



## AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF INDIAN STATE TOURISM DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL WEBSITE CONTENTS FOR THE PROMOTION OF FOOD TOURISM

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### Abstract

Regional cuisine has always been a component of the tourist experience. In fact it represents an important part of the average tourist budget. Food tells us about a culture and the society. Food tourism plays a important role in enhancing tourist experience, regional identity and help in the growth of other area of that region. Food helps in the sustainable development of a tourist destination. Gastronomy has been an important attribute in development destination. Previous studies reveal that there is a positive connection between food and tourism. Gastronomy can be use as tourism product for presentation & offering of local cuisines to tourists. Since today we live in the world of advanced Information Technology and for most enquiries Google is consulted. People have more faith on official websites so it is recommended that the official websites should be utilized as principal platforms for promotional efforts.

### Introduction

The word “gastronomy” first emerged in a poem published by Jacques Berchoux, a Frenchman in 1804. In the poem, Berchoux described gastronomy as enjoying food and drink at the very best. Before then, the word “gastronomy” had been ubiquitous and had been extremely difficult to define, because it encompassed an extensive association with everything related to food, eat, and drink. In 1835, the word gastronomy added and defined in a French dictionary as “the art of good eating.” Athenee, a Greek writer, he wrote about food and drink and food habit in those days. Similarly, the Italians in the Middle-Ages explored and incorporated gastronomy in every part of life, from medicine to farming. Food included in the study of medicine and that makes relationship between healthy living and food habits. By 1920, the first gourmet literature was published in France as a guideline to local foods for travelers, which function to promote regional gastronomy tourism”

**Review of literature:** Kumar Vikas (2015) revealed in their study that tourist returning to a particular destination to enjoy a cuisine: which he/she enjoyed during a past visit means that role of food and a drink is becoming much more important than just a basic need. Gastronomy has become a central part of the tourism experience. (Kumar Mahesh, 2014) stated that local and regional food, wine could give added value to the destination. (Ignatov & Smith, 2006) stated that term culinary tourism means the preparation styles of food in the context of social and culture and its consumption during tourism trips. Previous research has shown that tourists spend almost 40% of their budget on food when traveling (Boyne, Williams, & Hall, 2002). The 2004 Restaurant & Foodservice Market Research Handbook states that 50% of restaurants’ revenue was generated by travelers (Graziani, 2003).It shows that there is a symbolic relationship between food and the tourism. Moreover food has been considered as an effective promotional tool of a destination (Hjalager & Richards, 2002). China, Thailand, Italy and France have been known for their cuisine. (Hjalager & Corigliano, 2000) stated that culinary tourism is an area that has not been studied by many researchers but it could be a crucial segment of the tourism industry. (Au & Law, 2002) stated that gastronomy and tourism linked together. Authentic and interesting food can attract visitors to a destination. The image of France has always been associated with its food and wine. (Quan & Wang, 2004) noted that food can convey unique experience and enjoyment to travelers.

### Methodology

This paper is a study of how much efforts are being made by different state of India for the development of tourism using their gastronomic prospective and a comparison of the same with the efforts being made by other countries. Since today we live in the world of advanced Information Technology and for most enquiries Google is consulted for, both these facts were kept in mind while designing the research methodology. This study is focused on the exploration of official website of state tourism department of India which is known for their remarkable efforts for the promotion of Gastronomic Tourism. Most of the data and information is being collected from the websites and previous research.

### Importance of Website for Regional Cuisine and Cultural Promotion

Website contents play a very important role in food tourism, since today we live in the world of advanced Information Technology and for most enquiries Google is consulted. People have more faith on official websites so it is recommended that the official websites should be utilized as principal platforms for regional cuisine and cultural promotional efforts. In the UK each decade since the 1950s has seen a series of food related television programmes fronted by a chef/cook who has become nationally, sometimes internationally, recognized. As many of the recent star chefs claim their expertise on the basis of a particular regional cuisine, it is not surprising that these regions also become framed as potential tourist destinations.



Journey and leisure promotion away from conventional press such as television and magazines, towards new press targeted on personal customer needs, particularly the Online. The Online has an excellent potential to web link professional providers of gastronomy and journey and leisure items to allocate but vast international market of experienced customers. For Example: Sanjeev Kapoor show Khana Khazana, TarlaDalal, Puspesh pant, Vikas Khanna celebrity chef articles on food. Travel Living channel, food food channel.

### **Establishing Gastronomic Activities**

Creating events based on food and tourism such as food fairs, cookery workshop, visit to local market and food producers, food tours. Food has moved into museums and heritage sites, Dharohar, Haryana culture Museum in Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra. Surajkund Craft Fair in Haryana, Ratnawali festival in Kurukshetra university, Kurukshetra (Haryana), Phagun Mela in Mahrshi Dayanand University, Rohtak (Haryana) could tell the story of the produce and production processes, including sometimes with hands-on experience. Festivals, themed events, parties, fairs, competitions, etc., can be conceptually linked to food. Such events also enable cooking utensils and food-processing equipment to be displayed and sold. Festivals also feature appearances by celebrity chefs, lectures and demonstrations, cooking competitions, auctions, etc. Finally, we believe that gastronomy is currently a key element in the development and promotion of a tourist destination and official website contents related to these theme based programme can be beneficial for the promotion of culinary tourism. Therefore, both public and private organizations involved in tourism should consider it to be of utmost importance in the promotion and commercialization of the area.

### **Study of Indian State Tourism Official Websites Contents Regarding Promotion of Regional Cuisine**

1. [www.delhitourism.gov.in](http://www.delhitourism.gov.in) : The official website of Delhi Tourism contents show the information about Delhi facts, historical importance of Delhi, local transport, entertainment places and accommodation facilities. The websites beautifully explain delicious cuisine of Delhi, famous restaurants which offer various types of cuisine.

2. [www.tamilnadutourism.org](http://www.tamilnadutourism.org): The official website of Tamil Nadu Tourism contents show the detailed information about the tradition, culture, folk, festivals & local dance, temples etc. Hotel, restaurant and famous destinations Information regarding weather condition, peak season and off season is also provided. But when it comes to Gastronomic Promotions it has a one page description about the Tamil Nadu cuisine under the link of cuisine.

3. [www.up-tourism.com](http://www.up-tourism.com): The official website of Uttar Pradesh Tourism “A land of Ganga and Yamuna river cultural and geographical diversity dense forests and fertile land and places of historical, cultural and religious importance. The land of Rama, Krishna, Buddha, Mahavir, shrines and holiest city Varanasi. It is also home of India’s most visited site Taj Mahal (Agra). Information about destinations and accommodation and various tourist circuits is also provided. But the Gastronomic importance or promotion is not there nor is any link to know about the cuisine seen except few recipes in the dropdown menu of home page.

4. [www.aptdc.gov.in](http://www.aptdc.gov.in): The official website of Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation it tells about historical genesis of Andhra Pradesh known as Andhra Desam. It is known for its architectural grandeur, traditional attire, music etc. The website conveys the diverse range of tourism facilities that the state offers, from boating, beaches to hills, heritage and pilgrimage to adventure and wild life”. The information regarding tour packages accommodation and other regular information that a traveler needs are provided on the website. Coming to gastronomic tourism the website provides the experience shared by two dignities Vizag and Rayalseema delicious food experience which is posted on the website, in the dropdown menu of Explore on the main page explore/cuisine-experience.

5. [www.ktdc.com](http://www.ktdc.com): The official website of Kerla Tourism Development Corporation the website open with line “Official host to God’s own country” provides detailed information about the accommodation facilities their location, tour packages (backwater canal tour), ayurvedic therapies ( Age halt package) and spa facilities in the state. But no cuisine page on website.

6. [www.maharashtratourism.gov.in](http://www.maharashtratourism.gov.in): The official website of Maharashtra Tourism The website says “Maharashtra is a land of mountains, forts, temples, beaches. The website provides detailed information about the attractions for tourists, leisure and adventure activities offered in the state. For the cuisine of Maharashtra, website has one page write-up on the value of food for “Maharashtrians is well known that they consider their food as ‘Anna he poorna brahma’ meaning they consider ‘anna’, or food, equal to ‘Brahma’, or the creator of the universe. Website also explains various sweets which are prepare on particular festival.

7. [www.mptourism.com](http://www.mptourism.com): The official website of Madhya Pradesh Tourism opens with “Suswagatam” land of adventure tourism, wildlife and heritage tourism. Information of accommodations and online booking. In Home page one site for culture and cuisine but nothing could be displayed on the website.



8. [www.rajasthantourism.gov.in](http://www.rajasthantourism.gov.in): The official website of Rajasthan Tourism contents display that “Rajasthan has tradition of bravery, monuments, rich heritage, colorful culture, exciting desert safaris, shining sand-dunes, amazing variety lush forests and varied wildlife and forts, lakes, fair and festivals that tell the story of a past time. It is an unbelievable destination for the tourist takes a safari on camels, horse, elephant or even in open jeeps. Train journey luxury on wheels( palace on Wheels) royal tour on wheels. The website also explains about the regional cuisine of Rajasthan under the link of Rajasthan/ cuisine.

9. [www.gujarattourism.com](http://www.gujarattourism.com): The official website of Gujrat Tourism open with a line “Aavo Padharo” It is a words of welcome in the language of Gujarat. Information related to Palaces to visit, Attractions, Beaches, Eco Tourism, Gandhi Circuit, Museum, Religious site, Fair and festival. Cuisine site begins with (Surat ka jaman aur Banaras ka maran) a popular saying in Gujrati which means dining at Surat and dying at Varanasi is the way of heaven. In cuisine section ‘Gujrati Thali (main dishes of Gujrat), Cuisine of Saurashtra (Kathiawad Cuisine), Bohri Cuisine of Muslim community. Dishes beautifully displayed with recipe and photograph.

10. [www.wbtourism.gov.in](http://www.wbtourism.gov.in): The official website of West Bengal Tourism it opens with Welcome to West Bengal and begins with “Experience Bengal the sweetest part of India”. It is a land of “ Maach aar Bhaat” which means fish and rice. Website tells about cultural diversity, folks and festivals and its beautiful landscapes, historical places, pilgrimage.. Information related to tourist attraction accommodation and various tour packages are displayed on the website”.

### **Wonderful World of Bengal Cuisine**

It covers beautiful gallery of Bengali cuisine such as Holi Special, Nababarsha special dishes, District special dishes gallery, Bengal cuisine on occasion( The Bengali proverb ‘ Baro Mase Tero parbon’( thirteen festival in twelve month). In west Bengal majority of festival are associated with special cuisine. Seasonal Influences Food with recipe and photograph beautifully displayed on website. Food festivals: As per the Tourism policy of Government of West Bengal. West Bengal Tourism regularly organize Food festival to promote divers art, culture and cuisine of the state such as: Ilish Utsav, Digha Beach Festival, Sea food festival, Kolkata Christmas festival, Panch Vyanjan vegetarian Food Festival and Nale Jhole-DumDum Food festival.

11. [www.chhattisgarhtourism.net](http://www.chhattisgarhtourism.net): The official website of Chhattisgarh Tourism “recognize the significance of tourism as tool for socio-economic growth, Chhattisgarh Tourism Board was established on 18th January 2002. The state has nearly 45% of the forests land and 32% of tribal inhabitants. State website offers huge opportunities for Eco-tourism, Adventure and Cultural tourism. But it lacks in promoting the cuisine of Chhattisgarh.

12. [www.goa-tourism.com](http://www.goa-tourism.com) : The official website of Goa Tourism website contents display history, church, temple, museum, wild life, culture. Things to Do section tells about water sports, hot air ballooning, ayurveda, hotels and cruise. Explore Goa section display Goan Cuisine under the heading of ‘Goan food, Goan drinks, Calendar recipes (all twelve month special dishes with recipe and photograph).

13. [www.himachaltourism.gov.in](http://www.himachaltourism.gov.in) : Website contents display about popular destinations, history of Himachal, flora and fauna. In this website go to first Himachal and then Culture section very small detail about cuisine of himachal. The cuisine of himachal is influenced by Punjabi and Tibetan styles of cooking. In Himachal Pradesh Food Festival ‘Dham’ attract several tourists from far and wide. But only one page description of cuisine of Himachal Pradesh.

14. [www.punjabtourism.gov.in](http://www.punjabtourism.gov.in) : The official website of Punjab Tourism website open with punch line “India Begins Here”. Punjab is food paradise of India but nothing to display about cuisine of Punjab.

15. [www.bihartourism.gov.in](http://www.bihartourism.gov.in) : The official website of Bihar Tourism website open with “ Revealing the Unseen”. Bihar is main hub of tourist circuit (Buddhist Circuit, Jain Circuit, Hindu Circuit and Sufi Circuit). In website section nothing to display about cuisine of Bihar.

16. [www.haryanaturism.gov.in](http://www.haryanaturism.gov.in) : The official website of Haryana Tourism website contents open with punch line “Come holiday with us”. The name haryana has a distinct meaning- the abode of God. Hari means God and ayana is home. In website ‘Experience Haryana’ section displayed highway tourism, farm tourism, heritage tourism, adventure tourism, pilgrimage tourism, mice tourism. The famous proverb of Haryana “Desa mein desh Haryana, jit doodh dahi ka khana”. But on website nothing to display about Haryanavi cuisine.

### **Findings**

To study the contribution of gastronomy in the overall development of tourism. The promotional activities undertaken by India and Indian states are not satisfactory and are not at par with the Global Markets only few website promote regional

cuisine on their content beautifully with photograph and recipe such as West Bengal, Goa and Gujrat. Every state has a very strong and unique cultural heritage and a very strong gastronomic background. Some of the cuisines are already well-known globally and are quite popular as well. Indian Cuisine is a non-ending list of specialties and delicacies from each region and state. With such wide range of specialties and delicacies this is quite evident that there is a lot of potential for the development of Gastronomic Tourism in India at state and regional levels.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

The study shows the local cuisine was the most or second most important reason for the majority of visitors choosing to visit any country. Finally, we consider local cuisine to be a vital part of the character of any tourist destination. All organizations involved in the tourism industry, whether public or private organizations develop their website contents that helpful in promoting regional cuisine and must give it a key role in the promotion and development of the destination. In this paper we analyzed how the official website contents of Indian state being the tourist reasons for touring a certain country and to what extent the local cuisine attracted them to their chosen place. Research should also be undertaken for suggestive to tourism department, the government and other stakeholders in the formation of policies for the promotion of food tourism. There is an urgent need of promotional efforts for regional cuisines. Since culinary tourism is mainly a domestic tourism activity, development in food tourism will automatically improve the socio-economic standards of the local community. Technology is evolving faster than ever before we need to optimize our strategies by the inclusion of technologies of today and tomorrow. People have more faith on official websites so it is recommended that the official websites should be utilized as principal platforms for promotional efforts.

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### Website Link

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