is important for their identity, something they may not realize. It is therefore reasonable to believe that their cultural identity may have larger influence on their food choices than they may think. This idea helps to understand how essential the cultural aspects of food consumption can be for Gen Y.

In addition to findings presented above, some contradictions in interviewees' answers were identified. This means that particular factors in their food consumptions are more important to some interviewees than for others.

All interviewees noted that food does not make them go to a specific destination and cannot be seen as a primary motivation to travel. However, some of them said that while already being at a destination they sometimes would take advises and go to specific recommended places. For instance, Irena when being in Italy was advised to visit a local market:

It was kind of this in Italy, where I went to the nearest village that was selling these gingerbread, candies and nuts and wine. So, if we could go, sure if it is possible we go. And again recommendation is much more important than something read online or even if the locals recommends, so I believe it's good. I follow recommendation, yeah, for sure.
(Irena, 28, Latvian)

Irena stresses that following a recommendation she went to a village located close to the place where she stayed. She also emphasizes that she trusts recommendations of locals or people she knows more than online reviews. The same idea was expressed by Ulia:

When we were in La Palmas our hotel was located a bit further away from the towns but then

we traveled and tried some coffee that was recommended by a guide. [...] It was good, to try what it is like. You find it similar to our way of drinking coffee in Russia. When it comes with milk and is very sweet. (Ulia, 28, Russian)

Ulia and her husband stayed at some hotel in Spain and went to some distant place just to try coffee as suggested by their guide. She was glad to drink something that reminded her about her cultural traditions. It seems that for both interviewees recommendations were important, and where the first was happy to find some local Italian food specialties the other was reminded about well-known Russian foodways.

In general, the motivation for the interviewees to visit some food-related places while already being at a destination is much stronger than to plan the whole trip based on food interests. This can be explained by a willingness to go the last mile to get something special in the area, an unexpected experience that appeared from a recommendation. It is interesting that this behavior seems very relevant in the shortcoming to Hall and Michell's (2005) model of special interests in food (Figure 1) that for Gen Y tourists who belong to the last two groups of tourists still have a high interest in food while at a destination, it just does not have much influence over their destination choices.

The next finding concerns the interviewees' different perception of look and smell of the food. In the countries where language seems to be a problem to communicate with locals some interviewees mentioned that they would really appreciate to have some visual image of the dish in the menu even instead of translation. Such preferences support views that in tourism the visual aspect is more important (Urry, 1990) and especially Gen Y tourists have a tendency to pay attention to vision more than other senses (Nordin, 2005). Rita tells about her dining experiences in Asian countries:

Sometimes it's what I imagine the locals eat I think. Yeah. I don't know. You know some places where they have pictures of the food instead of translating, but I don't know, I order what I think looks good. But that is mostly, you know, tourist places that do that. (Rita, 31, Dane)

She explains that images of dishes would be more useful because the look for her is a determinant factor when she orders an unknown meal. But she is not consistent in her views as she earlier said

that she prefers to have food in restaurants serving locals and by the statement above she acknowledges that service like visualization of dishes in a menu is common mostly in touristic places, which locals may stay away from.

Not all interviewees have preference of visual senses. Some of them found smells of the dishes more crucial than their looks. Irena is one of them:

[...] if I feel this smells so good. The smell would be more attractive than the look. (Irena, 28, Latvian)

This statement of Irena shows she is one of the members in the minority of Gen Y that are not focusing on the looks of things when it comes to making decisions. The smell and vision examples present heterogeneous food-related behavior of Gen Y and stress that there are more complex patterns within the target group that the examined literature did not mention.

Finally, the hygienic conditions mentioned in existing literature (Cohen and Avieli, 2004; Kim et al. 2009) as a huge barrier for all tourists when it comes to food in unknown environments does not seem to be that big to some of the interviewees. Rita shares her concern about sanitary conditions she experienced in Bali last year:

[...] hygiene is something that really could hold me away from a place [...] when I was in Bali I was in a restaurant where I could see into the kitchen, and it was a restaurant actually with only one table and this old woman was cooking and the hygiene was horrible, but we still ate it. (Rita, 31, Dane)

Rita expresses her shock about a situation in a very small restaurant. She wants to say that hygiene is something that can hold her away from a place. It aligns with Cohen and Avieli (2004) and Kim et al.'s (2009) conclusions that hygiene standards and health considerations is a powerful factor affecting food choices of tourists. This means that being sick due to some unhygienic conditions in interviewees' vacation possibly leads to not being active in some parts of the travel and miss something. Many interviewees like Irena and Olivia echo her in her concerns about hygiene standards. However, in spite of her unsatisfactory with this, Rita did not leave the place and ate there.

Such contradiction can find an explanation in the words of Ulia, who lived a few years in Taiwan. She argues that:

[...] it would be a different level of expectations when you for example travel in Asia and in Europe. So when in Asia you understand their level of living and then you will not expect perfect, clean environment if you are in a local so you need to learn that. [...] In Taiwan for example the night markets they are not so clean and you have to be prepared that it will be different, the aromas in the air, that sometimes will be completely shocking for Europeans but still you have to try and experience then you will know you cannot build walls around you. (Ulia, 28, Russian)

Ulia voiced the importance to understand the cultural differences and to be prepared for some shocking situations where smell and cleanliness which are absolutely normal to that local environment but not attractive for tourists. She also said that fear can stop people from experiencing new things pointing out that some unpleasant details are also a part of an experience which help to remember the place. Perhaps, therefore, Rita valued her food experience more than she feared becoming ill. From such contradiction in food-related attitude it seems that some of the Gen Y tourists give their curiosity in tasting local food a higher level of importance than their concern about sanitary conditions in that local dining place.

All the examples communicate the idea of heterogeneity in tourists' foodways within one big generation. In this group every individual apart from possessing group characteristics is also affected by individual factors. The research findings are a contribution on behavioral characteristics of Gen Y tourists' foodways and provide some insights into the theoretical gap about the relationship between foodways at home and at trip. Additional angles of the existing theoretical views and new ideas found during the thesis research allow making analytical generalizations of the studied phenomenon in the form of suggestions for new and improved theory on the topic of Gen Y tourists and their foodways at home and on holiday. The new insights about Gen Y's food behavior may have wider applications than this study and its results can contribute to a general theory of the phenomenon of Gen Y.

5. EVALUATION OF THE RESEARCH

As with any piece of research, it is critical to assess the trustworthiness of the present study (Yin, 2011). Generally, trustworthiness depends on the research approach and the philosophical perspectives (Bryman, 2008). Given the qualitative nature and constructivist approach of the thesis the trustworthiness criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability are brought to light in this chapter. As indicated by Hirschman (1986), Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Shenton (2004), those four criteria were developed primarily for qualitative studies in order to assess their findings.

5.1. Credibility

Credibility shows to what degree the research findings represent a credible interpretation of the original data (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Hirschman, 1986; Yin, 2011). For the thesis it means to which extent the results are believable and agree with interviewees' opinions.

For this thesis, credibility was enhanced by using various forms of triangulation and member checking.

To strengthening the conclusions from the study on Gen Y tourists' foodways the principle of triangulation is used (Glesne and Peshkin, 1992; Shenton, 2004; Cohen and Crabtree, 2008; Stake, 2010; Yin, 2011). It means that the thesis uses multiple data sources, multiple methods and multiple theoretical perspectives. This way, according to Bryman (2008, p. 379), the researcher tries to overcome the weaknesses and biases from qualitative methods when the data is derived from a relatively small sample compared to the entire population, Gen Y tourists. Therefore, applying multiple methods such as netnography, unstructured and semi-structured interviews, and using them interactively should lead to better understanding the issues within the topic and improves the quality of the findings.

To ensure a higher degree of credibility of blog content interpretation in the analysis the variation in the sample was increased by using three different entrances to the Internet communities. The main purpose here is that each individual has particular knowledge and interpret data differently, and such subjectivity can affect what was selected for netnography and how it was interpreted (Reid and

Gough, 2000; Guba and Lincoln, 2005; Bryman, 2008).

The experimental in-depth interview included three individuals who belong to the Gen Y target population in order to assess if the in-depth interview questions were understandable. It also gave the opportunity to revise the overall structure, question phrasing and make the interviews as relevant as possible for the study (May, 1997).

In addition, member checking was applied in order to verify the researcher's interpretations and conclusions from the in-depth interviews (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Hirschman, 1986; Horsburgh, 2003; Shenton, 2004; Stake, 2010). During the analysis short summaries with interpretations of the interviewees' answers were sent out to many participants via email, the ones that were really interested in the topic. They were expected to reply with hopefully additional comments and clarifications but far from all replied back before the report deadline. The low number of replies means that the member checking was not successfully completed and this impacts the credibility of the interpretations.

5.2. Transferability

Transferability refers to the extent to which findings can be generalized or applied to other contexts and settings (Reid and Gough, 2000). The thesis' transferability was enhanced by thoroughly describing the research methodology and context as well as the assumptions that were central to the research. Also, purposive sampling was used to ensure triangulation across situations in similar settings (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Reid and Gough, 2000). The variation in the snowball sample was increased by using a few different entrances in the community and interviews were conducted among people of different nationalities and cultures.

However, making generalizations on the basis of the findings is not possible. First, the netnographic research involves only three blogs. Second, the research involved Gen Y tourists from Westernized countries only. Third, there are no interviewees between 16-23 years old, which means a big share of Gen Y were not represented. Fourth, most of the interviewees are women as they seemed to be more willing to participate in the study. Fifth, it is possible to conclude, that all interviewees have a long travel history and thus the thesis does not take into account the Gen Y tourists with only modest or little travel history. Finally, many the interviewees from one or another side connected to tourism (education, past or present work related to tourism or hospitality).

The researcher acknowledges that the findings in the thesis may not last over time, space and person, as travel careers of the interviewees constantly develop and their foodways change under various circumstances (Berg, 2009).

Furthermore, statistical generalization to a larger population is not the purpose of the study given the constructivist stance of the research but analytical generalization to expand theory is. According to Yin (2003) theoretical contribution represents a set of theoretical tools and concepts developed by recognizing similarities of objects and issues within rich descriptions of their phenomena.

5.3. Dependability

Dependability focuses on whether the same results could be obtained by measuring the same thing twice (Gerring, 2001; Payne and Payne, 2004). Taking into account the qualitative nature of the thesis to measure twice means to measure two different things and different researchers using different measures will get distinctive results. One of the strategies for improving dependability of the results is to use a recording device. Audio files with digitally recorded data, blog messages from the Internet communities, complete transcriptions of the interviews, the process of creating interview guide, data analysis decisions are all available either electronically or in paper form. This separation of research design and data allows other researchers to reproduce the research.

However, according to Bryman (2008), dependability is not obligatory in constructivistic research, as the paradigm accepts the existence of subjectivity, multiple realities, ways of interpretations, constructions of knowledge and analysis. Therefore, two different researchers can only achieve the same results if there is sufficient inter-subjectivity in the measures and this cannot always be expected. This means that the findings of the research can be relied upon only to some degree.

5.4. Confirmability

Confirmability deals with objectivity, which is viewed as an agreement between two or more researchers reviewing the findings for accuracy and meaning (Hirschman, 1986; Shenton, 2004; Stake, 2010). Usually, objectivity is associated with the research methods which are not dependent on human skill and perception (Patton, 1990). In other words, objectivity expects a distance between researcher and subject, which is impossible in qualitative research. It is assumed that in qualitative

research each researcher brings a unique perspective to the study (Neuman, 2007).

As there is only one researcher doing this study it poses an unavoidable shortcoming for the trustworthiness (potential for bias or distortion). Given the constructivistic stance the researcher immersed herself in the study environment in order to construct knowledge through the interaction with participants of interviews (Hirschman, 1986; Shenton, 2004; Denzin and Lincoln, 2004), and this interaction is affected by and affects the researcher. According to Guba and Lincoln (2005) subjectivity is an inevitable consequence of the constructivist paradigm and some steps were made to try avoiding judgmental conclusions in the thesis.

Here, the role of triangulation should be emphasized again, in this context of reducing the effect of the researcher's bias. Therefore, the relevant literature on Gen Y food habits was investigated in order to get a feel for the variety of interpretations (Hirschman, 1986). Also, to reach effectiveness of the interview data the purpose of study and the researcher's identity were fully disclosed to the participants.

An additional step to enhance confirmability suggested by Hirschman (1986), Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Patton (1990) is to use external auditing to have an expert examine both process and findings of the study. This step was not accomplished because an external expert was not found due to lack of time to find an expert who would be familiar with the topic and possess the necessary knowledge of Gen Y tourists' food behavior. Thus, complete objectivity is not possible in this social inquiry.

To summarize the researcher of the thesis suggests that the trustworthiness of the thesis should be understood as the researcher's ability to convince the reader while still realizing the limitations and weaknesses of the thesis research. The interpretation of the original data is empirically grounded and the reader him/herself can confront the interpretation with his/her own experiences. Having said that, research never truly reaches the desired level of trustworthiness, which is also the case here.

6. CONCLUSION

The overall aim of the thesis is to examine what characterizes foodways of Gen Y tourists while on holiday and how it relates to their food behavior and preferences at home. This is done through an investigation of existing literature and Internet blogs combined with exploratory interviews and in-depth interviews. The many data sources provide a lot of rich information for the analysis, illustrating Gen Y individuals' foodways and their perception of how it compares when in the everyday environment and at a destination.

It seems that there is a relationship between the foodways of Gen Y tourists on holiday and at home and it is characterized by the following. They experience many changes in their food behavior at home due to their traveling, and it appears that the more they travel and the more they try new food the more it changes them. The range of food expands after they get to know other cultures and traditions and newly developed food preferences are often different from those of their family home. The majority of the Gen Y tourists includes more new dishes and food ingredients to their menu at home but they still leave out some ingredients that are not common to them. Though, across the different individuals it takes different time and it happens to different extent. Moreover, when it comes to exotic food, in spite of Gen Y tourists' interest in it they give the impression that they prefer to mix it with habitual food in order to avoid an overdose of new experiences and tastes.

The analysis found a number of characteristics of Gen Y tourists' foodways on holidays. Positive food experiences in previous trips and memories about it make the majority of tourists more open-minded about new food and foodways in their next trips and at home, whereas bitter food experiences can hold back the interest of Gen Y to taste unusual dishes for a while and in this period in order to avoid risking such experiences individuals tend to rely more on their habitual taste than on curiosity. Some Gen Y tourists like to challenge themselves with strange food that is uncommon for their culture. Here, fun and adventure are their primary interest and the dish itself is secondary. In order to have long-lasting memories a majority of the Gen Y tourists makes pictures and buys local food in vacation as souvenirs, especially if it is something which may not be found at home. Some, especially women, like to share unique experiences through social media to see the reactions of friends, and often it is not much about the food itself but about atmosphere and togetherness with

family and friends. All in all, for some Gen Y tourists pictures are reminders about food-related experiences, for others the pictures are part of a learning process from earlier experiences to improve their own cooking as they show how dishes were cooked and presented, which they can use in their own kitchen.

There are different motivations in relation to food on holidays that were voiced by Gen Y: escape cooking and habitual environment, try new food and food-related experiences which are contrasts to daily life. Some tourists try to keep a different food system, eat something that they do not usually eat at home and show non-habitual food behavior such as skipping lunch or swapping eating time. The real contrast between home and travel foodways is shown in almost all studied Gen Y tourists in their tendency to be more relaxed about eating more desserts and fast-food, what they usually do not do at home. The reason for such shift could be their attempt to make the vacation a time of pleasure and new experiences. Gen Y tourists' hybrid food behaviors across holidays seems to depend on the nature of the trip, as it differs for cultural city trip, visiting friends and family or backpacking.

The last point here is hygienic problems of dining places at the destinations. Some Gen Y who raise this issue also indicated that they still eat in those places. Other individuals go deeper, explaining that differences in culture and standards should be taken into account and accepted before visiting local dining places.

One of the important findings of the research that relates to their foodways in general is that with age Gen Y appears to turn to be more concerned about healthier foodways. However, one aspect of their food behavior is associated with togetherness, where in order to feel comfortable and be accepted in the group of peers some individuals still choose to eat fast-food. But even this change with age when to try something new becomes more important and the common understanding of positive social identity also changes. It was also found that Gen Y women seem more adventurous about new dishes than their partners and more loyal to healthy foodways and the analysis also indicates that some Gen Y men are more likely to prefer familiar core food behavior.

Gen Y tourists seemingly acknowledge that their priorities change and some food-related issues are more important for them than before: regular breakfast as well as access to fresh fruits, vegetables and meat that are locally produced. It underlines that many Gen Y tourists' concerns about sustainability in food consumption. In most cases it looks like Gen Y tourists appreciate changes in

their foodways and see that it also changes them as tourists. It may give them additional opportunities to get to know the world from a different angle and contribute to both their daily life and travel experiences. Moreover, in the globalized world with the easy access to a variety of ethnic restaurants at home food does not seem a main reason to go to specific destinations. However, such restaurants become a contrast to daily food routines, albeit for all the Gen Y tourists it appears to not be the food that is of primary interest, instead the experience of eating out and partly escape everyday cooking is.

Seemingly, many Gen Y tourists are more eager to cook and prepare more advanced dishes for their family and friends than for themselves. Socialization and togetherness while they eat may improve food experience, and appreciation for the home food and cooking skills appear to be important for Gen Y. Besides that, most of those who cook very often at home agreed that cooking gives them new knowledge, relaxation and positive experiences. It is an opportunity of self-expression and a guarantee that family and friends would spend time together. The levels of involvement also manifest themselves in Gen Y's interest in new technologies, with sharing ideas and recipes and food-related hobbies. Also, there was not found strong loyalty to food brands among Gen Y tourists, as they expressed that it is not possible to maintain long-term loyalty when they travel a lot, but they try to keep a healthy way of eating.

Gen Y tourists agreed that religion does not affect their foodways, but none of them practice religion, whereas culture and food traditions seem to be more important for big family and cultural events, and this is more apparent in Gen Y representatives who live in a country other than their origin. The occupation also seems to affect Gen Y tourists' foodways, relating to both differences in income and time. With more time individuals may have opportunities to cook themselves and carefully select what to buy and what to prepare. It means that they can control their foodways and concentrate more on their healthy preferences as their economy allows. On the other hand, having a good income for most of them means that such healthy preferences can be followed through, but time is crucial and so they may choose to eat out more often than just for the experience or the prestige that comes with it. Finally, Gen Y tourists show duality in their attitude when it comes to food attractiveness. Unlike most of the theoretical views where Gen Y is said to rely on their vision more than other senses, the thesis found that the smell of the dish can be equally or even more important to some of the Gen Y tourists when making food choices.

6.1. Contribution to Existing Literature

The thesis research focuses on the foodways of Gen Y tourists at home and in trips in contrast to the reviewed literature, which examines the food tourism where food is a primary motivation for travel and food choices of individuals apart the tourism context. Unlike the thesis focus, the existing literature does not consider Gen Y tourists' foodways nor exposes the gap between foodways of the same individuals at home and destination settings which does not assist to see the relationship between the two settings.

So, first of all, this exploratory study made a first steps to fill this gap by observing Gen Y tourists' food behavior at home and on holiday. It was found that Gen Y tourists cook local dishes from the holiday destinations at home in order to prolong their vacation spirit. The motivation here is opposite the existing knowledge in the literature.

Next contribution to existing literature is Gen Y tourists' concerns about sustainability in food consumption which was not covered by the literature in food context.

Furthermore, by regularly cooking some of the uncommon dishes at home Gen Y may change their taste, what in turn makes them more curious about new food-related experiences. In this way, traveling indirectly influences Gen Y tourists' foodways over time even when they already are back in their home environment.

Also, it was found that particular foodways like vegetarianism may bring some uncomfortable feelings if such choices are not shared by others in the group to dine together. This finding introduces a new notion about social aspect of food as a mental barrier.

Finally, even though the Gen Y tourists are not foodies or culinary tourists as such, while at a destination they tend to travel in the vicinity for food experiences, especially if recommended by friends and locals.

6.2. Further Research

Further research should focus on filling the gap that exists in the contemporary literature on foodways of Gen Y tourists. The researcher suggests a number of ways of accomplishing it.

It would be beneficial to make further steps in netnography by performing active participant observation with researchers immersing themselves in online communities. Following online conversations about food and travel and contacts with online community members it, hopefully, would make possible to select interesting potential interviewees. This will allow the researchers to ask questions directly in blogs about all the demographic detailed, and the differences in foodways at home and on vacations in order to overcome potentially poor text discourse in blog content. The research should therefore improve its trustworthiness by for instance involving larger amounts of netnographic data and using more interviewees from different communities.

A next step could be a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods where the quantitative method can help provide more reliable, generalizable data about Gen Y and the relationship between their demographic factors and their food preferences to make the data readily available and directly applicable for the tourism and hospitality industry.

Another approach that could be introduced is to take the marketing point of view for introducing the implications of this thesis research to tourism businesses related to food. For instance, knowing that Gen Y tourists more than other tourists are interested in the visualization of menus and sharing their selections, restaurants could use it to their advantage. They could give their dishes an extra aesthetic touch, making them more appealing and perhaps even differentiate their customers, and provide it only for the ones that care such as Gen Y. Additionally, they could consider providing interactive menus that allow direct interaction with social media where the customers may see what other customers, especially their friends if they visited, may have tried and rated.

Also, further research can take new theoretical suggestion and develop strategies for businesses how to implement those ideas in the real world. For instance, more research is needed to uncover the nature behind the finding that Gen Y does not go to a destination only because of food but while already being at destination some tourists still like to go to some food-related events or places.

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8. APPENDIXES

Due to large amount of pages all appendixes except Appendix C can be found on the attached disc.

Appendix A: Blog Reviews on Food and Travel

Appendix B: Exploratory Interviews

Appendix C: Questions for In-depth Interview Guide

Appendix D: Transcriptions of the Interviews

Appendix E: Interviewees' Pictures

Appendix F: Audio Files of Interviews

Appendix C: Questions for In-depth Interview Guide

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the interview for my thesis research.
My name is Diana. I am studying the foodways of young tourists – Gen Y.

For this study foodways means food behavior, food consumption, food preferences and habits, food-related activities and eating practices, beliefs and taboos about food, attitudes, and meal systems of individuals.

The purpose of my thesis is to understand what distinguishes food behavior and preferences of young travelers while on holiday and how it relates to their food behavior and preferences at home.

The interview is divided into five themes: travel career and past food experiences, levels of food involvement, factors influencing food tourist consumption, motivation and "food memories". For the last theme I would like to ask you to describe 2-3 pictures somehow related to food experiences that was meaningful for you (from old and recent trips or at home). It would be nice if you send me copies of these pictures too.

Please, answer as detailed as possible by providing examples from your experiences. It is a possibility that I will send you follow-up questions to your answers later and perhaps I will double check my understanding of your answers if you do not mind.

If you have any questions about the study you can contact me by email. All information you provide is confidential and your name will be changed in the report.

Themes	Question	Theories and Concepts Behind
Introduction	Introduce myself. Explain the topic of the thesis, main theme and. concepts of the research on foodways of Gen Y tourists. Ensure anonymity of the interview.	
General Information	Name Age Gender Nationality Religion Current country of residence Education Occupation Marital status	
Travel and food history	Can you give me an account of your travel history? Can you describe the way your travel experience has developed over time? (<i>give an account of how it began and what it is</i>)	Past experiences (Mak et al., 2012b) Travel career pattern

	<p>today?)</p> <p>According to this how did it change your food habits at home and during the next trips from earlier on?</p> <p>How do you feel about those changes?</p> <p>Why do you think the changes happened?</p> <p>How your food routine may vary across various days? Why?</p> <p>How does trying various foreign foods during your vacations influence your interest in and reluctance to try more unknown food?</p>	<p>and identity construction (Ryan, 1998; Bisogni et al., 2002; Pearce and Lee, 2005)</p> <p>“Food memories” (Barker, 1982; Tse and Crotts, 2005)</p> <p>Food behavior based on tourist typology (Cohen and Avieli, 2004)</p>
Levels of food involvement	<p>Can you give examples of your food habits from your travels? How does it vary and why?</p> <p>Does this play a role when you plan a holiday trip? How?</p> <p>Before going to particular place do you check information about local cuisine? Where, how and why?</p> <p>Have you tried to find/cook something you tasted on a holiday? Why? Examples?</p> <p>How often do you visit ethnic dining places at home? <i>If you do</i> - What do you look for? What does it mean for you?</p> <p>Did you learn anything, and if so what?</p> <p>Does it affect your decision to try the same dishes in the original country?</p> <p>Do you cook at home? How often? Are you good at cooking? What does cooking mean to you?</p> <p>How does it relate to what/how you used to eat at your family home?</p> <p>Have you ever cooked while traveling being on vacation? Can you tell more about it?</p> <p>What do you feel about new food technologies and advanced ways to prepare food?</p>	<p>Food-related traits (Fischler, 1988; Pliner and Hobden, 1992; Quan and Wang, 2004; Kim et al., 2010; Blichfeldt and Therkelsen, 2012)</p> <p>Food involvement scale (Marshall and Bell, 2004)</p> <p>Peak touristic and supporting consumer experiences (Quan and Wang, 2004; Therkelsen and Blichfeldt, 2012; Mak et al., 2012b)</p> <p>Hybrid n food consumption patterns (Therkelsen and Blichfeldt, 2012)</p>

	<p>Are you loyal to any specific food brand? What brands? Why?</p> <p>How do you share your opinion about some dishes with friends? (take pictures, reviews, social media)</p> <p>Have you had any great (or bad) food-related experience on holidays? At home?</p>	
Cultural/ religious and socio- demographic influences	<p>How do you make decisions about your food while on holiday? (<i>Based on what?</i>)</p> <p>How do you feel about strange and unfamiliar food (dishes/ingredients)? Examples?</p> <p>Under which circumstances can food be an attraction/impediment for you both at home and at a destination?</p> <p>How inclined are you to pick such food over food you can recognize?</p> <p>What would you never agree to taste?</p> <p>Is there anything you allow yourself to try that you would never do at home?</p> <p>How does your occupational status affect you food consumption? What were the changes? (what did you like before and now? Give an example: when you were student and after you get job)</p> <p>Can you say that you eat different food compared to your partner? How do his/her food choices affect yours?</p> <p>Is your food behavior different from your friends' or family's or colleagues'? (how/how are they not)</p> <p>What is the role of friends, family or partner in your food choices? How is it important for you?</p> <p>Do you listen to your friends' recommendations regarding food ingredients/destination's local cuisine/specific dishes/diets/some healthy/fancy ways of eating?</p> <p>How your cultural/religious identity affects what food you eat?</p>	<p>Cultural factors influencing food tourist consumption (Pizam and Sussmann, 1995; Cohen and Avieli, 2004; Mak et al., 2012b)</p> <p>Socio-demographic factor (Bäckström et al., 2004; Blichfeldt and Therkelsen, 2010; Cang et al., 2011; Mak et al. 2012b)</p> <p>Familiarity of food (Fischler, 1988; Cohen and Avieli, 2004; Quan and Wang, 2004)</p> <p>Food involvement scale (Marshall and Bell, 2004)</p> <p>“Ontological comfort of home” (Giddens, 1984)</p>

	<p>What do you do in the situation where you are on diet/vegetarian/vegan and go on vacation?</p> <p>How does your spending on food change in trip compared to when at home?</p>	
Motivation	<p>What is holiday for you in relation to food?</p> <p>Did you learn anything, and if so what?</p> <p>What expectations do you have to food on holiday?</p> <p>How did the food in your vacations live up to your expectations? Examples?</p> <p>What did you get out of it?</p> <p>When you choose food ingredients what are your choices based on?</p> <p>How do your choices vary? When?</p> <p>Do you revisit some places because of the food?</p> <p>Did you ever go to holiday/choose a destination based on you interest in particular food/cuisine/dish?</p> <p>What would you like to find in you next trip in relation to food?</p>	<p>Motivational factor (Bäckström et al., 2004; Yoon and Uysal, 2005; Kim et al., 2009; Blichfeldt and Therkelsen, 2010; Cang et al., 2011; Mal et al., 2012b; Therkelsen, 2012)</p> <p>Typology of consumption practice (Holt, 1995)</p> <p>Identity construction (Bisogni et al., 2002; Pearce and Lee, 2005; Filep and Greenacre, 2007)</p>
Memorabilia	<p><i>Ask interviewees to bring along some pictures and think back on specific food experiences.</i></p> <p>What is on the photos? When and where the photos were made?</p> <p>Why did you make them? (What do they mean for you?)</p> <p>What feelings do you associate with the experience on the photo? (What makes this experience the most memorable?)</p> <p>Did you buy food-related souvenirs in your holidays?</p> <p>How do you cherish them today?</p>	<p>“Food memories” (Barker, 1982; Pine and Gilmore, 1999; Ryu and Jang, 2006; Boswijk et al., 2007; Tung and Ritchie, 2011)</p>
Closure	<p>Something to add?</p> <p>Thank you very much for participation!</p>	