

# Norway as a culinary destination

**How can Norway grow to be a more attractive destination for culinary tourism?**



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## Prologue

This is my final thesis in the bachelor's program tourism management at Norsk Hotellhøgskole. Culinary tourism is a very sizable, complex and interesting theme within the tourism industry. I have always been fascinated by food and the deeper meanings it can implement which is one of the main reasons why I wanted to write about Culinary Tourism.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my supervisor for his knowledge, which was incredibly helpful when I was unsure how to start my assignment. I also want to thank my mother for her support through this process which has been a challenge for me. Furthermore, I would also like to thank my friends and family who were very helpful and gave me a lot of information to work with during the interviews. Finally, I also want to thank my wonderful girlfriend for the love and support she has given me. I would not have been able to complete this assignment without her. This has been quite the task to accomplish but I felt it was also very instructive.

I hope you will enjoy this read,

Kindest Regards,

239896

## Summary

The purpose of this study is to analyse and understand how to make Norway a more appealing country in terms of culinary tourism. It is without a doubt that Norway imposes itself on the world map of tourism, but that is mainly for its mind-blowing landscapes. The first question I asked myself is if Norway actually has the potential to grow in that sense. I wanted to start this study by going through literature that I found relevant for my question. I did some research surrounding the terms of gastronomic tourism, authenticity, and the appeal of traditional cuisine, to understand what attracts tourists to a specific destination. After further research, I was convinced that there was so much more Norway could do to present not only great traditional dishes, but also that there was a great potential to attract many more tourists because of its cuisine.

Norway may be perceived as rich for its mythos and history, but not so much for the traditions that are channelled through food. Of course, traditional cuisine is a direct path tracing to a nation's history and can be a great way for tourists to get a better understanding of its culture and ultimately to get closer to its people. To help answer my question, I wanted to get unbiased opinions from international tourists surrounding their thoughts about Norwegian cuisine, through several interviews. I wanted to pick international tourists that I knew had visited Norway and had experienced enough Norwegian food to have a valid opinion. I

wished, through those interviews, to ask them the same questions I asked myself, if Norway truly had the potential to grow to be a renowned destination for gastronomic tourism.

Furthermore, what was the way forward to accomplish this? This thesis will highlight the findings of my research and will present the results of this question:

“Can Norway grow to be a more attractive destination in terms of culinary tourism?”

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## 1.0 Introduction

This thesis explores the potential of the Norwegian food culture to become a stronger tourist attraction in Norway. We will also investigate the factors that will make foreign tourists come to Norway.

### 1.1 Background for choosing this thesis question

Although Norwegian food is deemed for many as very good, Norway is not as popular as other culinary destinations such as Japan, Spain, France or even the USA (Li, 2021). This is the reason why Norwegian food is not as prominent as other foreign food. There are however many reasons to believe that Norwegian cuisine has great potential for growth and exposure.

Which has led me to this question to answer:

“How can Norway grow to be a more attractive destination for culinary tourism?”

### 1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate the different aspects of Norwegian cuisine, its value and interest in the global market and its potential to grow and attract foreign tourists. We will also look for ways to improve the country's image in this regard.

### 1.3 Structure of the thesis

Firstly, I will discuss various theories and findings that I found relevant for this research.

Secondly, I will go through the data collection process for finding out an adequate answer to my research question. I will also explain how and why the data analysis and interpretation process works. I will also conduct several interviews with the help of some correspondents to



ask them questions related to my research which will hopefully help me gather personalized information. The final part of the thesis will be to analyse all the information I have gathered, discuss the results, and settle on an adequate conclusion on the research findings.

## 2.0 Theory

Through this chapter, I will explain the various theories and concepts that I believe are central to the thesis.

### 2.1 Relevant terms and concepts

In this chapter I will explain and elaborate some relevant terms and concepts to Norwegian cuisine, but also food in general.

#### 2.1.1 Traditional cuisine

Traditions will change with time, just as people and society change. Tradition is often defined by society as customs such as food, beliefs, products etc. that is passed down between several generations. It is also often linked with history and culture. In this case we could say that traditional foods are dishes that have passed through generations and that its existence has passed down through the antics of history. Traditional foods can often be linked to national history as well, and national dishes are often linked to its country's heritage. There are also links that associate traditional foods to myths, personal interest, family identity and political identity (Amilien, 2002, p. 33).

In many European countries traditional cuisine has been studied in connection with identity building. Norway has one of the oldest folklore scientific university environments in Europe,

where traditions have been studied for over a hundred years. But traditional cuisine has not been examined as thoroughly as, for example, folk tales or folk music (Amilien, Hegnes & Jacobsen, 2006, p. 24).

Norway is known for its seafood, but other traditional Norwegian food consists of many other dishes with ingredients such as reindeer, moose and lutefisk. Since traditions will change over time, many young Norwegians would agree that tacos are a big part of the Norwegian food culture. Oslo has many different restaurants that offer traditional Norwegian food. The food offered can be everything from seafood and reindeer to “Nordic Taco” (Visit Oslo).

The English version of Visit Norway provides information regarding the different cities and promotes the specialty dishes of those destinations. As an example, king crab safari in Kirkenes and skrei degustation’s in Lofoten in the northern regions of Norway. We also take notice of Trondheim, which has been labelled as the European region of gastronomy in 2022. The Norwegian version of the website however, provides a lot more in-depth information regarding Norwegian gastronomy rather than promoting specific places to enjoy regional specialities (Visit Norway).

### 2.1.2 Local food

Local food can be described as products that are being grown and processed rather near the places it is sold to, purchased, and consumed. The use of “local” fluctuates by community. For example, in the US, it depends on which state you are in to define the definition of local food. Food being local varies from having to be from within the state, nearby state, 150 miles and even up to 500 miles (Foodprint, 2020).

Tradition and culture come as an added value in relation to local food. When food comes from a specific area in which they are culturally rooted, it anchors itself as unique. With a deep cultural dimension, the food is allowed to have a greater geographical distance to the food products. The food is still perceived as “localized” when you have moved from the area in question to another (Amilien, Schøll & Vramo, 2008, p. 12).

### 2.1.3 Authenticity

The word authenticity means that something is real, original or which has distinctiveness. It can apply to art, music, architecture, food and so on (Olseth, 2020). To appear authentic in the eyes of the public you must establish a sense of credibility. Some of the different dimensions with authenticity that are being emphasized are predictability, difference, realness, ordinariness, transparency etc. (Krogstad, 2019).

The term authenticity has an important role when talking about culinary tourism as local products are very essential elements in this concept. They add colour to the culinary rainbow that food tourists are looking for. In fact, the specific flavours of a country's or region's products are directly influenced by the soil as well as its climate and its method of production. Those elements allow local products to be a part of the authentic gastronomic experience in each location. This can also be related to authentic recipes. To make an authentic meal, the recipe must call for the use of local ingredients in the proper amounts, as well as following time-honoured traditions. This is a common occurrence in fusion cuisines, because finding original ingredients is either impossible or prohibitively expensive. Imported products do not always have the same fresh flavour as products sourced locally. The majority of food-loving visitors are aware that "the real ingredients" can only be found in the countries they visit (Athanasopoulou, 2020).

## 2.2 Culinary Tourism and Tourist motivation

Food tourism will be the main topic of this project, since our main goal is to explore how the different facades of food tourism can be implemented into developing Norway as a more attractive destination. Hall and Sharples' among others have provided definitions to further explain the term food tourism. According to them, food tourism can be described as “visitation to primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants and specific locations for which food tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of specialist food production region are the primary motivating factor for travel” (Hall, Sharples, Mitchell, Macionis & Cambourne, 2003, p.10).

This definition draws into the fact that the main motivator for food-interested tourists is based primarily on which food they eat as well as the different establishments and events that revolve around eating or tasting different foods. Furthermore, they created a model to explain the many different levels of interest that divides food tourists from one another. The food tourism spectrum helps us understand the fact that some tourists have a distinct interest in food, even though food is not the key motivator for them to travel to a specific destination.

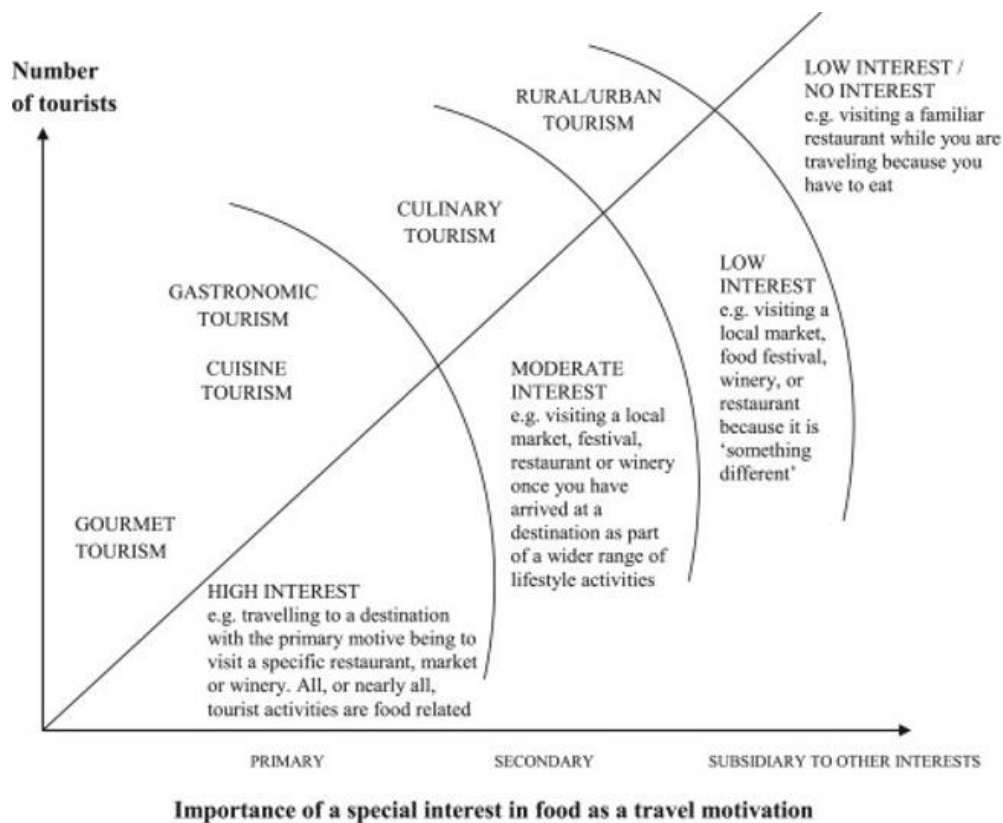


Figure 1 The food tourism spectrum (Hall et al., 2003, p. 11)

Hall et al.'s definition and model focuses solely on the customer, while defining food tourism as an assembly of diverse food-related establishments or experiences that can entice people to travel to a specific location. There are also other definitions linked to food tourism that are worthy to explore. For example, Long (2004) explains that food tourism is "about food as a subject and medium, destination and vehicle, for tourism."

In other words, it is about individuals experiencing new types of food they are not used to as a gateway to learn about different cultures and traditions. It is about people fulfilling their curiosity, but also about groups using food to create an interest in their cultural history and further develop marketable and publicly appealing identities (Long, 2004, p. 20).

We could say that Long's definition of food tourism hints that culinary tourism has more than one singular actor. On one hand there are the consumers, eager to experience a meal that differs from their usual routine, to enhance their taste buds but also perhaps to feel closer to the destination's culture. The tourism destination, on the other hand, requires providers who can deliver culinary goods and food-related experiences to visitors. To simplify, food is the key link between these two characters. Through this definition, food seems to be the central theme and medium of food tourism.

Long (2004) also names that exploration and intentionality are key to define food tourism. To weigh up that fact she noted an interesting definition of what a tourist is. According to Valene Smith, a tourist is "a temporarily leisured individual who voluntarily visits a place away from home for the purpose of experiencing a change" (Smith, 1989, p. 1). In other words, as a culinary tourist, you wish for a change of experience when tasting new foreign foods as you are not merely satisfying a basic need to satisfy hunger. Culinary tourists actively seek something different for the sake of discovering (Long, 2004, p. 21).

Long goes on to explain that culinary tourism is a powerful gateway into perceiving otherness. She uses sightseeing as a contrasting activity to food tourism, as the latter utilizes all our senses to the experience, such as taste, but also smell, touch and vision. These are all powerful elements linked to our emotions and our memory. This offers a deeper and more authentic level of experience as it "Engages one's physical being, not simply as an observer, but as a participant as well" (Long, 2004, p. 21).

These definitions help us to further understand the value and meaning behind the term food tourism. Food tourism is understood to be any intentional travels to food-related

establishments as well as attending events or activities for the main purpose of exploring and consuming food or participating in food-related experiences. It is important to note that the tourist in question has to have a distinct degree of interest related to the foods of a destination, meaning it is not solely to satisfy hunger.

### 2.2.1 The global appeal of Norwegian seafood

Some examples of typical traditional Norwegian cuisine consist of different elements. Fish, for example, is a large part of Norwegian gastronomy. The Norwegian coastline, which is nearly 101.000 kilometres of fjords and islands, made Norway an ideal place to develop strong maritime traditions. The fishing industry is considered as a real cultural treasure (Kongelig Norsk Ambassade, 2017).

Statistics show the massive value of the Norwegian seafood industry in today's global market as Norway exported 2.7 million tons of seafood in 2020. This made for a new record of NOK 99 billion in 2018. Compared to 2017 there was a value increase of 5 percent, and a volume increase of 4 percent. In NOK this amounts to an increase of 4,6 billion. The value of Norwegian seafood exports has increased massively in the past 10 years (Norwegian seafood council, 2019). This proves that there is indeed an important global interest for some of Norway's main food, despite a global pandemic and difficult trading conditions. Many villages and towns in Norway were founded because of the fishing industry. Indeed, there are large areas in the north of the country which can be perceived as challenging to humans, but compensates for fantastic fishing conditions. Much of the culture residing in the northern regions of Norway is built on this rich legacy (Christiansen, 2021).

There is a high demand as well as high prices for the Norwegian salmon, especially in Europe, which is Norway's top market. It seems there is a solid rise in all exports of Norwegian seafood, with countries such as Denmark, Japan and Poland as some of the main importers. CEO of Norwegian Seafood Council Larsen confirms there is a positive perception of Norwegian seafood from the world in terms of its quality and sustainability. She even expects the export value to double in value during the next decade. Larsen goes on to mention that there is a growing interest in sustainability and the environment from the younger generation; as result, there is an increase in willingness to pay for sustainable foods such as Norwegian fish. (Norwegian Seafood Council, 2020)

## 2.3 Alternate popular Norwegian foods, drinks and raw ingredients

### 2.3.1 Meats

Besides fresh seafood there are also several other popular raw ingredients typical of the Norwegian diet. Meat, for instance, is very common to this diet. Reindeer and moose for example, are very popular and those two species of animals are abundant in the Northern regions of Norway. Reindeer is often referred to as one of the country's most popular delicacies. Lamb is also used extensively in Norwegian cuisine. But some of the most traditional dishes involving meats are often related to festive seasons such as "Fårikål", pork rib and "pinnekjøtt" (Hurtigruten).

#### 2.3.1.1 Fårikål

"Fårikål" is essentially a meal made up of boiled mutton, pepper and cabbage which is usually served with boiled potatoes. It is extremely popular amongst all the regions of Norway and has also been designated the country's national dish twice (Hurtigruten).



#### 2.3.1.2 Pork rib

The pork rib is distinguished by its rind. This dish takes some effort to perfect as the rind should be as crunchable as possible. Meatballs and sauerkraut are common side dishes to have with pork rib (Visit Norway).

#### 2.3.1.3 Pinnekjøtt

The mutton rib or “pinnekjøtt” (roughly translated from “stick meat”) is characterized by the way the meat is salted and smoked to some degree. The meat takes the centre stage, but some accompaniments such as potatoes, mashed root vegetables are necessary to make the dish whole and balanced (Høberg, 2020).

### 2.3.2 Drinks

It is important to mention that traditional food does not only revolve around eating, but also drinking. In this section, we will go into further details surrounding the more popular alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinking products enjoyed by Norwegians.

#### 2.3.2.1 Water

The natural drinking water of Norway is well known to be of the highest quality, and exceptionally, ranks number one in the rankings of the best tap water worldwide every year. Voss, for instance, which is known for its iconic and simplistic bottle design, is recognized for its high global exports (Fjord Tours, 2020). Voss has become much more than a bottled water product and has throughout the years established itself as a premium brand in the industry, for its quality but also as a symbol for luxury (Arthur, 2017).

### 2.3.2.2 Solo

Solo, an orange-flavoured beverage which bears much likeness to Fanta, is one of the numerous non-alcoholic soft drinks enjoyed in Norway. It is well-known and popular throughout the country. In fact, about 50 years ago, Solo was more popular than the soft-drink giant Coca-Cola. Surprisingly, this Norwegian Fanta bears its origins from a Spanish recipe. Nowadays, Solo ranks third among the most popular non-alcoholic drinks in Norway (Firebird Tours, 2022).

### 2.3.2.3 Beer

Beer has a heavy cultural heritage in Norway dating back to millennia. Today's researchers can only speculate on how old the brewing technique is in Norway, although solid sources dating back to at least 3000 years have been discovered. Beer was especially important in ancient society as it was considered sacred, linking it to the gods. During this time, no valid agreement or marriage was approved until beer was consumed, which verified the deal. At birth, baptism, engagement, marriage, and funerals, beer was a ceremonial drink. Furthermore, it was to be consumed at least four times a year in honour of the gods: at the winter, summer, autumnal, and spring equinoxes. We can locate legal clauses about beer in ancient law archives (Ringnes).

Today, beer bears a different meaning but nevertheless has an important place in the country's tradition as it is still very much appreciated. Craft Beer for instance, has skyrocketed during the past few years as you can find as much as 188 small-scale breweries in Norway. "There is beer for every taste", says Evan Lewis, the co-founder and chief brewer at Ægir Brewery. Tore Nybø also mentions how this trend exploded just a 5 years ago and that many more Norwegians are a lot more conscious about what kind of beer they drink, experimenting with different tastes and even trying to brew their own beer at home. "When you start scratching

the surface of the world of beer, there's so much fun to latch onto. After a while, you'll start to taste and experience beer in a whole new way." (Nybø). This means that the brewing market of Norway, which was just a niche some years ago, has blossomed to be an interesting phenomenon. This very phenomenon relates well to our topic of gastronomy and how a movement inspired and influenced people to do the same, in other words, to experiment with new culinary drinking habits (Visit Norway).

#### **2.3.2.4 Aquavit**

The most traditional spirit of the country has a rich history and tradition. Its name stems from the Latin word aqua vitae, the water of life (Øygård, 2021). Akevitt is made from potatoes and grain and is highly popular for celebrations or during festive times such as Christmas and weddings. It is a quite strong alcohol that can be mixed with other ingredients to create some of the more classical Norwegian cocktails like Driven Snow or Olof Palme for example. It can also be consumed as a digestive after a meal (Firebirds, 2022).

### **2.4 Norwegian Food culture**

Virgine Amalien, a culture researcher, wrote a study in 2002 on the culinary culture surrounding the tourism industry. Throughout her research, she expands on the Norwegian food culture and its meaning. I found her research to be very helpful to understand the depths of the intricate culture surrounding Norwegian food.

When speaking about food culture in Norway, it is important to notice their coalition with national identity. National identity is a cultural construct based on a variety of specific factors, such as historical or geographical limits. Amalien argues that the common notion of traditional food, which connects food culture to authenticity and the past, will place

Norwegian cuisine in a historical perspective. She is also pointing out the difference between the political perception of Norwegian food and the individual perception. It is crucial to distinguish between the collective and the individual. While politicians want the food culture to be based on older eating habits from a distant past, one could argue that most Norwegians choose what to eat and to drink depending on their finances, their time schedule and even their mood. It can also be dependent on their past experiences, the food they might have eaten during their childhood (Amilien, 2002).

Norwegian cuisine as a concept, is a little complex to explain as it can be seen from different points of view. At its very basic, Norwegian cuisine is associated by many with fish, sauerkraut, boiled potatoes, and meatballs with brown sauce. This would be the more traditional side of Norwegian cooking. However, Norwegian society as well as its dishes has changed drastically in the past decades. Pizza, tacos and pasta are currently well integrated into daily life and are considered as “Norwegian food” by the youngest generation. For the older generation of Norwegians, it may still be seen as an Italian dish, but for today's young people, who are well accustomed to “pizza grandiosa”, this is a typical Norwegian dinner (Amilien, 2002). In a survey from 2011, 200.000 Norwegians stated that they eat Grandiosa on Christmas Eve (Godt, 2018).

All these conditions make the very concept of Norwegian traditional food very complex and ambiguous. As I mentioned earlier, traditional food is food that has been used for generations and can also be seen as Norwegian home cooking. Norwegian traditional home cooking for us is, for example, mutton cabbage, chops, meatballs in brown sauce, rakfisk and lutefisk. We will therefore use the term traditional food as a collective term for this type of food and home cooking (Amilien, 2002).

## 2.5 Tourist perspective of Norwegian Food

Incoming 2013 is a project that was developed in 2013 by several actors such as Innovasjon Norge, Virke v/NIR, Nord-Norsk Reiseliv and NCE Tourism-Fjord Norway. The goal of this product was to gain more knowledge on how tour operators and shareholders play a part in Norwegian tourism. The study developed several interviews towards the tour operators, asking them what international tourists perceived as negative or positive when traveling to Norway on holidays. This study proved to be very helpful to identify how Norway is perceived by international tourists.

Throughout the rapport, one could easily identify that the main reason people come to visit Norway is for its incredible nature and landscapes. The international tourists also mentioned how organized and clean the country appeared in contrast to other European nations. On the other hand, their opinion concerning the food offered was mixed. Most of them approve of the quality presented on their plates, especially local foods, and authentic raw products such as fish and diverse seafood. Some of the negative opinions were mainly surrounding the high prices for services and food in the country (Heyerdahl Refsum AS, 2013, p. 3).

Furthermore, the survey proved that the so-called authentic segment, meaning the tourists who are interested in local food, local traditions, local culture and other arts and cultural offerings, are the ones who spend the most money and are most satisfied with their tourist experience in Norway. They are also more satisfied with the relationship between price and quality than other foreign holidaymakers in Norway (Virke, 2014).

We know that it is the unique Norwegian nature that attracts tourists to Norway, and that our cost level gives us some challenges. But it is surprising and gratifying that local food and local culture increase satisfaction and willingness to pay so much that we still get a good response in the market. (Virke, 2014, section 4)

This shows us the clear identity Norway attempts to portray itself as in the tourism industry. Norway is a nation of rich cultural history and stunning nature which is also as of today its main attraction. Furthermore, it is clear to see that Norway is proud of its cultural heritage surrounding its local authentic food, and they are trying their utmost to present it the best way possible to its visitors. Of course, as mentioned, the quality of the food presented is often linked to its pricing. Virke (2014) has produced a checklist for small tourist companies that want to offer themselves in an international market as part of the Incoming 2013 survey, in partnership with NCE Fjord Norway, Nordnorsk Reiseliv, and Innovation Norway. Virke wants to be able to use the survey's findings to help the development of rural-based food and tourism in a favourable direction, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture.

The survey and analysis we have carried out since we discussed this topic with the previous Minister of Agriculture here in Berlin exactly a year ago, show that the focus on local food and rural tourism is on the right track, and hits very well in the market. The players are too small and weak to assert themselves in an international market separately, but with a focus on local networks, increased market expertise and professionalization, this is where we find the future for many players in the Norwegian tourism industry. (Virke, 2014, section 10)

## 3.0 Method

I have chosen a qualitative method for the research on this thesis, which will answer the question “How can Norway grow to be a more attractive destination for culinary tourism?”. This thesis question required more detailed answers than what a quantitative survey would have given me. One of the purposes is to have a better understanding on how the marketing of Norwegian Cuisine can get better and attract more people from other countries. I will also provide some insight on how much tourists and other nationalities already know about Norwegian Cuisine as well as what is their opinion about it.

### 3.1 Qualitative methodology

When I was choosing which method I wanted for my thesis question, I had to look at what kind of answers I wanted for my research. In qualitative methodology the researcher goes into details and depths in a narrow field. The material is usually collected by interviewing, analysing documents, and observing. There are different types of qualitative methodology, but the common ground is that the researcher can obtain a different type of knowledge than in quantitative research (Andersen, 2019).

In qualitative methodology I am going to interpret the content and create a context of meaning. I had to understand in what way the interviewees answered the questions and that the questions I posed on to the interviewees were reserved for them. This way I could obtain a full understanding of the answers I received. This is a big contrast compared to the quantitative method, which is more analysis over numbers and where one should be objective in the analysis. There are a lot of repetitions and systematics in the survey and therefore also in the answers (Linge & Dagsland, personal communication, 7. January 2020).

*Table 1 Qualitative - quantitative - what is the difference?*

<b>Quantitative methodology</b>	<b>Qualitative methodology</b>
Nomothetic ideal - “the speech of the numbers”	Hermeneutic ideal - “the language of texts”
<b>Frequently</b>	<b>Frequently</b>
Many units - small number of features	Few units - large number of features
Great validity in volume - generalizability	Limited reach and validity - not generalizability
Suitable for testing hypotheses and theories, unsuitable for further development of theoretical reasoning	Difficult to assess about the assumptions (hypotheses) and theories are tenable
<b>Straightforward - “superficial”</b>	<b>Insight - “understanding”</b>

(Linge & Dagsland, personal communication, 7. January 2020)

Based on the table above, qualitative methodology would give me the best outcome. My thesis question needs answers that are thought through and detailed. Different types of view are important to get a better understanding on how a country can grow as a culinary tourist attraction.



### 3.2 Research design

The qualitative research interview seeks to understand the point of view of the interviewees. You also discover the importance of people's different experiences (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, s. 20). In my study, I am looking to bring to light the interviewees explanation and opinions about food, and especially Norwegian cuisine. The questions that are asked are therefore designed so that I could get elaborate and explanatory answers.

There are many different research designs, where in the research literature it is often ranged from experiment, quasi-experiment, case study and various qualitative research designs (Krumsvik, 2013, s. 29). A case study is a study in which it covers only a single case, or one unit. Comparative case studies include two or a few units, which are systematically compared. The units are compared after they are studied separately, and this way you can for example compare two or more interviewees in a comparative case study (Wæhle, Dahlum & Grønmo, 2020). I chose this research design because it matches well with my thesis question. My design includes both data collection and analysis techniques. By using this combination, I have collected all the data I need. Since I collected the data relatively early in my project, I have been able to adjust the use of literature and perspectives for the analysis (Tjora, 2012, s. 13).

### 3.3 Data collection method

This study was conducted between February 2022 and April 2022. My wish was to interview international candidates that I knew had experienced a trip to Norway, and ultimately had a chance to taste Norwegian cuisine during their journey. The age scale of the chosen candidates did not matter as the only information I needed to analyse was their opinion and their experience surrounding their knowledge of Norwegian cuisine. I had also sent my

request to interview and collect information from my candidates to the Norwegian Centre for Research Data, which was later approved. The interviews were made upon appointments and conducted through phone calls. Naturally, I recorded their answers with a Dictaphone and the candidates were made aware of that. The process went well, and I felt I received some valuable information from each and every candidate, which was very helpful for my research.

### 3.3.1 The interview

My Interview was focused on being a structured interview. I was open for the interview to go over semi-structured if necessary to gain a deeper understanding of the answers, but also to obtain information that comes naturally when one discusses a topic. A structured interview is made of predetermined questions, in which the researcher uses a standardized or a formal interview guide. That means that the researcher must collect the data in the exact same manner from all the informants. He or she should know what kind of information they are looking for and what kind of questions the informants should be asked to get the right information (Mehmetoglu, 2004, s. 68). My interview was semi-structured because the interviewees were asked to elaborate on some of their answers, as well as adding information on what they felt was important to add (Krumsvik, 2014, s. 124).

### 3.3.2 Interview guide

The interviewees received a brief introduction of the thesis question, what I wanted to achieve with the interview and why they had been chosen. I had prepared an interview guide of 13 questions and proceeded to the interview. By following the guide, I have a good overview of what questions I have asked and that the questions gave me the answers i was looking for.

The questions asked will give me a better understanding of how Norwegian food can be more visible in other countries, but also their own experience with Norwegian food.

The questions in my interview guide were to highlight the interviewees own views on Norwegian food. I wanted to know if there was anything they had tasted before and if there was anything they would like to try. I also asked about whether Norwegian food was visible enough to other countries and furthermore, about what was important for them personally when it comes to choosing a destination for the food it has to offer.

The interview was semi-structured, and every question asked was open enough so that my candidates could give a broad enough answer. This made the interview a very fluid and natural conversation.

### 3.3.3 Implementation

As I have mentioned before I chose a Semi-structured interview to get the most information from the interviewees. This means that when the interview takes place both the interviewer and the interviewees need to set aside enough time. There were some different challenges in the planning process with the interviewees. Since none of them live in Norway I had to arrange for the interview to be over the phone. One of the interviewees also lives in California so there were also some time differences to consider.

I estimated the interview to take approximately 15 min, but this varied a lot. Since I knew the people I was interviewing, the interview felt both natural and relaxing. I didn't feel stressed, and I was not rushing through any of the questions I had prepared. During the interview I used a Dictaphone to record the content and then listen to it again later. This way I was not missing

out on any of the information that was given to me, and it also made me able to have a continuous flow without being interrupted by taking notes. The Dictaphone stopped working during the first interview, so I had to start taking notes. The rest of the interviews went very smoothly.

### 3.4 Selection

I chose to interview three candidates, one male American friend of mine, one close female family member originally from France, and one other female friend from France. All the candidates had been visiting Norway for at least one occasion, so I was assured their opinion would be authentic and therefore the information provided to me throughout those interviews would be all the more plausible.

When choosing the interviewees, it is important to consider the authenticity and credibility of each of them (Andersen, 2019). Since I know the candidates personally, I can vouch for both their authenticity and credibility. Subsequently my three interviewees will be referred to as A1, F1 and F2. A1 for my American friend, F1 for the French family member, and F2 for my French friend. A1 was born in France but he has since moved to California. Candidate A1 has a long background in cuisine and baking, both through work and studies. He visited Norway for 10 days where he experienced a lot of different aspects of the food Norway has to offer both in Stavanger and Oslo. F1 is, as mentioned, a close family member and had visited Norway several times and had the chance to discover Stavanger, Ålesund and the northern region of Lofoten. F2 was a close family friend who stayed in Norway for several months, mainly in Ålesund. F2 had the chance to taste the traditional Norwegian Christmas dinner among other things.

It was crucial to me to interview people I knew. Furthermore, those people needed to have enough experience and knowledge of Norwegian cuisine to form an opinion that would be valuable for my research. Luckily as well, every one of my interviewees had also a large background of traveling abroad. All those criteria fitted perfectly with the type of segment I wanted to interview.

### 3.5 Reliability and validity

For my approach to verification, I chose to use Lincoln and Guba's perspective with the terminology's credibility, transferability, reliability and verifiability (Mehmetoglu, 2004, s. 144). Trustworthiness is important when conducting research, since it is crucial that it is recognized as familiar and understood as legitimate (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017, p. 3).

#### 3.5.1 Credibility

To test the credibility, I used a strategy where I as a researcher had to evaluate my analysis of the interview by making sure that the concepts reflect the interviewees' opinions. It is crucial that the thesis is not influenced by the researchers' own attitudes and opinions but is a pure product of the interviewees (Nowell et al., 2017, p. 3). Credibility is also strengthened by making it clear where the line between primary data and my analysis lies (Thagaard, 2003, p. 170). I have a relation to the interviewees as well as the same interest for food, which may affect the interpretation of the data.

### 3.5.2 Transferability

Transferability is just as important as credibility. Transferability is done by developing an understanding within a project, and further connects to a specific circumstance that can then be used for similar situations (Thagaard, 2003, p. 170). In this case, the circumstances will vary to the situation of each interviewee as they have different backgrounds and experiences (Nowell et al., 2017, p. 3). All the interviewees have at some point been living in France, but A1 has lived most of his life in America. F1 has lived in many different countries and is familiar with the world of gastronomy. F2 have been staying in Norway for a longer period of time than the rest. All of their experiences and knowledge are therefore different when it comes to both Norway and food. A1 and F2 can be considered part of the younger generation segment, compared to F1, who is one generation above.

### 3.5.3 Reliability

Reliability is consistent throughout the research where I present how I have executed the work. This applies to when choosing a method, informants and as well as analysing the interviews, so that the same results can be achieved by other researchers. This also makes it possible for the readers to see how the researcher came about his conclusion of the work (Mehmetoglu, 2004, s. 147).

### 3.5.4 Verifiability

Verifiability is achieved when I, as a researcher, have gone through all the data I have collected, evaluated, analysed, and explained how I have arrived at the result with a critical vision. Since I have been the only person writing this thesis, I had to discuss the research with my supervisor as well as other students so that I could have a more objective view when I

continued my writing. By explaining the procedure for how I obtained the primary data and further how I connected it to the literature in the discussion, it will be testable and clear to the reader what I have done (Nowell et. al., 2017, s. 3).

### 3.6 Error sources

Sources of error are a big factor in research and its impact on the research must therefore be assessed. I am very interested in food and its many different aspects, and this can influence my interpretation of the responses I received. As a researcher, I want a certain type of outcome of the study. Therefore, I must be thorough in analysing the answers as they are given, and not fitting them into my thesis question in an unnatural way (Svartdal, 2019). Since it's a qualitative interview I have conducted myself, I have had no opportunity to confirm this. I therefore had to discuss the answers with a fellow student that was willing to help me, so that the answers from my interviewees were presented with what they meant to convey. Under the interview it was natural for me to also share my own experiences and thoughts when some parts of the interview were not related to the questions I had prepared. This could also influence the interviewees' answers to the questions I had asked.

As I have mentioned before, I had to do all the interviews over the phone due to great distances between me and my candidates. When the interview does not take place face to face, it can be difficult to interpret the body language. This can result in me not perceiving if the interviewees are talking the truth or if they think some of the questions are uncomfortable to answer. Even if this could be the case, I perceived all the interviews as honest and trustworthy. Another reason for their trustworthiness could be because they didn't have a chance to look at the questions beforehand. This way they didn't have too much time to think

about the questions and possibly prepare themselves on what would be the more correct answer to give.

Another error source could be the limited selection of interviewees. Since I only interviewed 3 candidates in my research, it does not provide me enough information about how much knowledge the average tourist has about Norwegian gastronomy. All of them have some experience regarding Norwegian food since they all visited the country. If I was to ask a tourist that had never visited Norway, I may not have received accurate enough answers. Interviewing more people would have given me more in-depth information regarding the subject.



## 4.0 Analysis

In this part of my thesis, I will analyse the data I have collected under my interviews. The purpose of the collection of data has been to determine how culinary tourism can grow and become more attractive in Norway as a tourism destination. I divided this chapter into three main topics. For each topic, I wish to present and comment unbiasedly on the results I have gathered from my interviewees. Under each topic will be a discussion where I shall attempt to tie together the data gathered with some of the literature I presented previously.

### 4.1 Background and attraction for traditional food.

In this section I wanted to analyse the background and the meaning behind wanting to take a trip to Norway. My idea is to examine the differences between the answers I received from each interviewee concerning the subject. It was important to me to understand what the priority was when visiting the country from the point of view of an international tourist. Furthermore, I wish to look at the importance of traditional food as a basis for travel, and during the stay itself.

First and foremost, it seems that most of my interviewees recognized the fact that Norway's landscapes and nature was perhaps the most inviting attraction the country has to offer. A1 says: "In Norway you have the fjords and the mountains. The landscape there is probably your greatest asset as far as tourism goes". F2 also noted that Norway is fantastic to go to if you want great sceneries and landscapes to explore.

When I questioned them about whether they wished to travel to a specific destination because of the local food they have to offer, everyone responded positively. A1 mentioned that it was very crucial for him, and that he would do research beforehand according to where he can find

the most exciting food experiences. He also does not mind spending money on food experiences because that is something that his life revolves around. F2 added the importance surrounding discovery through food: “Yes, it is important to me, because I love discovering, culturally speaking, foods I am not accustomed to. I like traditional stuff, and eating traditional food makes my mind travel”.

Afterwards, I asked them to define to me their idea of traditional food. In other words, what those words meant for them. The answers were surprisingly alike. I noticed a pattern between the word’s history, past, and authenticity, which was interesting. “It bears a strong history I believe. It is also about storytelling and adapting and making something authentic” (Interviewee A1). When I received their answer, I wanted to dive deeper to understand why local food was important to them for traveling. Again, their answers were very similar in context.

#### 4.1.1 Interpretation

Already we have acquired some interesting responses concerning the enthusiasm for exploring traditional food through traveling. A1 mentioned that he did not mind spending money on food experiences, but we have to note that this specific candidate has a professional background in cooking, which is of course, not the case for every gastronomic tourist. When it comes to analysing the meaning behind traditional food, I found F2s answer to be quite intriguing. She mentioned that tradition is something that was popular in the past yet still remained an important dish to this day. This also made me think that tradition is a direct link from the past to the present. It bears a strong meaning, and it can be understood not only by a local but also a foreign tourist. Even though tourists do not have any direct relation to the culture, food and traditions seem to go hand in hand for the understanding of one's culture.

“Working with the seasons and with the land and the environment you have been given. It’s also about storytelling and adapting and making something authentic” (Interviewee A1). Here the candidates mention storytelling, supporting the idea behind translating something historic through food. It seems that, through those answers, local and traditional food is collaborating to attract tourists to specific destinations for the history, the storytelling and the culture it can translate. The definition of food tourism that was presented by Long can also help us understand the fact that food is a powerful medium to interact with, and understand another culture (Long, 2004, p. 21).

Candidates A1 and F1 mentioned the importance of authenticity when traveling. Candidate A1 mentioned that he would rather experience a country’s history and culture through gastronomic experiences rather than through activities like visiting museums, which I found interesting. This statement can also be supported by the literature I went through earlier concerning authenticity and the way it is valued by tourists. F2 also mentioned that the reason local food was important to experience while traveling is to support the local economy. On the other hand, she acknowledged that eating locally provides a low impact on the environment, which she found crucial when traveling abroad and when dining at any kind of restaurant. Athanasopoulou (2020) is also supporting this statement by telling us how important it is that local food and products are a part of the authentic gastronomic experience.

I can conclude this section by adding that my interviewees seem very much interested in the food tourism bubble, and I believe it is the case for many tourists as well. People travel to experience new cultures, understand foreign traditions, and tasting traditional foreign food is probably one of the most authentic ways to involve oneself in a foreign tradition. As Long

(2004) mentioned, food has the ability to be an ever-stronger stimulant than sightseeing, because it entices almost all of our senses.

## 4.2 Knowledge of the Norwegian cuisine and its potential

In the following section, I wished to get a better understanding of what the common knowledge was concerning Norwegian cuisine, but more specifically traditional Norwegian cuisine. At the same time, I wanted to gauge whether they thought the type of food they experienced during their trip to Norway was inviting as well as appetizing. The answer to those questions would put me on the right path to analyse the potential of Norwegian cuisine in the eyes of a typical international tourist. I first asked my correspondents to name some of the typical Norwegian food they could come up with. The answers were quite similar, with all of them answering salmon, fishcake and seafood in general. I also received some interesting alternatives from two of my interviewees. A1 mentioned waffles and brown cheese, which I found surprising. F2 mentioned reindeer, and the Christmas traditional dinner. Furthermore, I questioned them on why they thought the food they named was deemed “typically Norwegian”, which was important for me to understand their thought process on that matter. The answers to that question varied widely from the other questions, where everybody answered quite similarly. “It is kind of the Viking culture; I don’t really know how to put it. It seems to me that Norwegians are a very proud people, as well as with their cuisine” (Interviewee F1).

I think the history of Norwegian cuisine has had a part to play into today's “traditional” recipes. I know Norway used to be a lot poorer country, economically speaking. Of course, that changed after a while but the local products and recipes did not. (Interviewee F2)

The next natural step for me was to try to quantify the attraction of Norwegian cuisine through the eyes of the average international tourist. I questioned the interviewees about if the food we have to offer was “good enough”, and ultimately, if it had the potential to grow on the world map of international cuisine. The answers were very positive on the matter. Some of them were convinced that the potential was there due to the amount of fresh ingredients Norway had at its disposal. Two of them mentioned some constructive criticism on what Norway could do better to impose itself more on the culinary tourism map.

I personally had some great experiences in Oslo and in Stavanger. Both in bakeries and restaurants. I feel there is a high standard in general. I feel there is a ton of good stuff to explore. You just have to know where to go or do some research beforehand.  
(Interviewee A1)

There is a lot of fresh food I believe. I do not know how varied and wide the local food spectrum actually is though. Having its coast on the North Sea must help for developing a stable seafood production. Which is a very high-quality product from my experience. (Interviewee F1)

To conclude each interview, I asked if my interviewees wished to add anything else they deemed relevant to the subject. F1 mentioned Voss water and added that it was perceived as a high-quality brand of bottled water.

Voss water and Norwegian tap water is almost as luxurious as salmon. Here in France, it is considered as the “Channel” of bottled water. (Interviewee F1)

### 4.2.1 Interpretation

From the information I gathered from my interviewees, the most known ingredients and dishes Norway has to offer are seafood, which was unsurprisingly named by all my interviewees. This aspect of Norwegian cuisine seems to be well recognized on the world map due to the freshness and the easy access of the ingredients. I was surprised to hear A1 mentioning waffles and brown cheese when asked about Norwegian traditional food: “Brown cheese, something that is pretty unique to Norway. Norwegian waffles are a sweet combo with that”. He later applauds the traditional food and the impact it can have, comparing the Norwegian cuisine tradition to the US: “Over here in America, it is hard to pinpoint tradition because there is not much of one”. This is an interesting note because it shows us the value behind a tradition which has been there for a long time. This supports what I wrote in the theory chapter about how tradition and culture add value in relation to food (Amilien et al., 2008, p. 12). Furthermore, it was fascinating to hear an international tourist talk fondly about the traditional Norwegian Christmas dinner.

The typical Norwegian Christmas dinner was quite memorable. I really enjoyed it with the cabbage, salted meats, and potatoes. I was not very used to that kind of dinner, coming from France where the Christmas dinner is very different. But I did enjoy it a lot. (Interviewee F2)

This again supports our earlier insight on the attraction of the foreign and the unknown. Høberg (2020) talks about the mutton rib which is characterized by the way the meat it is salted and smoked. This is a typically salted meat that Norwegians eat for Christmas dinner, which F2 said she enjoyed eating. Additionally, I felt that some of my interviewees sensed a feeling of pride behind the Norwegian traditions, from its culture to its cuisine. F1 mentioned

the Viking culture, and that the Norwegian people are very proud. This shows a kind of continuity to Norwegian cuisine, which has kept its roots through time. If international tourists feel a sense of pride behind the Norwegian culture and its cooking, it makes it all the more attractive and intriguing.

In addition, I appear to understand that even though the whole spectrum of Norwegian cooking is quite unknown, my interviewees seemed to appreciate most of the raw ingredients that Norway had to offer. A1 mentioned that there is a lot to explore if you know where to go, and that there is a big potential for more Norwegian food restaurants. This tells me that even though the food and local ingredients are appreciated, they are not so easily put forward. It is also interesting to notice that some Norwegian brands such as Voss have a colossal influence worldwide, as F2 mentioned. This is also supported by Fjordtours (2020).

Reading through the Incoming 2013 rapport, one could identify that the food offered to tourists was well appreciated overall. Many tourists acknowledged the high quality of short-haul foods and farm produced products, as well as the authentic raw products such as fish and diverse seafood. Perhaps this could be something Norway should focus on even more to present to its tourists?

A1 also adds that foreign restaurants are very popular. And even though the quality is good, it takes a lot of space.

During my short stay in Oslo, I have to say I witnessed a lot of different foreign cuisine that was well executed. I feel like Norwegians prize that even more than typical Norwegian food, because beside the amazing seafood restaurant I went to in

Stavanger, there weren't many typical Norwegian cuisine restaurants, at least not to my knowledge. The foreign restaurants were very accessible. You can find many fantastic cuisines just around the corner, but sadly, not that much typical Norwegian cuisine. (Interviewee A1)

It seems that, without a guide, it would be hard to know which restaurant to visit to consume traditional Norwegian meals.

Norway is fantastic to go to if you want great sceneries and landscapes to explore. To attract more people for its food is a different question. I want to say that it would be good if there would be more traditional Norwegian restaurants. Those were hard if not impossible to find actually. Of course, you can find the odd traditional dish here and there but next to none “traditional” Norwegian restaurants. So that tourists could eat a little more typical ingredients and dishes that are made locally. If such a concept could be put a little more forward, it would for sure be attracting more tourists for what Norway has to offer, gastronomically speaking. (Interviewee F2)

Again, this tells us that traditional Norwegian cuisine is not marketed as much as the foreign cuisine in Norway. Most Norwegian chain restaurants are concept restaurants to promote other cuisines than Norwegian cuisine. Through those statements, we can distinguish that there is an obvious link missing between Norwegian food and the way it is presented/promoted. Because the cuisine, the dishes and ingredients that the interviewees tried during their visit to Norway were mostly very appreciated. Otherwise, as A1 mentioned earlier, you should do some research beforehand, or have a guide of sorts; someone who has the knowledge of where to go to really get a taste for authentic Norwegian dishes.



### 4.3 Marketing strategy

For this final section, I wished to investigate what strategy Norway could imply to market itself more effectively to foreign tourists, gastronomically speaking. I asked my interviewees how Norway could attract more people from other countries to visit for the food Norway has to offer. I received a variety of responses to that question. Correspondent F1 mentioned that Norway could utilize better marketing, through the use of social media. Furthermore, two of my interviewees stated again that Norway's greatest asset was its landscapes and nature to explore. Still, both of them noted that the potential to expand on the exhibition and marketing of the food Norway has to offer was definitely there.

Additionally, I also wanted to know if my interviewees thought that foreign countries knew the different aspects of Norwegian cuisine, from common knowledge that is. The reason for that was that it would help me acquire a general idea on the worldwide knowledge of what food Norway has to offer. The answers I received were very similar. Most of them were not quite sure about whether foreign countries knew so much about the different dishes or food Norway has to offer. Two of them mentioned that fish and seafood was the most commonly known ingredient. F1 mentioned that except for fish, there was also some good chocolate. “Besides seafood I am not sure. When I discussed it with my French friends, there were very few people that know what typical Norwegian food really is. Excluding the famous red salmon, which we have imported here to France” (Interviewee F2).

A1 also compared France to Norway in that aspect, saying that Norway had a long way to go to impose itself on the worldwide podium of culinary influences. Still, he added that Norway had room to improve on that aspect. He continued with that since technology is evolving and

that we now can transport food from all over the world, Norway could make themselves more visible in this way.

#### 4.3.1 Interpretation

From the results I received, it seems that Norway's cuisine is not that visible or established from a worldwide point of view. My interviewees also pointed out the fact that most typical dishes were not straightforwardly accessible when visiting the country. The comparison between France and Norway mentioned by A1 was true, even though most cuisines would have a hard time challenging French cuisine through a popularity contest. The obvious ingredients mentioned by my candidates were fish and seafood overall, which is inevitably the area where Norway seems to excel at. This is also supported by the Norwegian Seafood Council (2019).

The main issue that was pointed out by my interviewees concerning Norwegian cuisine was not necessarily in terms of its quality, but its accessibility, its promotion and advertisement. In fact, two of my candidates noted that Norwegian traditional cuisine would be a lot more known worldwide and perhaps grow to be more popular as well, if it was marketed better.

I found F2s initiative about creating a restaurant chain that revolved mainly around traditional Norwegian dishes fascinating. As I have explained in the theory chapter Visit Oslo has many recommendations as to where to eat traditional Norwegian food. However, as A1 mentioned, you need to do research beforehand or know someone who can guide you there.

It could be important to recall the quotes mentioned by Renate Larsen concerning the growing interest and demand in Norwegian seafood in the global market. She also speaks on the younger generation being further involved in the environment, the climate and producing food

in a more sustainable way (Norwegian Seafood Council, 2020). Perhaps this could be an advantage for Norway to attract a younger segment of tourists for the high quality of seafood they have to offer but also for the sustainable aspect of its production.

When we utilize the English version of Visit Norway's website, we instantly notice that the main focus is on specific gastronomic destinations in Norway, rather than on the general Norwegian food culture. We can observe those destinations being highlighted for a specific kind of food such as King Crab safari in Kirkenes or Skrei in Lofoten (Visit Norway, 2022). This is, in my opinion, a great way of marketing Norwegian destinations. When comparing it to the Norwegian version of the website, one can find that there is a lot of in-depth information concerning Norwegian gastronomy and food culture. It is interesting to notice that Norwegian gastronomy is marketed a different way in both versions of the website.

Through the results I gathered through my interviews, I believe there are two things Norway should focus on. The first one would be on how to better promote Norwegian food dishes to attract foreign tourists. The other would be on how to make Norwegian dishes more accessible whilst visiting the country. In view of the fact that two of my interviewees noted that it was very hard for them to actually find “Norwegian restaurants” during their visit, even though F2 spent some months in Norway. If its promotion and accessibility were to evolve, it may launch Norwegian cuisine to a new level. This could be through social media influence, better initiatives to advertise itself more effectively to tourists that are visiting Norway but also to those that are yet to visit as well. The quality of food available seems to be appreciated by my interviewees. A1 mentioned that the best to market Norwegian food would be to highlight the best we have to offer. Which is in his opinion seafood and other traditional dishes.

Norway's rich history and traditions could be a helping hand in the initiative to market the food the country has to offer. As mentioned by several of my interviewees, tourists tend to travel to Norway for its landscapes and untouched nature. There are other alternatives available for a tourist wishing to explore a destination where gastronomy is one of the greatest highlights, such as France as A1 mentioned. However, one could also argue that visitors come to Norway to experience the full package such as culture, food and people, and not only for the experience of raw Norwegian nature. One might add that stunning landscapes could be perceived as a quite one-dimensional experience and if it is really the main reason why visitors wish to stay long term. It could be that it is the culture, the atmosphere, the people and the food who entices a tourist to return rather than simply for the landscape.

## 5.0 Conclusion

In this final section, I wish to conclude our research, and to answer our main question on “How can Norway grow to become a more attractive destination in terms of culinary tourism”.

Much of the literature that was presented was helpful to understand the intricate world of food tourism and the different degrees of interest a food tourist may have, when planning a journey to a specific destination. It seems that our analysis proved that Norway is a particularly popular destination to visit mostly for its landscape and untouched nature, rather than for the food it has to offer. I believe that nature is and most probably will remain Norway's greatest asset in terms of attracting foreign tourists. Furthermore, I believe there is a long way to go before Norwegian gastronomy is able to impose itself on a worldwide scale. The reason for that is mainly because Norwegian food is not well known and perhaps not well enough marketed. If Norwegian food is to be sought after by tourists visiting Norway, I believe that all levels of the food and tourism industries should assemble and rally together to market it more effectively.

If Norway wishes to grow to become a more attractive destination for its gastronomy, it should focus on presenting the food and ingredients the country excels at, predominantly seafood and fish. My interviews and the report from Incoming 2013 gave an insight that the quality of the food presented to tourists in general was of great quality. My interviews also showed that much of the traditional food and dishes that my candidates tried, was acknowledged and appreciated. In addition to that, much of the locally produced farm foods and ingredients Norway has to offer can be a great asset to build on. In other words, if Norwegian gastronomy wishes to become a more desirable tourist destination, places that

focus on traditional Norwegian food, locally produced food, and short-haul food must be part of a larger tourism package when visiting. Even though Norwegian food can be of high quality, I don't believe that food alone would help attract more tourists. Therefore, food should be part of something larger to gain more attraction from food tourists. In addition, it could be a way to expand on the main attraction which is Norwegian nature. To name a proposition, a whale safari package trip in Lofoten could be accompanied by a taste of some Norwegian traditional dishes.

As I previously mentioned, nature is the main attraction that appeals to foreign tourists, but food culture is something that may entice a return, or even a permanent stay. If Norwegian gastronomy wishes to gain more popularity, it is crucial that it makes itself more known and accessible than the way it is as of today. Norway also needs to imply a better marketing strategy both for tourists that are planning to visit, and for those who are already there. As a visiting tourist, to any country, one should not have a hard time looking for where to get local or traditional food. Norway is so rich in tradition, but seems a bit shy when presenting its traditional dishes. If Norway was to present its dishes with pride, its food culture would appear stronger, thus more appealing to foreigners.

Seafood, which is Norway's greatest and most known asset, gastronomically speaking, should be built upon even more. Seafood should therefore be more accessible in several restaurants and dining places. It seems that there is still a long way to go for Norwegian cuisine to grow enough to attract more tourists to Norway for the sole reason of the food. However, everything implies that the potential is there and is strong enough to expand on and blossom in the future.

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# Vedlegg

## Interview Guide

13 questions:

1. What is typical Norwegian food in your opinion?
2. Can you explain what you believe is traditional food in general?
3. Do you have any examples of Norwegian traditional food?
4. Why do you consider it Norwegian?
5. Is there any food you don't want to taste? and why?
6. Do you travel to certain destinations because of the local/traditional food they have there?
7. Why does the local food interest you in the destinations you wish to visit?
8. How can we reach more people/tourists from other countries to come here for food?
9. Do we have good enough food to offer?
10. Do you think people from other countries know what different types of food we have?  
examples?
11. Would you travel to other countries for food alone?
12. When you eat food at a restaurant, is it important for you to know where the food is  
from? (Local food)
13. Anything you would like to add?