



Adding Value to the Recipe: Creative Use of Off Season in Culinary Tourism

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Theoretical background

- **Gastronomy and food tourism**
 - Expression of local culture, heritage, values and identity
 - Sensory windows and access to 'authentic' backstages
 - Expensive destinations
- **Rural tourism**
 - Often have unique food produce and culinary heritage
 - Tourism as a way to generate income and growth
 - Lifestyle and network entrepreneurs



Aim of the study

- Paucity of information on the behavior of small firms means that entrepreneurial activity in the tourism sector is poorly understood (Roberts & Hall)
- Size of a business is a poor guide as to whether it is entrepreneurial or not (Wickham)



Methodology

- Small scale multiple case study
- Theoretical sampling: Innovative gastronomy/food entrepreneurs in one specific area
- Innovativeness: Expert assessment (DMO, other tourism enterprises) + dynamics of product portfolios + new business areas
- Three case companies
- Sources of evidence: 'Mystery shopping', observations, secondary data, marketing material, qualitative interviews (including discussions of findings at company level and of cross case analysis)



Case presentation

- 3 gourmet ventures in the Wadden Sea area:
 - Mettes Ganefyd
 - Slagter Christiansen
 - Hr. Skov



Mettes Ganefryd

- Mette is a common Danish girl's name and Ganefryd means joy to the palate
- A gourmet gastro house that emphasise on quality and not food from a bucket
- Besides from being a restaurant the gastro house also offer a small shop with own products, themed events, catering, cooking classes etc.
- Forrest cattle (Galloway)
- Cooperation with other interesting players in the Wadden Sea area



Slagter Christiansen

- A butcher shop on a small island where tourism is dominant
- Well established and luxurious brand
- Attracts customers from the mainland
- Flagship products and award winning products
- Supplementary gourmet products



Hr. Skov

- Skov is the owners last name
- Combined café/restaurant, wine shop, gourmet store and butcher shop
- Luxurious products and own gourmet products
- Concept; Never-ending taste experiences
- Scarcity factor



Findings (1) – micro businesses

- The ventures deliberately chose to become a micro business
 - Being one's own boss
 - Being able to dedicate time and resources to innovative efforts
- Growth is not a key objective



Findings (2) - innovativeness

- Innovative and creative during the low season
 - Product development
 - Planning events
 - New concepts
- High season is dedicated to service encounters



Findings (3) - Cooperation and network

- Does not perceive other gastronomic ventures in the area as competitors
- The more gastronomic ventures the better
- Use each other to get inspiration, to find suppliers, to share knowledge and to give and get help
- Competition is not a zero sum game; instead it is the key ingredient that is necessary in order to be(come) a destination that attracts guests interested in gastronomy.



Findings (4) – whole year tourism?

- Off season is not only used to recharge batteries. It is the time for innovativeness and creativity
- Off season dedication to innovation is a key characteristic of all three businesses and may be a key factor for their success
- Micro businesses = if more customers during the off season, they may not be able to find the time or resources to be innovative





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