

The Impact of Destination Attractiveness on Tourists' Motivation to Consume Local Foods: Empirical Evidence from Ella and Nuwara Eliya Tourism Zones

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Although the food is an imperative aspect of the tourism industry, there are limited studies on tourists' motivation to consume local foods at tourist destinations. Thus, this study concerns the destination food brand image towards the local foods and tourists' motivation to consume local food based on different destination attractions. To identify the relationship between destination attractiveness, destination food brand image and motivation to consume local food; to uncover the impact of destination attractiveness to motivate the tourists' local food consumption and to elucidate how destination food brand image mediates the destination attractiveness and motivation to local food consumption were main objectives of the study. Three hundred tourists who visited Ella and Nuwara Eliya were selected using convenient sampling technique and a self-administered questionnaire was fielded to collect primary data. Five underlying factors were analyzed under destination attractiveness; of local food consumption were labelled: cultural experience; authentic experience; food health; sensory appeal; and physical excitement. The study reveals that destination attractiveness as well as, a destination food brand image, can significantly enhance tourists' motivation to consume local food. Marketers required identifying the ways that they can develop destination food brand image, food service providers required to develop relevant skills to produce local foods with better taste, smell, appearance and they should use quality and fresh ingredients to maintain the food healthiness. Based on the results it can conclude that tourists taste local foods while travelling and communication is more important to motivate them by promoting and establishing destination food brand image in their minds.

Keywords: Motivation, Destination food brand image, Tourism, Local food consumption, Destination attractiveness