

PERCEPTION OF FOOD AND LOCALITY AMONG CHINESE TOURIST EXPERIENCES IN FINLAND

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BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Chinese tourists have showed a growing interest in travel to the Nordic countries and the number of Chinese overnights has almost tripled since 2010 (Wu, 2016).

- In Finland 522 000 visitors from China in 2015
- 73 % were first-time visitors

The focus of the study is to gain an understanding of Chinese tourists' relations to food during their visit to Finland.



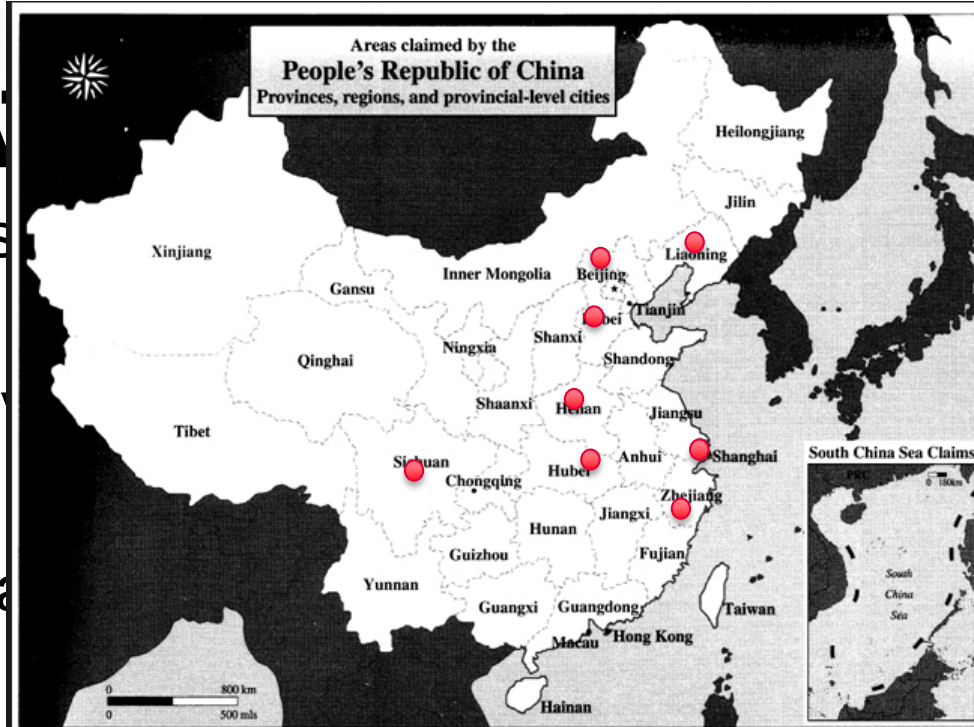
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METHODS AND DATA

The research material consists of 12 depth interviews.

- 12 Female and 3 male interviewees
- Ages 18 to over 60 years
- from different parts of China
 - Shanghai area (2)
 - Liaoning Province (Dalian City) (2)
 - Henan Province (4)
 - Beijing (1)
 - Hubei Province (1)
 - Hebei Province (2)
 - Zhejiang Province (2)
 - Sichuan Province (1)



The thematic interviews were used to understand the perceptions of Chinese tourist on four themes:

- Food and tourism
- Locality
- Environmentally friendly food, and
- Organic food.

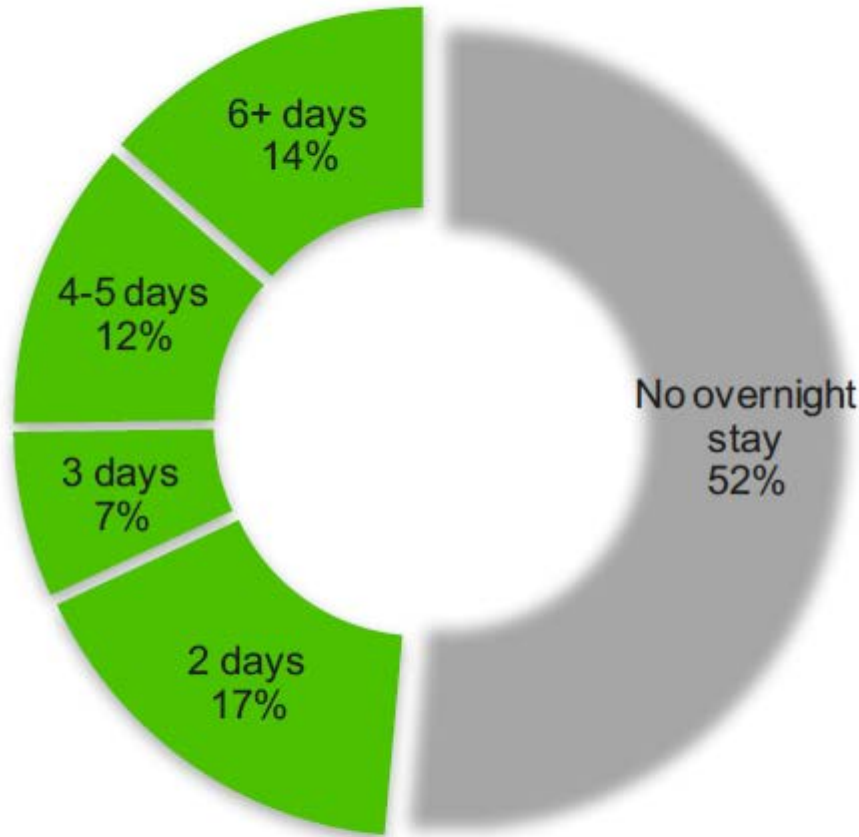
The interview data was analysed using qualitative content analysis.



KEY

Length of stay

Source: Visit Finland visitor survey, 2015



Half of Chinese visitors
stayed overnight in
Finland

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- Skilled in using online travel advisers
 - “Traditional and original food”
- Traditional food, restaurants and small local food shops were seen as symbols of Finnish **culture** in general.



PERCEPTIONS OF ORGANIC FOOD

- Interviewees not that familiar with "organic food"
- Attributes and descriptions from interviews:

"Healthy"

"Vegetables, I think."

"Green, healthy, no additives, no pesticides and chemical fertilisers."

"High standard production"

"High standard, high price"

"Organic food focus more on the quality than the quantity"

"Expensive, healthier and safer"



”Yes, I like organic food. I think it’s safer, high quality and fortunately I can afford it”

”Not that important to me. If the price is similar [to the conventional], I will choose organic food”

”I don’t usually spend money on organic food. I will clean all the [conventional] food properly”



CONCLUSION

- It can be concluded that Chinese tourists are not familiar with the Finnish food and they have difficulty in identifying local food or organic food at holiday destinations.
- However, Chinese tourists are skilled in using online travel advisers and seek recommendations and additional information there.
- Services of this kind were considered trustworthy and informative
- Keywords in seeking: *most famous, traditional*



THANK YOU !

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