

Food safety when eating outside: an aspect of tourist safety in Cape Coast tourist destination in Ghana

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Introduction

Tourists' safety increases people's propensity to travel and also empowers tourists to keep their plans and visit destinations they have saved money to travel (Kovari & Zimanyi, 2011). Destinations should now provide safe food for the tourists in order to be able to stay and enjoy the number of days they intend spending at the destination.

Materials and methods

This study is a review of sources of eating outlets among the tourists in Cape Coast destination, the tourist hub in Ghana. The sources of various types of food offered for sale at this destination can be grouped under the following: restaurants, "chop bars", drinking spots and home-kitchen food for home visitors or tourists who stay in foster homes/families.

Results and discussion

Table 1: Type of tourists, what and where they eat in the public

Type of Tourists	What and where they eat	Observation
First time visitors/tourists	Eat continental or oriental food at the restaurants and home-kitchen.	They are very conscious about food security.
Repeat visitors/eco-tourists	Eat local foods at the restaurants, local chop bars & home-kitchen.	They have become used to the foods in the community. They try other local foods.
Tourists/Students on educational field trip (mass tourists) & conference tourists	Eat continental food and oriental food at the restaurants & food recommended by the tour operators.	Asian descent tourists patronize oriental food; European & western descent tourists patronize continental food; some tourists try local foods.
Tourists who stay in foster homes	Eat more of the home-kitchen food prepared by their host.	They eat more of the home-kitchen food and learn how the food is prepared.
Tourists of African descent	Eat all types of food from restaurants, chop bars & home-kitchen.	They are daring in eating food of African origin

In Table 1 above, the type of tourists, what and where they dine are shown and observations are made about such tourists. In general, tourists are really particular about food they eat in this tourist destination and only few tourists dare to try new foods. Also, there is a plethora of literature about the fact that food law and legislation in Ghana is quite out-of-date and unreliable even at district, municipal, metropolitan, regional, national levels (Ababio and Lovatt, 2015; Monney et al., 2014; Abrokwah, 2013; Nicolò, 2012; Sefa-Dedeh, 2009). There

are also sets of bye-laws at these levels in Ghana as regards the enforcement of food safety but the effects of enforcement are very weak because of weak institutional logistics. This situation has deepened the weak links among the food safety policy makers, implementors and inspectors such as Ghana Standards Board (GSA), Food and Drugs Authority (FDA), local government authorities (LGAs) and Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA).

Conclusion

It is recommended that the local sources of food (chop bars) should be regulated and monitored by Ghana Tourist Authority (GTA). This can highly improve the image of the destination in order to increase the tourist arrivals in Ghana. It must be said that food law and regulations should also be updated, institutional responsibilities should be strengthened and coordinated to keep up with food inspection services and food control management in Ghana.

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