



## Ethnic Food as a Tourism Driver

### What is the issue?

Evidence shows that the main push factor of some tourists visiting a place is dining experience. Tasting ethnic food is part of experiencing different cultures. Chinatown is a typical ethnic food tourism center, attracting many tourists and locals to patron. However, there is a lack of study on motivations of tourists visiting Chinatowns for ethnic food.

### What did the researcher do?

This research focused on the role of ethnic food as a motivator and determinant of destination choice. Key factors such as satisfaction level, similarities and differences between tourist's demographics and psychographics and the role of the dining experience were also determined. The study compared Montreal and Toronto Chinatown visitors using a survey.

### Why is this research Useful?

As ethnic neighborhoods operate in an increasingly economic and sociocultural competitive environment, how to identify and use their potential to participate in tourism is a challenging issue in order to enhance their prosperity. This study can help policy makers to have better understanding of tourists' behaviours visiting Chinatown and develop effective marketing strategies and policies. The findings also will shed light on ethnic food tourism choices in Chinatown.

### What were the outcomes?

The preliminary findings indicate that Chinatown seems to be a pull factor for many Chinese tourists visiting Toronto and Montreal. The big differences between Toronto and Montreal are the size and the variety of Chinese cuisine provided within Chinatown. Toronto has much larger Chinese population and has more variety of Chinese cuisines provided than Montreal's Chinatown. One marketing strategy is to promote Chinatown in China, increasing the awareness of what can be offered in Chinatowns in both cities.

### About the Researcher

Dr. Zhen Lu is an Associate Professor at Ryerson University. His work focuses on e-procurement, strategic and crisis management in the lodging and tourism industry.

### Citation

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### Keywords

ethnic food, tourism demand, Toronto Chinatown, tourist motivation

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