

FYI WHERE FOOD IS THE FOCUS

One of the highlights of food tourism is traveling to special places where food is the focus. Nowhere is food more on center stage than at fairs and festivals dedicated to special foods. Consider sampling one of these destinations from the food festival smorgasbord:

- Asparagus Festival, Lovran, Croatia
- Crave Sydney International Food Festival, Sydney, Australia
- Durkheimer Wurstmarkt, Bad Durkheim, Germany
- Florida Strawberry Festival in Plant City, Florida
- Gilroy Garlic Festival, Gilroy, California
- Maine Lobster Festival, Rockland, Maine
- Mackinac Island Fudge Festival, Mackinac Island, Michigan
- Sauerkraut Days, Lisbon, Iowa
- Terlingua International Chili Cook Competition, Terlingua, Texas
- Tyne Valley Oyster Festival, Tyne Valley, Prince Edward Island, Canada

If the names and foods don't make your mouth water, keep searching, there is a food festival to tempt every taste bud.

form of communication that provides specific timing and instructions for the banquet service team to meet guest expectations. This level of detail becomes especially important when dealing with groups requiring a variety of services over multiple days. For example, at a four-day conference, meeting goers will likely be served breakfasts, lunches, dinners, refreshment breaks, and cocktail parties. These may range from a formal dinner-dance banquet to a self-service continental breakfast.

Building Profitable Operations

“Mention food and beverage, and most hotel owners and managers want to run for the exits. Restaurants, and to a lesser extent bars and lounges, are hard to conceive, staff, operate, and certainly profit from” (p. 26).¹⁸ Competition in the F&B industry is fierce, with owners and managers facing the added problem of operating on very thin profit margins, so it is not surprising that a 60% failure rate for restaurants has been reported.¹⁹

Why is this failure rate so high? People seem to become financially involved in F&B establishments naively or for many of the wrong reasons. Some are motivated to own or invest in a restaurant because they crave social recognition, whereas others like to dine out and think they know how to deliver the dining experience. Still others venture into this line of business because they have gained status as accomplished cooks from dinner parties put on for friends. Such experiences lead many to believe falsely that they have the necessary skills to be good F&B operators. However, there is some good news. Research has shown that the median lifespan for restaurant operations is 4.5 years.²⁰ So, the restaurant you enjoyed on your last trip may still be there on your next trip.

FYI CHINESE' AFFECTION FOR FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Chinese cuisine is famous around the world. However, one really has to be in China to realize how much they enjoy foods and beverages. In full-service hotels, the revenue generated from F&B operations accounts for more than half of the total revenue, whereas

it is around 40% in North American hotels. It is not uncommon for a hotel to have several large ballrooms and many private dining rooms to serve the banquet needs of customers. In addition to banquets and restaurants, hotels take advantage of festivals to

earn revenues through the sales of gift packages that include festive food products. For example, hotels could easily generate over U.S. \$1 million revenue selling moon cakes during the mid-Autumn festival.