

1

General Orientation of the Study

		PAGE
1.1	INTRODUCTION	2
1.1.1	Background and Literature Review	2
1.1.1.1	<i>Food tourism</i>	4
1.1.1.2	<i>Food tourism and destination marketing</i>	5
1.1.1.3	<i>Destination marketing and destination competitiveness</i>	6
1.1.1.4	<i>The benefits and impacts of local food</i>	7
1.2	PROBLEM STATEMENT	8
1.3	PURPOSE OF THE STUDY	9
1.3.1	Overall Goal	10
1.3.2	Specific Objectives of the Study	10
1.4	SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	11
1.5	SCOPE OF THE STUDY	14
1.6	RESEARCH DESIGN APPROACH	15
1.6.1	Methodology	17
1.6.2	Research Design	19
1.7	DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS	19
1.8	ORGANISATION OF CHAPTERS	19

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Governments, researchers and industry have only since the mid 1990s explicitly recognised the strong relationship between food, culture and tourism. In 1986, the 36th AIEST (Association Internationale d'Experts Scientifiques du Tourisme) congress addressed the topic of "The Impact of Catering and Cuisine Upon Tourism" (Kaspar, 1986). This relationship, at that time, proved to be problematic in tourist-gastronomic circles and in the tourism industry at large, thus emphasising the connection between agricultural products, culinary heritage and tourism promotion. The minimal attention that food tourism initially received from governments and as a research area has grown steadily, as in 2003 four publications focused on a variety of aspects regarding food tourism (Boniface, 2003; Hall, Sharples, Mitchell, Macionis & Cambourne, 2003b; Hjalager & Richards, 2002b; Long, 2003). The development of food tourism strategies in certain regions and countries such as Canada, Australia and the USA are presently receiving more attention and are being implemented with positive results. South Africa, with its nine provinces and 55 tourism regions, although rich in culinary resources and opportunities, has yet to capitalize on its food tourism potential.

1.1.1 Background and Literature Review

As reflected in the literature, the initiatives and discussions regarding the development of food tourism and the use of local food products pertain mainly to the developed world and very little has been reported and published regarding the situation and potential in developing countries. This study contributes to the discussion of the situation regarding the development of food tourism and the use of local food products as a tool in destination marketing in South Africa, a country forming part of the developing world.

Food tourism is regarded as niche or alternative tourism. As result of escalating competition and a change in traveller wants in terms of destination experience, food tourism is now more often being included as a new or additional sector in the travel and tourism business (Poon, 1993; Ritchie & Crouch, 2000). This situation affords food tourism the opportunity to be an important source of marketable images and experiences for the tourist, reinforcing the competitiveness and sustainability of the destination (Quan & Wang, 2003). The food and tourism industries benefit from this interaction, as local and regional food products become an important means of selling the identity and culture of a destination, enabling food producers to add value to their products by creating a tourism experience around the raw materials (Quan & Wang, 2003).

Food is considered a reflection of the culture of a country and its people. It is, therefore, the ideal product to offer as an attraction at a destination as it has many possibilities for use as a marketing tool (Bernard & Zaragoza, 1999; Bessiere, 1998; Boniface, 2003; Burnett, 2000; Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Cusack, 2000; Deneault, 2002; Frangialli, 2002; Gallagher, 2001; Hall & Sharples, 2003; Handszuh, 2000; Hegarty & O'Mahony, 1999; Hjalager & Corigliano, 2000; Hjalager & Richards, 2002b; Long, 2003; Ohlsson, 2000; Richards, 2002; Santich, 1999; Stebbins, 1997; Stewart, 2004; Symons, 1999; Wagner, 2001; Wolf, 2002a). Several authors have reflected on food and wine as an expression of place and how it is used to market a destination.

There are many examples of how the inter-relationships between food, food and wine and tourism and regional development have been put into practice around the world, by either the development and promotion of a specific product, course, event, service or any combination of products and services (Bernard & Zaragoza, 1999; Bessiere, 1998; Boniface, 2003; Boyne, Williams & Hall, 2002; Briedenham & Wickens, 2003; British Tourist Authority, 2003; Burnett, 2000; Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Corigliano, 2002; Cusack, 2000; Elmont, 1995; Gallagher, 2001; Hall, 2003; Hall, Mitchell & Sharples, 2003a; Hall *et al.*, 2003b; Handszuh, 2000; Lockie, 2001; Macdonald, 2001; Ohlsson, 2000; Richards, 2002; Scarpato, 2002; Sharples, 2003; Stewart, 2004; Symons, 1999; Wagner, 2001; Wolf, 2002a; World Tourism Organization, 2000). Numerous publications illustrate this relationship in specific countries: New Zealand, Australia and various countries in Europe (Boniface, 2003; Cambourne & Macionis, 2003; Hall *et al.*, 2003a; Hassan & Hall, 2003; Hjalager & Richards, 2002b; Murray & Haraldsdóttir, 2004; Sharples, 2003), in Canada (Selwood, 2003; Telfer & Hashimoto, 2003) and in several other countries and regions (Bernard & Zaragoza, 1999; Chang & Yeoh, 1999; Cusack, 2000; Demhardt, 2003; Haas, 2002; Handszuh, 2000; World Tourism Organization, 2000).

Food and wine tourism networks exist in Australia and New Zealand, where in many cases, it is the better established wine industry that serves as a catalyst in the development of a lagging food tourism industry (Cambourne & Macionis, 2003; Hall *et al.*, 2003a; Smith & Hall, 2003). Likewise, the promotion of local foods and wine in restaurants help to build and strengthen such networks (Cambourne & Macionis, 2003; Hall *et al.*, 2003a; Smith & Hall, 2003). Tourism New Zealand's web campaign focuses on food, wine and garden tourism and offers an integrated tourist experience with stronger and more established attractions supporting the lesser-developed attractions, such as food tourism (Tourism New Zealand, 2004). The German federal government launched their 'Culinary Germany' campaign during the late 1990s and are benefiting from a well established food tourism marketing initiative

that has grown even stronger in time, also utilising the web (German National Tourist Board, 2005).

A number of regions and locations in Europe, especially those in France and Italy use their food and/or wine reputation for tourism promotion e.g. Burgundy, Champaign, Bordeaux and Tuscany (Bessiere, 1998; Corigliano, 2002; Santich, 1999). Other countries that have developed food/food and wine tourism as an important component of their tourism strategy are Britain, Scotland, Canada, Singapore and most recently China (Boniface, 2003; Boyne *et al.*, 2002; British Tourist Authority, 2003; Canadian Tourism Commission, 2002; Chang & Yeoh, 1999; Deneault, 2002; Ooi, 2001; Quan & Wang, 2003; Stewart, 2000; Stewart, 2004; Telfer & Hashimoto, 2003; The Economic Planning Group of Canada, 2002).

These examples demonstrate the variety of themes that can be identified in the food and food and wine tourism industry in the different parts of the world. South Africa with its multi-cultural society and developing economy has the opportunity to add to this list of successful initiatives if its potential for the development of food tourism is realised through appropriate marketing.

This study was approached from the perspective of stakeholders in destination marketing, acknowledging the role of local food as a marketing tool in destination marketing. A review of relevant literature, present trends and best practices was conducted to determine and compare the knowledge and perspectives of experts in the areas of food/culinary tourism, destination marketing and destination competitiveness. Moreover, the position of food in the tourism field and how to market it as a form of niche tourism was assessed.

1.1.1.1 Food tourism

Food tourism has ceased to be concerned with only the provision of food for tourists in restaurants, hotels and resorts. In fact, the focus has changed - it is now the tourist that travels in order to search for, and enjoy, prepared food and drink (Hall, 2003). Food is considered to be *an expression of a society and its way of life* (Kaspar, 1986:14), which is also verified by Boniface (2003), who regards culture, both past and present, as an inevitable part of food tourism. Long (1998) accentuates the fact that food or culinary tourism is a sensory experience utilising all the senses, therefore, making it central to the tourism experience. Hall (2003b:xxiii) summarizes it concisely and contends that food tourism is increasingly:

- *recognised as part of the local culture, consumed by tourists;*
- *an element of regional tourism promotion;*

- *a component of local agricultural and economic development;*
- *a key element to competitive destination marketing;*
- *an indicator of globalisation and localisation; and*
- *a product and service consumed by tourists with definite preferences and consumption patterns.*

Considering the various facets of food tourism, a focus on how food can contribute to tourism marketing strategies is becoming more urgent and apparent in present day research.

The roots of food tourism lie in agriculture, culture and tourism (Bernard & Zaragoza, 1999; Bessiere, 1998; Boniface, 2003; Cusack, 2000; Gallagher, 2001; Hjalager & Corigliano, 2000; Refalo, 2000; Selwood, 2003; Telfer & Wall, 1996; Wagner, 2001; Wolf, 2002b; WTO, 2000). All three components mentioned above offer opportunities and activities to market and position food tourism as an attraction and experience in a destination. Agriculture provides the product, namely food; culture provides the history and authenticity; and tourism provides the infra-structure and service and combines the three components into the food tourism experience. Thus these three components form the basis for the positioning of food tourism as one of the products in the tourism paradigm.

1.1.1.2 Food tourism and destination marketing

Food is seldom the key reason for visiting a destination and, more often than not, is only considered as part of the overall destination experience (Hjalager & Richards, 2002b; Long, 2003; Selwood, 2003). However, food is fast becoming one of the most important attractions as tourists seek new and authentic experiences and alternative forms of tourism (Boyne, Hall & Williams, 2003; Crouch & Ritchie, 1999; Hjalager & Richards, 2002b; Selwood, 2003).

It is this paradox that is creating the opportunity for food tourism to become an important and appealing attraction in a destination. The destination can enhance the appeal of its resources and attractions by marketing them correctly (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999). This would include the promotion, product development, packaging and positioning of the attraction.

Food tourism is regarded as one of the attractions offered at a destination and can therefore constitute part of the destination marketing strategy of a particular destination. It is clear from the experiences recorded in this section that destination marketing and food tourism are linked. No destination can afford to ignore the importance of food as either a key or more often, a supportive attraction. However, according to the literature reviewed, food tourism is still considered a neglected and untapped component of destination marketing.

1.1.1.3 Destination marketing and destination competitiveness

The contribution of food tourism to the sustainable competitiveness of a destination involves the identification, development and implementation of food tourism enhancers to achieve destination competitiveness. The concept of sustainable competitiveness utilised in this study is taken from Ritchie and Crouch (2003). It entails the ability to increase tourism expenditure by attracting a larger number of tourists, providing them with satisfying, memorable experiences, profitably, while enhancing the well-being of destination residents and preserving the natural capital of the destination for future generations. Sustainable competitiveness of the destination is of prime concern.

Food tourism is one of the offerings of a destination that can enhance existing tourism products, as it fits the definition of being an amalgam of individual products, services and experience opportunities. As an offering, food tourism is a combination of products and services of most of the attractions and resources as portrayed in the literature. It incorporates natural features; culture; services; infrastructure; access; attitudes toward tourists; and uniqueness. The total experience of the destination is even further enhanced, as food is the only product that can be experienced using all the human senses, consequently enriching the tourism experience. According to Quan and Wang (2003), since food tourism holds several implications for destination marketing and development, local and regional foods should not be regarded as trivial and ignored in tourism marketing. Food as a tourism product and experience can contribute to the competitiveness of the destination if appropriately developed and executed.

This study uses the destination competitiveness framework of Ritchie and Crouch (2003) as a point of departure and frame of reference to contextualise the position, role, importance and contribution of food tourism with regard to the enhancement of competitiveness and sustainability in a destination. However, the model was adapted and rearranged to focus more on destination marketing management and to contextualise it with specific reference to food tourism. Food tourism was positioned within destination marketing and subsequently food tourism enhancers were identified and defined as they feed back into the sustainable destination competitiveness model. This enables the destination to develop a profile regarding its position and potential as far as food tourism is concerned. The identification and development of food tourism enhancers entails actions, products and services that contribute to increasing the competitiveness of a destination, simultaneously enhancing the sustainability of the destination through food tourism as an attraction.

The destination is the central point around which tourism revolves. Therefore, according to Ritchie and Crouch (2000), the most important product in tourism is the destination experience. Destination attractions and the experiences they offer are becoming the competitive edge of tourism destinations and are receiving more attention and promotional funding (Ritchie & Crouch, 2000).

Destination marketing, as one of the components of destination competitiveness and sustainability, provides opportunities to achieve and ensure destination competitiveness (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999). Changing consumer preferences and the fact that South Africa is still relatively 'undiscovered' as a tourism destination, provide sufficient challenge to include food tourism as an attraction in destination marketing strategies. The development and enhancement of food tourism as a destination attraction by the various tourism stakeholders in South Africa could help to improve sustainable destination competitiveness. As a result, tourism destination communities will receive social and economic benefits, and tourists and visitors will receive more benefits from appropriately developed and marketed attractions (Yoon, 2002).

1.1.1.4 Benefits and impacts of local food

Local and regional food as one of the important components of food tourism holds great potential to contribute to sustainable competitiveness in a destination, both from a tourism development and a destination marketing perspective. The promotion of local and regional food is an effective way of supporting and strengthening the tourism and agricultural sectors of local economies by: preserving culinary heritage and adding value to the authenticity of the destination; broadening and enhancing the local and regional tourism resource base; and stimulating agricultural production.

The development of a framework and guidelines for developing and implementing food tourism can enable destination marketers and current and prospective entrepreneurs to optimise the tourism potential of local and regional food. Boyne, *et al.* (2003) verify the need for a framework to enable the stakeholders to co-operate and achieve the effective implementation of marketing strategies regarding food tourism. Figure 1.1 provides an outline of the process and interrelations between a sustainable and competitive destination, food tourism and destination marketing management.

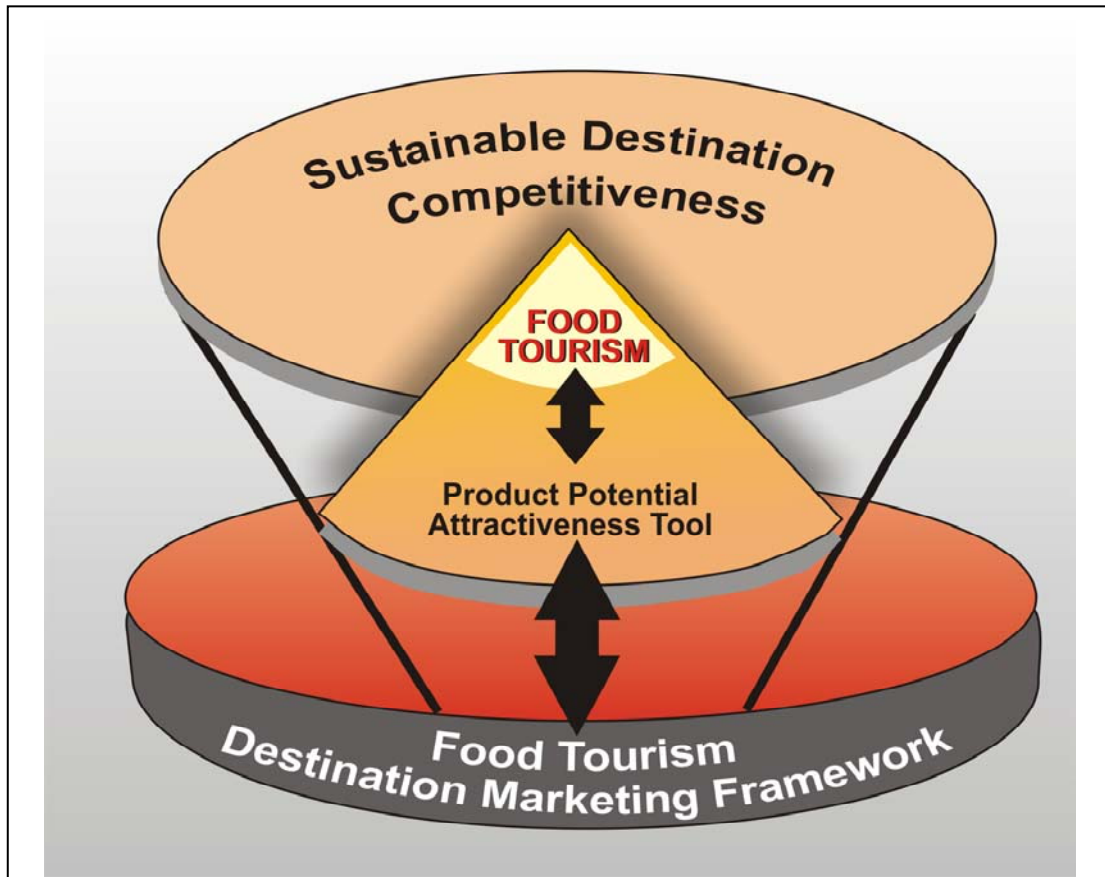


Figure 1.1: Towards a framework for food tourism

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

An analysis of relevant tourism literature and promotional material of South African and key international destinations indicate that in spite of its potential, the role of food in the marketing of destinations has until recently, received very little attention globally as well as in South Africa. These observations are reinforced in a study undertaken during 2000 by the World Tourism Organisation (WTO), where food and drink products of a destination were considered as one of the most important cultural expressions of a destination (Bernard & Zaragoza, 1999; Handszuh, 2000; Hjalager & Corigliano, 2000).

On a practical level, a nation's identity is reflected and strengthened by the food experiences that it offers. The way in which various ingredients are combined, cooked and eaten, forms an important element of a national cultural identity and the destination's culinary heritage (Bessiere, 1998; Cusack, 2000). Many tourists are influenced by the quality and type of accommodation and food on offer (European Commission, 1999) and although food does not

usually form an attraction in its own right, it is an essential part of almost every vacation and can add to the overall attractiveness of the destination.

Local food enhances the appeal of a destination and eating is an important activity for tourists once at the destination (European Commission, 1999; Selwood, 2003). Tourists seeking nature and culture are particularly interested in sampling local food products and tasting authentic regional recipes. According to the Eurobarometer Survey (European Commission, 1999) more and more attention is being paid to the origin of the food, i.e. local and regional specialties and locally produced goods. Based on these perspectives, it can be argued that local and regional food is a feature that can add value to a destination (Boyne *et al.*, 2003; Handszuh, 2000; Telfer & Wall, 1996) and contribute to the sustainable competitiveness of a destination (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999).

Knowledge regarding food tourism consumer behaviour will allow food tourism stakeholders to effectively target and develop markets, thereby intervening in the decision-making process and persuading the consumer to purchase local and regional food products and services (Mitchell & Hall, 2003). Research in this area is lacking and is reflected in the literature which has reported that tourists enjoy indigenous food, particularly items of local or ethnic nature (Wagner, 2001). Furthermore, knowledge of the local, regional and national cuisine has become an interest for tourists (Chappel, 2001; Gallagher, 2001). Santich (1999), Macdonald (2001) and Bessiere (1998) also report that people interested in travelling for gastronomic motivations are on the increase. In spite of these trends, gastronomy has not been considered for its real potential (Bernard & Zaragoza, 1999; Selwood, 2003) nor exploited conveniently as a tourism resource and subsequently not portraying the behaviour of the food tourism consumer. Food tourism is not purely income generating but also a cultural enhancement activity contributing to the tourism experience. It therefore needs to be considered as an essential component of the marketing strategy of a destination.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The overall purpose of this study was to determine the role of food tourism as a key component of tourism and to assess the current use and future potential of local and regional food as a tool in destination marketing. The study outlines the key components of a proposed framework and the supportive tools that have been developed and tested with regard to developing and implementing food tourism as an attraction at a destination. It furthermore postulates guidelines and recommendations for destination marketers and

current and prospective entrepreneurs regarding the development, packaging and marketing of local and regional foods. Proposals for future research are also outlined.

1.3.1 Overall Goal

The ultimate **goal of this study** is therefore to **develop a Strategic Food Tourism Destination Marketing Framework and guidelines for destination marketers and current as well as prospective entrepreneurs, to optimise the tourism potential of local and regional foods in future destination marketing.**

1.3.2 Specific Objectives of the Study

To achieve the stated overall goal of the study, the following specific objectives were determined for the study:

- to develop a **theoretical framework** providing a strategic context for food tourism in destination marketing (Chapters 2 and 3);
- to explore **current trends and best practices** both nationally and internationally (Chapter 3);
- to establish **key elements of sustainable competitiveness** from a food tourism perspective by constructing a food tourism destination marketing framework (Chapter 4);
- to execute a **situational analysis** of South Africa's current usage of food as a destination product and marketing tool based on the theoretical framework (Chapters 5 and 6);
- to compile a **culinary database FOODPAT** and to develop the **Product Potential and Attractiveness Tool**, that contributes to the construction of the Strategic Food Tourism Destination Marketing Framework for optimal and responsible development and implementation of food tourism in destination marketing, in context of stated perspectives (Chapters 5 and 7);
- to apply the Strategic Food Tourism Destination Marketing Framework in a selected **case study** so as to determine 'implementability' by assessing the acceptability and applicability of the framework (Chapter 8);
- to formulate guidelines for the implementation of the Strategic Food Tourism Destination Marketing Framework in the South African context (Chapter 9); and
- to create the basis for best practice for the use of local and regional foods as a destination marketing tool (Chapter 9).

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS STUDY

The importance and explicit benefits of this study and its potential implications can be discussed from both theoretical and practical standpoints.

The Global Competitiveness Project of the South African Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT) and of the official umbrella marketing body for the country, South African Tourism (South African Tourism, 2004), reported that South African cuisine was one of the cultural experiences that required improvement and diversification as a tourism attraction and experience for both local and international tourists. Furthermore, the South African Tourism Industry is one of the biggest contributors to the South African Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and growth in employment numbers. South Africa also wants to expand its tourism industry significantly (South African Tourism, 2004). This study offers valuable input with regard to the development of the tourism industry in South Africa.

A further contribution of this work concerns theoretical understanding within the discipline. The current level of knowledge as found in the existing literature on food tourism and its implementation in South Africa, particularly in the field of destination marketing, is enhanced by the development and assessment of the Strategic Food Tourism Destination Marketing Framework and supporting tools: FOODPAT and the Product Potential and Attractiveness Tool.

The expected advantage of improved recognition of the role of local food, as a tool in destination marketing, would be the increased sustainable competitiveness of the destination with regard to the required improvement and diversification of South African cuisine as a tourism attraction and experience for both local and international tourists. This is especially so, as little research in the past has focused on food tourism in South Africa from the viewpoint of stakeholders. This study can thus provide new insights about how to optimise the tourism potential of local and regional foods in future destination marketing.

In terms of its practical contribution, the findings of this study can assist in the planning and development of destination marketing strategies incorporating food tourism specifically. Tourism stakeholders' networking and participation create important dynamics in the tourism industry. This study provides information on the procedure required to successfully develop and implement food tourism in a destination area focusing on the use of local products to enhance its sustainable competitiveness as suggested in the literature (Corigliano, 2002; Hjalager, 2002). Guidelines are offered to alert decision makers to the potential and

importance of using local foods as a tool for this purpose. It is necessary for administrators in government at national, provincial and local levels, in the private sector, in the tourism industry itself and within the food tourism sector particularly, to understand these matters if sustainable food tourism products and experiences are to be created to boost the economy and bring real benefits to local communities. This research on the use of local food as a tourism attraction and experience could contribute to the sustainable competitiveness of the tourism industry as a whole in South Africa.

The outcomes and key recommendations of this study, more specifically the Winelands case study, could be usefully applied to other regions within South Africa with a potential for and interest in food tourism. Evaluating the growing significance of food tourism, both globally and locally, can help to increase the effectiveness, with which food tourism and products are developed and marketed, so as to contribute to ultimate success in the destination area that will be maintained. The key advantages of developing this kind of tourism are the benefits that can accrue to local people. Opportunities can be created for new entrepreneurs; the country's heritage is cost-effectively preserved; and a major contribution is made to South Africa's own nation-building process and fostering national pride. A further benefit is the utilization of local resources, namely, products, labour and expertise that provides a local experience for the tourist, which is unique to South Africa and contributes directly to the sustainability of the destination.

Developing food tourism as a marketing tool for Destination Marketing Organisations (DMOs) assists in creating the food tourism products and experiences for a specific niche market. Furthermore, food tourism can also act as an agent for economic and social change and provides a platform for integrating the country into the global market economy. The development of food tourism can:

- **Contribute to identity and branding for South African cuisine**
The ultimate vision of this study is to provide an identity for South African Cuisine and to position it both nationally and internationally.
- **Contribute to responsible and authentic food tourism development and marketing within the context of destination marketing**
Understanding and managing the complex relationships between, markets, stakeholders and destination products and services is the key to success in the total process of destination marketing.
- **Create awareness and involvement on the part of stakeholders**

To create awareness regarding the role food tourism can play in the total spectrum of destination marketing and involve stakeholders from the tourism industry in general, the DMOs more specifically and definitely the providers of the various food experiences in a destination.

- **Provide a Strategic Food Tourism Destination Marketing Framework for future food promotion as an integral part of destination marketing**

To develop the **Strategic Food Tourism Destination Marketing Framework** and guidelines whereby the DMOs can optimise the tourism potential of local and regional foods in destination marketing.

- **Provide added value linkages with agriculture and tourism**

Food tourism is emerging as a special interest niche market with close relationships to other aspects of tourism, such as sustainable tourism, eco-tourism, cultural tourism, rural tourism and wine tourism. The integration of the food industry with the tourism industry can be seen as a strategic move to develop their combined economic potential.

- **Develop rural tourism in accordance with the vision and philosophy of the Tourism White Paper**

The tourism industry can assist in 'dynamising' the agricultural sector by contributing to an increased demand for new agricultural products and services e.g. farm tourism, regional produce, and so forth (Government of South Africa, 1996a). Tourism can bring development to the rural areas, such as infrastructure that is lacking, additionally providing opportunities for the rural people to share in the benefits of tourism development (Government of South Africa, 1996a:16).

- **Provide added elements to enhance destination competitiveness**

Developing culinary tourism as a niche market in South Africa holds great potential for increasing the number of travellers, both national and international, in cultural tourism, which is sustainable and contributes to the development of the country's infrastructure (Government of South Africa, 1996b).

South Africa has a developed sophisticated infrastructure with a wealth of untapped food tourism potential to offer the tourist. Not only culinary experiences comparable to the best in the world, but also authentic experiences reflecting the ethnic and culinary diversity of the country. Thus it becomes possible to implement projects of low impact sustainable tourism to preserve both the cultural and natural resources (Bernard & Zaragoza, 1999:8).

1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of this study includes the following aspects, which encapsulates the assumptions and delimitations of this study, namely:

– **To perform a situational analysis of the South African food tourism industry**

A thorough analysis of the present situation was performed regarding:

- the current status of food as an attraction at destinations;
- the current role of food in destination marketing strategies; and
- the constraints and gaps experienced in utilising local and regional food as attractions and as key elements of destination marketing strategies.

– **To execute the analysis as outlined above, information on the following issues was collected:**

- the use of food as a promotional tool in destination marketing;
- available food experiences;
- the utilisation of food information in current promotional literature and brochures; and
- the culinary heritage of the area.

A collation of the abovementioned information led to:

- the development of the Strategic Food Tourism Destination Marketing Framework for promoting and implementing food tourism at a destination; and
- the provision of key recommendations for future research and strategy development.

– **To evaluate key international key best practices and current trends**

International best practices, food tourism strategy development and promotional initiatives were evaluated from available literature and information provided on the web sites of the key role players in food tourism. This information was applied to benchmark the position of food tourism in South Africa.

– **To develop a theoretical framework identifying the crucial role of food in destination marketing**

A theoretical and conceptual framework was developed to determine the relationship between food and tourism and to identify the key roles of food and tourism as they relate to one another and also how they contribute to food tourism enhancement and the destination marketing competitiveness framework.

- **To develop a Strategic Food Tourism Destination Marketing Framework**

The aim of this study was to develop a **Strategic Food Tourism Destination Marketing Framework** and supportive tools namely a **culinary database FOODPAT** and a **Product Potential and Attractiveness tool**. These would contribute to the development and implementation of food tourism in destination marketing. **Guidelines** would be formulated for destination marketers and current and prospective entrepreneurs, to optimise the tourism potential of local and regional foods in their future destination marketing strategies.

- **To carry out a case study in a selected tourism region**

Stakeholders in the Winelands region were selected to apply the Food Tourism Destination Marketing Framework and determine the ‘implementability’ by assessing the acceptability and applicability of the framework. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) techniques were applied for the spatial analysis and assessment of the tools utilised in the Food Tourism Destination Marketing Framework.

1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN APPROACH

The relationship between food and tourism is a relatively new field of research and requires the creation of a sustainable perspective and specific research inputs to contextualise and integrate it as a study field within the specific disciplines of tourism and food. Hjalager and Richards suggest (2002a:233) *a more holistic approach to studying tourism and gastronomy... as tourism and gastronomy are complex fields that involve a wide range of resources and actors in their composition. The basic problem for both tourism and gastronomy studies is a relatively isolated position on the edge of established disciplines.* Hjalager and Richards (2002a) further suggest that the different disciplinary perspectives need to be integrated to create a new and innovative approach to food tourism. Therefore, the value of different research efforts can contribute to the creation of a holistic understanding of the relationship between food and tourism.

Bearing in mind the macro-scale of this study, a quantitative approach was selected. A situational analysis for the country as a whole was undertaken, with the focus on the use of local food as a marketing tool by DMOs. The spatial analysis considered the availability of resources, attractions and events, giving an added dimension to the interpretation of collected data.

The research study is an exploratory-descriptive study utilising the systems framework as applied in destination marketing. Tourism can be studied by applying various approaches, but the systems approach integrates these into a comprehensive method that deals with both the macro- and micro-issues in the surrounding environments (Goeldner *et al.*, 2000:25). Exploratory research concerns the exploration of a relatively unknown research area (Mouton & Marais, 1990:43), and food tourism can be seen in this light. The exploratory-descriptive approach can meet the needs of the providers in the tourism industry. According to Veal (1997:3) descriptive research is very commonly used in the field of leisure and tourism studies. However, much of this type of research is exploratory as the main aim in this field is to discover, describe or map patterns of behaviour. A second reason why this research approach is used for this study is the constant change that occurs regarding tourism phenomena. The providers of tourism products and services need to stay abreast of the constant changes and respond to the changing market conditions. Descriptive research provides the industry with up-to-date information and assists them in managing and strategising (Veal, 1997). Food tourism is a form of niche tourism that constitutes part of the new approach to tourism and as reported prior, food tourism has received scant attention and very little has been published in this regard. The reasons for applying exploratory research in this study are:

- to gain insight into food tourism and its role in destination marketing;
- to undertake a preliminary investigation of the phenomenon ‘food tourism’, before embarking on a more structured study of food tourism and the role it plays in the context of destination marketing, thereby developing and improving the final research design;
- to develop a conceptual framework regarding food tourism to clarify concepts and develop operational definitions; and
- to determine priorities for future research in the area of food tourism and destination marketing.

A multi-disciplinary research approach was followed. No single discipline alone can accommodate, treat or understand tourism; it can be studied only if disciplinary boundaries are crossed and if multi-disciplinary perspectives are sought and formed (Graburn & Jafari, 1991). Marketing is the most active discipline in tourism studies and is prominent in this work. A sub-topic of marketing is consumer behaviour, which plays an important role in the context of tourism, and more specifically, destination marketing. The tourist is the consumer and the food experience(s) of the destination is the product being marketed.

Modern marketing, based on a concept of generalisation and a mass marketing approach to markets and consumers is being challenged by its post-modern transformation oriented towards the individual. Plurality, diversity and originality characterise the consumer behaviour patterns, or rather the absence of regular behaviour patterns. Consumers are changing and radically creating new market opportunities (Kupiec & Revell, 1998:237). A similar orientation can be applied in the field of destination marketing, where both the client and the product are being influenced by the post-modern paradigm. The emphasis on sustainability in the tourism industry and the influence of globalisation on the importance and availability of food have created a challenge for tourism marketing and more definitely for destination marketing (Blignaut, 2001).

The conceptual **destination competitiveness and sustainability** model of Ritchie and Crouch (2003), was adapted for use in this study, concentrating on the elements of the model that relate to food tourism in the context of destination marketing as outlined in Chapter 4. The elements of food tourism in the adapted model were then exploded to develop a conceptual framework specifically for food tourism. The conceptual framework was applied to develop a Product Potential and Attractiveness Tool. The Product Potential and Attractiveness Tool was strategically applied in the Strategic Food Tourism Destination Marketing Framework to assist DMOs to position food tourism as part of their destination marketing strategy.

1.6.1 Methodology

The methods applied in this study fall primarily within the paradigm of quantitative research and include certain qualitative techniques, which culminates in a mixed methodology approach. The research methodology, therefore, allows for a combination of techniques, making a convergence of the results from three datasets, namely: TOURPAT; FOODPAT; and the Stakeholder and Expert Opinion Survey possible. The methodology structures applied in this study include both literature based research and empirical research that together constitute a situational analysis approach. The combination of data collected from these research methods was applied to develop an exploratory-descriptive research approach.

A situational analysis was carried out on a representative sample of local and regional destination marketing organisations in South Africa to determine:

- the status of food as an attraction in destinations;

- the role of food in destination marketing strategies; and
- the constraints and gaps experienced in utilising local and regional food as attractions and as key elements of destination marketing strategies.

The empirical research phase of the study was preceded by an in-depth literature study regarding destination marketing, destination competitiveness and food tourism. Thereafter, an analysis of international trends and best practices regarding the role of local and regional food in destination marketing was executed to gauge South Africa's position regarding the utilisation of local and regional food in destination marketing.

The first phase of the study comprised a situational analysis that included a survey of DMOs representing all nine provinces and all 55 tourism regions in South Africa (n=112). Expert opinion interviews were conducted in the food tourism industry, with both local and international experts, using in-depth interviews consisting of a number of open-ended questions. The questions were transcribed and content analysis performed to identify core content and trends regarding food tourism planning, implementation and management.

In support of the situational analysis performed regarding food tourism and its position in South Africa, the second phase of the study comprised an analysis of all published tourism promotional material including printed, compact discs (CDs) and websites. The material provided was scrutinised and analysed as relevant to South African food tourism (products, events, attractions), cultural groups and tourism infrastructure. A culinary database was compiled, reflecting the above-mentioned information. The database of the Winelands tourism region regarding food tourism and the *Eatout* database reflecting a large number of quality and service rated restaurants in South Africa was included in the culinary database. The database information was used to visually portray the food tourism potential and current status regarding food tourism in South Africa, by applying GIS techniques.

The data was further analysed using descriptive statistics and integrating with data from the culinary database and expert opinions. The integration of the data contributed to validating and assessing the reliability of the data.

The final phase in the methodology of this study was the execution of a case study, which was carried out primarily to test the framework for planning and implementing food tourism in a destination. The case study was undertaken after integrating the three datasets and developing the framework for planning and implementation for food tourism. Utilising this information, a region was selected that spatially and strategically reflected the potential and

scope for planning and implementing food tourism in South Africa. The decision to select a region already implementing food tourism was taken as it afforded the researcher the opportunity to test the framework for planning and implementing food tourism in a region where the resources were present and the stakeholders were interested and positive toward food tourism. This step was imperative considering the low level of interest and awareness that food tourism has generated in most areas of South Africa.

The key findings of the South African situational analysis and the knowledge gauged from international trends and best practices regarding the role of local and regional food in destination marketing are central to the conceptualisation of a food tourism destination-marketing framework.

1.6.2 Research Design

The research design is considered the *blueprint* of the study to be undertaken and provides a chronologic explanation of the steps or phases to be followed in the research process to meet objectives (Cooper & Schindler, 2001:75). Additionally, the research design also provides a framework to guide the researcher in terms of time and other resources. The research design for this study was developed to comply with the overall goal and specific objectives of the study and was divided into distinct phases, each associated with the achievement of specific goals and outcomes. Table 1.1 illustrates the phases and design goals of the research design, as well as an indication of how the content is presented into the respective chapters of this study.

1.7 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

Concepts are considered to be the *building blocks* of a study as they depict the phenomena to be studied and determine the entire course of the study (Veal, 1997:44). The following key concepts (Figure 1.2) were identified as being relevant to this study. A complete list of definitions of these concepts is provided in Annexure 1.

1.8 ORGANISATION OF CHAPTERS

The study is presented in nine chapters, introduced by the current chapter, **Chapter 1**. This first chapter provides an outline of the study; articulates the significance of the study; poses the research problem; formulates of the overall goal and specific objectives; presents the

Table 1.1: Research design: The role of local food in destination marketing

RESEARCH DESIGN		
PHASE	DESIGN GOALS	CHAPTER
Phase 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction and orientation to the research theme, food tourism and destination marketing • Determine feasibility and value of the study • Problem analysis • Formulation of research problem • Purpose of the study • Overall goal and specific objectives of the study • Research approach and design • Definition of key concepts 	Chapter 1 General orientation of the study
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection on contemporary systems framework • Literature study on destination marketing focusing on elements of sustainable competitiveness 	Chapter 2 Contemporary systems framework for destination marketing focusing on elements of sustainable competitiveness
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature study on food tourism • Review of international trends and best practices 	Chapter 3 Role of food tourism as a key element of destination marketing International trends and best practices in utilising food in destination marketing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction of conceptual framework • Development of a destination marketing framework with a key food tourism focus 	Chapter 4 Conceptual framework
Phase 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situational analysis research procedure • Research population • Sources of information • Development of instrumentation (interviews; questionnaires) • Pilot study • Data collection (stakeholder questionnaires; expert interviews) • Data analysis 	Chapter 5 Research approach and methodology
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data analysis – status of food tourism in destination marketing (descriptive statistics) • Expert opinion analysis • FOODPAT 	Chapter 6 Results and discussion
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and compilation of Strategic Food Tourism Destination Marketing Framework • TOURPAT • FOODPAT • Product Potential Attractiveness Tool 	Chapter 7 Strategic Food Tourism Destination Marketing Framework
Phase 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case study selection (rationale) • Application of Strategic Food Tourism Destination Marketing Framework 	Chapter 8 Case study
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synthesis, conclusions and recommendations 	Chapter 9 Conclusions and recommendations

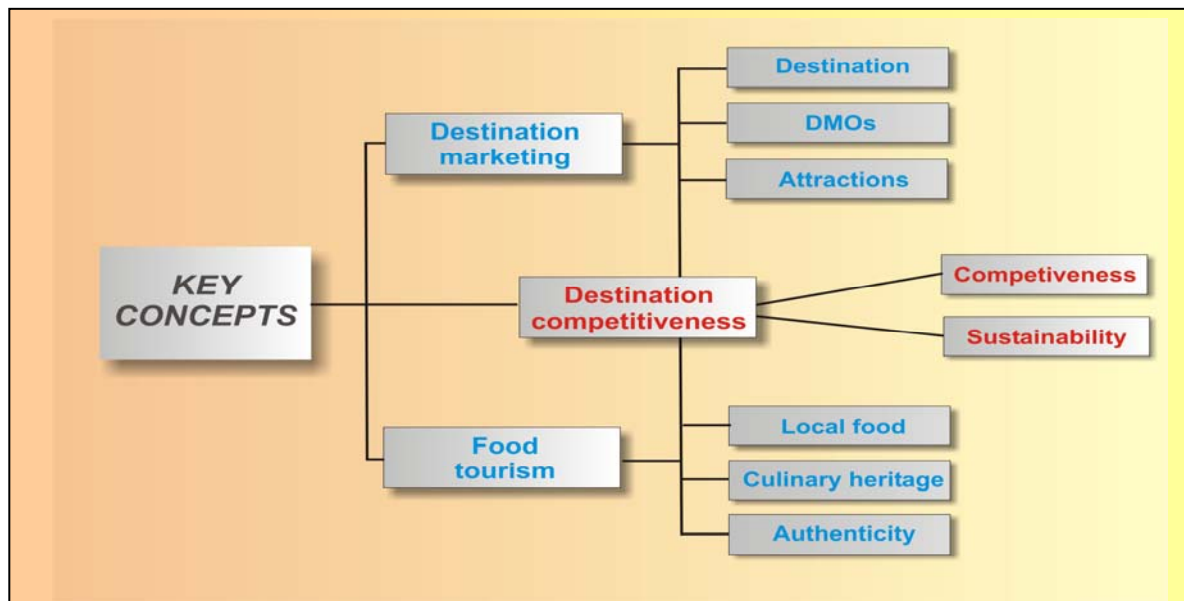


Figure 1.2: Key concepts pertinent to destination marketing and food tourism

research design; explains the scope and significance of the study; and finally identifies the key concepts that will determine the course of the study. Chapter 1 thus contextualises the study and states the overall goals and objectives of the study in relation to the research problem and purpose of the study.

Chapter 2 focuses on the development of the theoretical framework, which includes an analysis on the contemporary systems framework and a literature study on destination marketing focusing on elements of sustainable competitiveness.

Chapter 3 reviews the literature on food tourism as a key element of destination marketing. It provides a theoretical basis and framework for assessing the role of local food as a tool in destination marketing. Important themes being addressed include: the nature and framework of food tourism; the development of food tourism strategies; the role of local and regional food culinary heritage, and authenticity; and finally, the role of food in destination marketing. Chapter 3 also includes a review of international trends and best practices regarding food tourism products and experiences.

Chapter 4 presents the conceptual framework, outlining the development of a destination marketing framework with a key food tourism focus. Food tourism enhancers as elements of the food tourism destination marketing framework are presented and their contribution to destination competitiveness and sustainability, are identified.

Chapter 5 outlines the research approach and methodology procedures to achieve the overall goal and specific objectives of the study. Both the quantitative and qualitative methods and techniques are discussed. The situational analysis approach is explained. Included are details of the data collection design, data collection procedures and methods of analysis regarding the key stakeholder and expert opinion surveys.

In **Chapter 6**, analysis, interpretation and a complete description of the main results relating to the role of local food as a tool in destination marketing are presented and discussed. Chapter 6 provides a discussion and statistical, graphical and spatial presentation of the trends and patterns in the data with reference to the stated overall goal and specific objectives of the research. The findings of the three datasets TOURPAT, FOODPAT and the Stakeholder and Expert Opinion Surveys, are consolidated and assessed in terms of the potential food tourism enhancers.

In **Chapter 7**, the development and compilation of the Strategic Food Tourism Destination Marketing Framework are outlined and discussed. The procedure of applying the strategic approach is presented by describing each step and the various phases within each step. A detailed description of the supportive tools: FOODPAT and the Product Potential and Attractiveness Tool, are offered.

Chapter 8 presents the case study focusing on the rationale for selection of the specific region and the procedure followed during the execution of the case study. The perceived acceptability and applicability of the Strategic Food Tourism Destination Marketing Framework by the stakeholders in the Winelands region is presented and specific findings regarding the case study region are highlighted.

Chapter 9, the concluding chapter, addresses the final objective of the study, namely to formulate guidelines and propose recommendations for the development and implementation of food tourism in South Africa, focusing on the use of local food as a tool in destination marketing to create the basis for good practice in any destination. The main findings that have been obtained in the study are discussed by consolidating the results from the previous chapters. The significance and value of the study are indicated, and certain constraints and possibilities for further research are specified. The chapter concludes by recommending guidelines for destination marketers and current as well as prospective entrepreneurs, to optimise the tourism potential of local and regional foods in future destination marketing.

2

A Contemporary Systems Framework for Destination Marketing Focusing on Elements of Sustainable Competitiveness

	PAGE	
2.1	INTRODUCTION	24
2.2	THE SYSTEMS APPROACH TO TOURISM	24
2.2.1	Tourism and its Systematic Approach	26
2.2.2	The Components of Tourism and Tourism Management	29
2.3	THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND CONCEPTUALISATION	31
2.3.1	Destination Marketing and its Concepts	34
2.3.1.1	<i>Destination</i>	34
2.3.1.2	<i>Destination marketing strategy</i>	35
2.3.1.3	<i>Stakeholders in destination marketing</i>	38
2.3.1.4	<i>Critical success factors in destination marketing</i>	39
2.3.1.5	<i>Destination analysis</i>	41
2.3.1.6	<i>Key destination marketing tasks</i>	43
2.3.2	Destination Competitiveness and Sustainability	52
2.3.2.1	<i>Concepts and definitions of destination competitiveness and Sustainability</i>	55
2.3.2.2	<i>Nature and framework of destination competitiveness and Sustainability</i>	58
2.3.2.3	<i>Development of sustainable competitive destination marketing Strategies</i>	61
2.3.2.4	<i>A model of destination competitiveness and sustainability focusing on the tourism offering</i>	63
2.4	CONCLUSION	66

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the literature relevant to the study of destination marketing and tourism destination competitiveness and sustainability is reviewed. First, an outline of the systems approach to tourism is examined. Thereafter, a review of relevant concepts, including destination marketing and sustainable competitiveness is provided. The discussion of the systems framework offers a review of the theoretical approach to be employed in this study, namely, the systems theory, and how it applies to tourism. The concepts discussed serve as background to the research questions and the study's objectives. Second, a discussion of the linkage between the theoretical background and the components of the proposed framework in the study is presented. Thereafter, the relevant fields' research pertaining to the framework will be reviewed. In particular, this section is devoted to the development of a theoretical framework for destination marketing focusing on elements of sustainable competitiveness for the development and implementation of food tourism at a destination, this is required for the explication of the conceptual framework that follows.

2.2 THE SYSTEMS APPROACH TO TOURISM

According to Goeldner *et al.* (2000) what is really needed to study tourism is a systems approach. This is confirmed by various researchers (Hall, 2000; Keyser, 2004; Laws, 1991; Lumsdon, 1997; Papadopoulos, 1999). Kaspar in Witt and Moutinho (1989) commends the systems approach when analysing tourism, as it is advantageous and contributes to the abandonment of one-dimensional thinking and facilitates a multi-dimensional approach to tourism problems. Furthermore, the tourism system proposes a multi-disciplinary perspective, as it is embedded in various super-ordinate systems as confirmed in the literature on tourism research. A system is regarded as *a set of interrelated groups coordinated to form a unified whole organised to accomplish a set of goals* (Goeldner *et al.*, 2000:24). Tourism is dynamic and is therefore, also regarded as an open system which entails both being *subjected to environmental influences* and *affecting the environment* (Witt & Moutinho, 1989:362). The openness of the tourism system subjects it to continual change and adaptation as a result of the many influences and pressures in the environment surrounding the system (Keyser, 2004; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). The tourism system consists of tourism subjects and tourism objects, which are component parts of the tourism system as a whole. Inter-relationships exist both inside and outside the system establishing an integrational function (Keyser, 2004; Witt & Moutinho, 1989). Both endogenous and exogenous factors in the tourism system and its sub-systems influence and determine the equilibrium which then require the various processes of strategic management to keep it in

balance (Witt & Moutinho, 1989). Sessa (1988:221), contends that tourism can be regarded as a *global socio-economic system* which is determined by logical and planned procedures, based on the inter-connections and interactions which exist among the subsystems themselves. It is therefore important to bear in mind that the tourism system is not only a multi-disciplinary approach but also consists of multiple subsystems, which are in constant interaction with one another.

The tourism system involves both the macro- and micro-environments and the interdependency of the various components within the system (Hall, 2000; Keyser, 2004; Lubbe, 2003; Morrison, 2002). The elements and the relationships among them constitute the environment. The structure of the system is thus composed of elements; the set of relationships between the elements; and relationships between the elements themselves and the environment (Hall, 2000; Keyser, 2004). The elements or variables that comprise the system need to be identified for the purpose of establishing relationships. This is the focus of the study. The scale of the elements and the inter-relationships between them determine the structure of a system (Hall, 2000).

To construct a specific systems model, it is imperative to determine the relevant elements in the environment which affect the operation of the system (Farrell & Twining-Ward, 2004; Hall, 2000). In this study the principle would apply to the competitiveness and sustainable model and how it intercepts with food tourism.

Defining the boundaries of a system is a further important consideration in systems analysis. This can be a relatively complicated issue yet it is important to determine these especially with reference to destination marketing tasks within the various tourism regions in South Africa. A modelled system that takes into account the complexities of destination marketing can provide a type of a map that would assist the various stakeholders in destination marketing (Hall, 2000). The spatial representation of collected data supports the theoretical systems model proposed for this research.

The tourism system incorporates both the demand created by the tourist and the supply that is managed by the destination and the various stakeholders. Additionally, these are constantly influenced by both macro- and micro-environmental elements (Lubbe, 2003). The systems approach to studying tourism can therefore be applied in either a macro- or micro-environment (Lumsdon, 1997).

2.2.1 Tourism and its Systematic Approach

Tourism literature reflects numerous systematic approaches that have been proposed to understand tourism components, their manner of functioning, interactive roles and linkages to the various environments with which they interact (Keyser, 2004; Leiper, 1990; Lumsdon, 1997; Mill & Morrison, 1992). When tourism is analysed as a system, the approaches adopted are either at a geographical level (Hall, 2000; Keyser, 2004), or following a supply sector or market approach (Keyser, 2004; Lumsdon, 1997) or as a production system as identified by Poon (1993). Each model has its merits and depending on the focus of the study, the most suitable model or adaptation of the model should be selected. The models based on geographical elements identify the flows of tourists from the generating region to the destination region, such as the model of Pearce and Leiper (Hall, 2000). Mill and Morrison (1992) proposed a commercially oriented tourism system consisting of four parts: market, travel, destination and marketing.

Alternative models have been suggested by various authors and emphasise the supply and demand dimensions of tourism where the focus is on the importance of the tourism experience, such as the system proposed by Murphy (1985:10) and that of Hall (2000). Formica (2001) in his assessment of destination attractiveness as a function of demand and supply interaction, proposed that a tourism system arises from identifying the total tourism resource base at destinations. The blend of demand and supply factors assists in comprehending the tourism system where promotion influences demand for the tourism destination and the tourist experience is determined by the quality of services and facilities supplied at the destination (Formica, 2001).

Tourism systems are also applied as an approach to visitor management. Here the focus is on the outcomes of the systems functioning for specific stakeholder groups during a certain period of time. The system, the Le Pelly and Laws model, is divided into inputs, components and outcomes (Hall, 2000). Lumsdon (1997) is of the opinion that the systems approach is the most appropriate for tourism marketing management. The linkages between consumers, suppliers and destinations are identified, which is essential for this study as food tourism is the combination of products and services which are provided as the attraction of the destination to the tourists, both local and international, visiting the various tourism regions. The systems approach will enable the DMOs to understand these linkages and also be aware of the macro- and micro-environments and how they impact on the business of tourism (Lumsdon, 1997).

Morrison (2002) uses the systems approach to explain the process of marketing in the tourism industry. He distinguishes between a macro-system, the industry of tourism, and various micro-systems, the individual organisations, within the tourism industry. One of the micro-systems identified by Morrison (2002) is the hospitality and travel marketing system. To understand marketing within the tourism industry, it is imperative to be knowledgeable in the major characteristics of the systems, as they exist and function in the tourism industry. The six major characteristics of systems in the tourism industry as identified by Morrison (2002:57) are:

- *openness;*
- *complexity and variety;*
- *responsiveness;*
- *competitiveness;*
- *interdependency; and*
- *friction and disharmony.*

Similar characteristics have been identified by various researchers in the tourism literature, Morrison (2002) however, places them in the tourism context and applies them in the marketing subsystem or micro-system. To understand and implement food tourism in destination marketing, it will be necessary to take cognisance of the characteristics of systems and how they impact on marketing. Furthermore, as competitiveness and sustainability is the paradigm applicable to this study, it is necessary to identify the role of the systems approach from a marketing perspective within the framework of competitiveness and sustainability.

Successful tourism development is determined by developing the most suitable combination of supply and demand components in a destination (Yoon, 2002). The tourism management model (Figure 2.1), portraying the systems framework of supply and demand and the linkages that exist between the tourist and the destination, graphically illustrates the interrelationship between all the elements of both the macro- and micro-environments in the tourism system (Lubbe, 2003). This model provides the study with a basis for an applicable conceptual framework that assists in depicting the role of food tourism as an attraction in a destination.

Food tourism has become a popular form of 'niche' tourism and, as a new type of 'tourism need' and/or motivation, is therefore considered as part of the demand side in this study. The resource base of the destination will supply the attraction to the tourist and therefore, constitutes the tourism supply in this study. Destination marketing is the enabling and

facilitating environment and applies the attraction namely, food tourism in the exchange process.

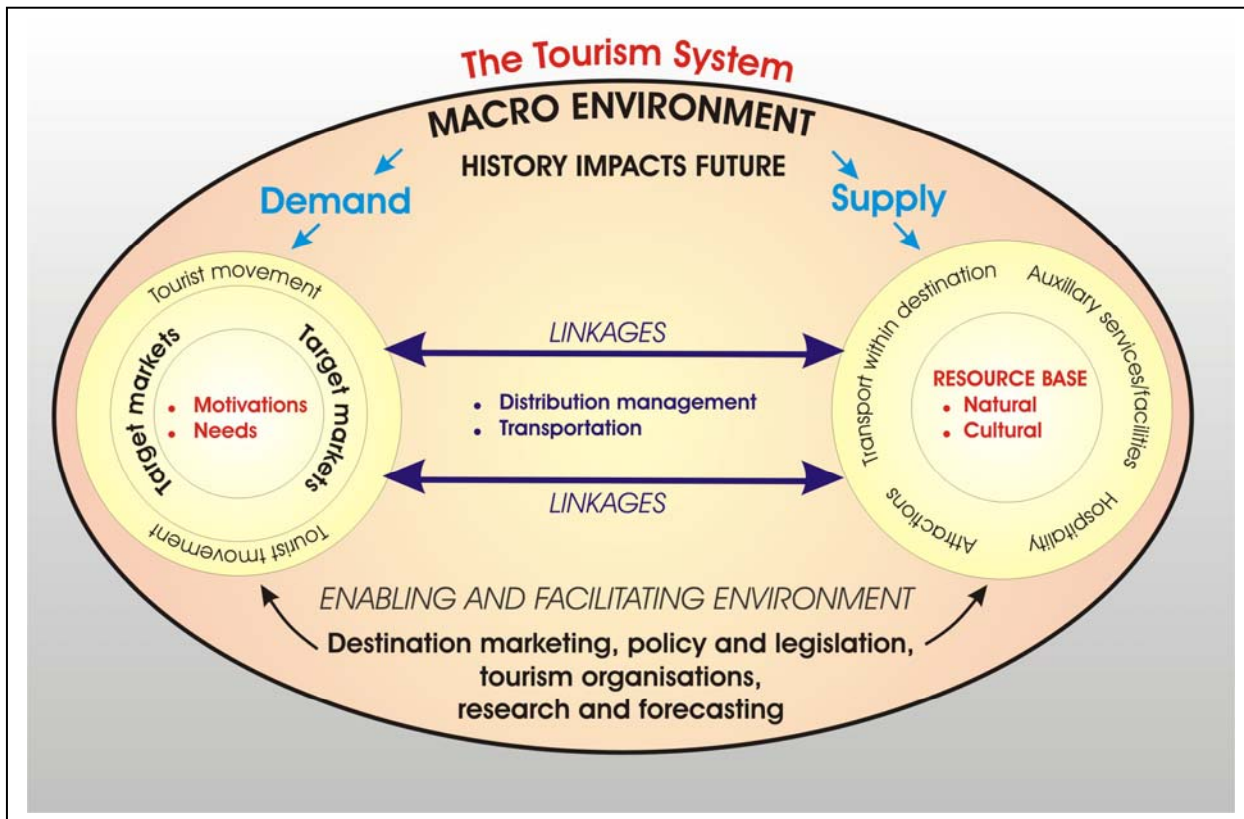


Figure 2.1: The tourism management model (adapted from Lubbe, 2002:4)

In conclusion, a systematic approach to tourism research provides a broad insight into tourism and its phenomena (Yoon, 2002). Tourism destinations and businesses that aspire to develop and supply competitive products and services to the tourism market will require sufficient understanding of the interactions and linkages between tourism supply and demand components in the tourism system. Besides the availability of tourism resources and attractions, effective operations and management processes that include marketing activities, promotion and product development, are of utmost importance in the competitive tourism industry. These are necessary for the very existence of tourism. This study, which is based on the systematic approach to tourism from a marketing perspective, presupposes the interactions and linkages among the components of tourism, which are essential to establish and enhance competitiveness and sustainability at tourism destinations.

2.2.2 The Components of Tourism and Tourism Management

Tourism is a complex multidimensional and multifaceted activity (Figure 2.2). It consists of components, processes and outcomes that occur within the tourism system (Goeldner *et al.*, 2000). According to Lubbe (2003), when tourism is considered as a system it is composed of both a demand and a supply component, with the tourist constituting the demand side and the resource base the supply side. Both function within the macro- environment. Linkages

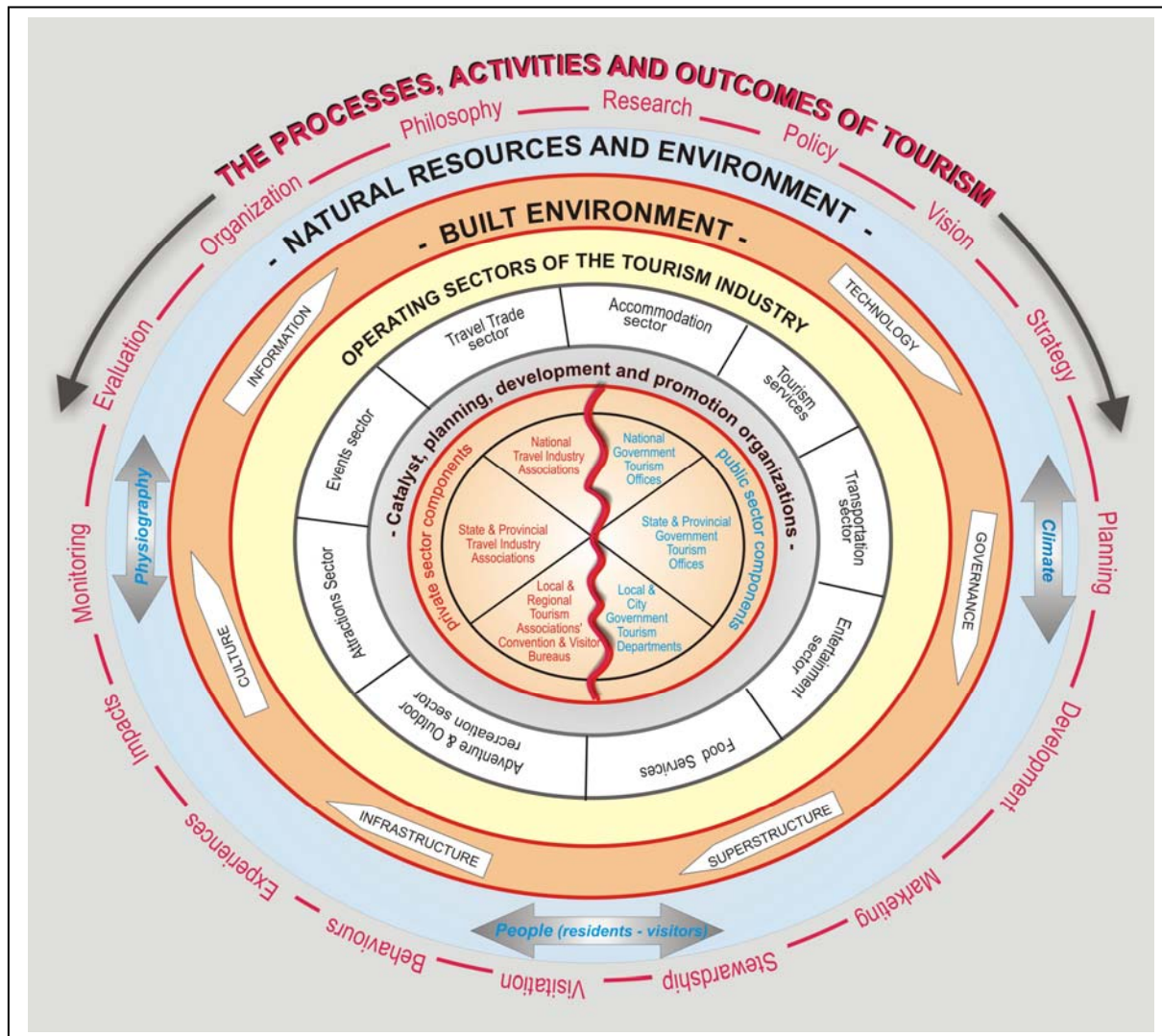


Figure 2.2: Components of tourism and tourism management (adapted from Goeldner *et al.*, 2000:26)

exist between supply and demand through processes, namely marketing, research, distribution, tourism organisations and transportation, where the tourists' needs are met by the offerings of the destination. The needs of the tourist as a consumer of goods and services offered by the destination must be adhered to, but within the framework of sustainability and competitiveness of the destination. Co-ordination between supply and

demand within the tourism system is achieved by the enabling and facilitating environment (Figure 2.1), and it is here that destination marketing is seated and plays the fundamental role of determining the competitiveness of the destination and contributing to the sustainability of both the natural and cultural environment.

The tourism system (Figure 2.2) is influenced by the macro-environment, consisting of both the natural and the built environment (Goeldner *et al.*, 2000). The natural environment includes the resources and the environment itself and the built environment consists of culture, information, infrastructure, superstructure, technology and governance (Goeldner *et al.*, 2000). These elements together thus constitute the political, economic, technological, ecological, legal and socio-cultural aspects of the macro-environment (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). The operating sectors represent those sectors within the tourism industry responsible for tourism to occur, namely the transportation, travel, tourism services, accommodation, attractions, food services, events, entertainment and recreation sectors (Goeldner *et al.*, 2000). The processes, activities and outcomes of tourism are the dimensions of the tourism system. These are responsible for the creation and functioning of tourism *per se*. Marketing plays a fundamental role in this area and includes both promotional and management activities. Furthermore, it encompasses two activities, namely, determining visitor satisfaction and applying a program of stewardship to prevent the destruction of tourism resources on all levels (Goeldner *et al.*, 2000). Both these activities contribute to the competitiveness and sustainability of the destination.

The tourism destination is considered to be the essential component of a tourism system (Yoon, 2002). Laws (1991) confirms this and considers the destination as the main area of tourist activity but adds that for the local residents, tourism is a peripheral activity and therefore, there is a delicate balance between competitiveness and sustainability in a destination. This is the result of the experience offered to the tourist and the gain the destination receives. Marketing the tourism destination, within the framework of competitiveness and sustainability, is a challenge all DMOs will need to heed if tourism is to continue to grow as a major financial and viable industry.

The destination competitiveness and sustainability model (Figure 2.3), of Ritchie and Crouch (2003), which constitutes a component of the theoretical framework for this study, is also based on the systems framework and incorporates both the macro- and micro-environments. Destination marketing management concerns the actions and activities of various stakeholders in the tourism system, which takes place within the micro-environment and is, in turn, influenced by the macro-environment.

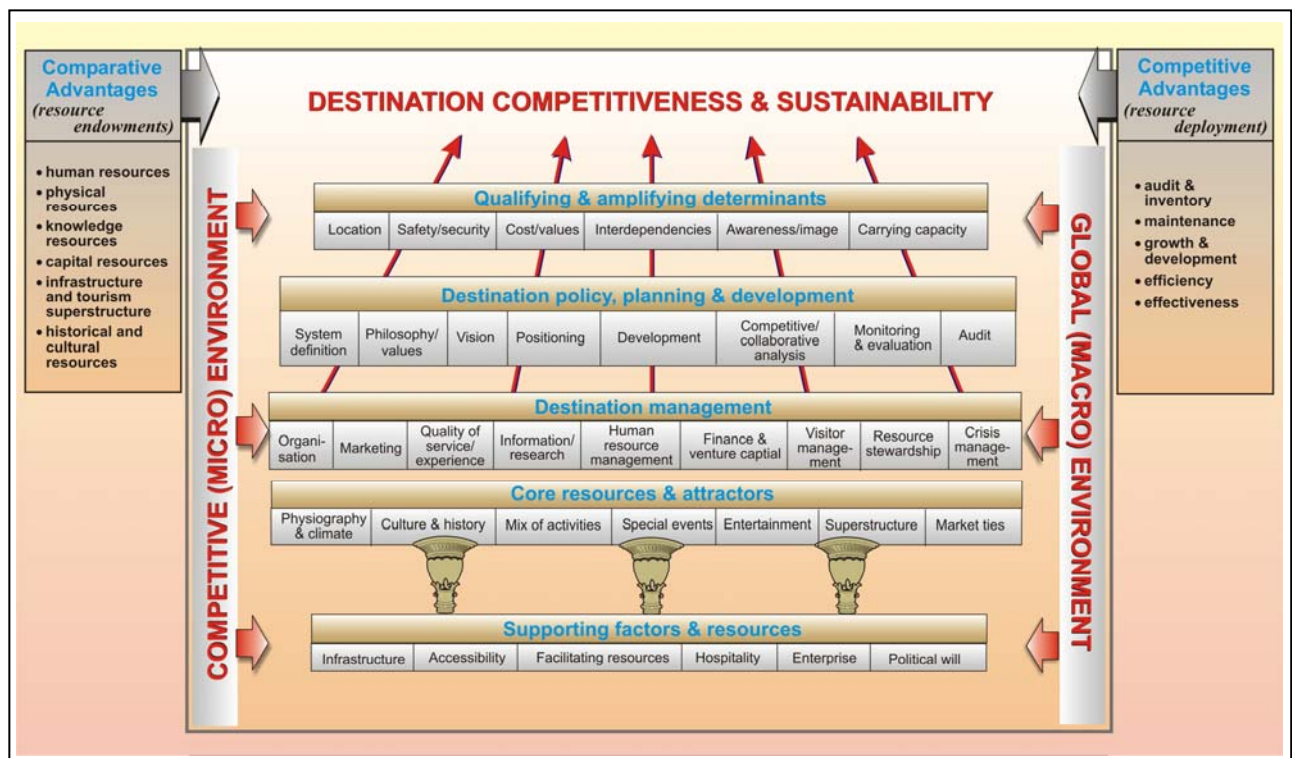


Figure 2.3: The destination competitiveness and sustainability model of Ritchie and Crouch (adapted from Ritchie and Crouch, 2003)

Finally, tourism as an open system has to contend with influences and pressures from the macro-environment within which it functions. It also utilises the micro-environment to achieve its goals by incorporating the required actions and activities of the various stakeholders constituting a destination. The components of tourism and tourism management verify the fact that tourism functions as a system according to certain processes and delivers a variety of outcomes, which provide the tourism experience.

2.3 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND CONCEPTUALISATION

Destination marketing, as one of the core aspects of tourism, offers many challenges to destination marketing organisations. Of late, it has become more competitive and complex, as it involves the coordination of economic, social, technological, political and geographic elements in destination context (Buhalis, 2000; Carlsen, 1999; Laws, 1991). Changing conditions, globalisation, competitiveness and sustainable development are however, putting pressure on the tourism industry to progress beyond the classical marketing rules and to accommodate the new macro-environment as complex, dynamic, relational and subjected to scarce and limited resources (Blignaut, 2001; Dwyer, 2001; Go, 1996; King, 2002; Ritchie & Ritchie, 2002). New marketing realities are culminating in a new marketing environment where the customer is an active partner in the marketing process, demanding information

and specific experiences (King, 2002). It is therefore imperative to approach destination marketing within the micro-environment in a constructive fashion and to apply a relevant framework, such as a systems-based approach to it. This will afford it a multidisciplinary focus and an applicable marketing approach, whereby value for both the consumer and the community is created with a global perspective (Buhalis, 2000; Go, 1996; King, 2002). The sustainable competitiveness framework proposed by Ritchie and Crouch (2003) complies with these demands. Ritchie and Crouch (2003) consider destination marketing as one of the distinct components of destination management and an important function of the DMO¹. Heath (2002) contends that destination marketing can be accepted as the most complex and challenging part of tourism marketing. The management and marketing of destinations is often performed by people in industry or consultants and this aspect has only recently received more academic and research attention (Buhalis, 2000). The issue of competitiveness and sustainability has come to the fore in destination marketing and receiving much more attention in literature (Chacko, 1997; Dwyer, 2001; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). Therefore the approach to destination marketing with a specific focus on sustainable competitiveness has been selected as the theoretical perspective for this study.

Prior to discussing destination marketing, it is expedient to provide an outline of the tourism marketing management perspective. The tourism marketer, according to Lumsdon (1997), has the task of balancing the interactions between supply and demand within the existing environmental and social constraints, complying with the principles of sustainability and contributing to competitiveness of the destination. Destination marketing is therefore seen as a component of the enabling and facilitating environment (Lubbe, 2003).

Tourists, as consumers of tourism goods and services, constantly place demands on the tourism industry to satisfy their needs and wants, thereby forcing destinations to stay competitive. Marketing is basically the management of the exchange process that occurs between the destination and the tourist (Lumsdon, 1997). Marketing management according to the basic definition of Kotler (1983:623) is defined as *analysis, planning, implementation and control of programs designed to create, build and maintain beneficial exchanges and relationships with target markets for the purpose of achieving organisational objectives*. Although this is a broad definition of marketing, it also applies to tourism. Therefore, the

¹ According to Ritchie and Crouch RITCHIE, J. R. B. & CROUCH, G. I. (2003). *The Competitive Destination. A Sustainable Tourism Perspective*. Oxon: Cabi., DMOs have in recent years acknowledged the importance of their non-marketing roles in achieving destination competitiveness and that a destination marketing organisation (DMO) in actual fact means a destination *management* organisation. As destination marketing includes both marketing and management activities, a DMO for the purposes of this study will be considered a Destination Marketing Organisation.

general marketing management process, as defined above, provides a point of departure for tourism marketing management and more specifically, for destination marketing.

Addressing the needs of the consumer is of utmost importance in the tourism industry and this is precisely what the process of marketing management facilitates to achieve this goal. As the provision and consumption of tourism services and goods usually occurs simultaneously, the focus turns more specifically to tourism marketing (Lumsdon, 1997). Lumsdon (1997:25) defines tourism marketing as follows:

Tourism marketing is the managerial process of anticipating and satisfying existing and potential visitor wants more effectively than competitive suppliers or destinations. The management of exchange is driven by profit, community gain, or both; either way long-term success depends on a satisfactory interaction between customer and supplier. It also means securing environmental and societal needs as well as core consumer satisfaction.

Tourism marketing is regarded as an orientation and only one of the essential perspectives of tourism management being based on the following generalisations (Lumsdon, 1997:30):

- *it constitutes a collection of strategic management tools;*
- *it requires an interdisciplinary approach and is part of the tourism management process; and*
- *it only forms one part of the total tourism development process.*

Furthermore, tourism marketing also involves the processes of analysis, planning, implementing, monitoring and control (Kotler, 1983; Lumsdon, 1997; Witt & Moutinho, 1989).

Tourism is accepted as part of the services sector and therefore the underlying principles which apply to the marketing of services, also apply to the tourism industry, namely intangibility, perishability, heterogeneity, inseparability and lack of ownership (Lumsdon, 1997). The main difference between marketing in the tourism sector and other service sectors, is that the tourism marketer must compete for the consumer's spare time and disposable income, as a vacation is considered a want and not a need (George, 2001). This makes tourism a highly elastic industry, influenced by subjective factors such as taste and fashion and other more objective factors such as price (Mill & Morrison, 1992). Furthermore, an intangible experience is being sold as a service where production and consumption take place at the same time (Mill & Morrison, 1992). An additional factor which makes tourism different, is the fact that it is an amalgam of services and products that need to be offered as a total experience with all stakeholders performing to the same standard to ensure

satisfaction. Therefore, the onus is on the destination marketer and all relevant stakeholders to create value and promote the desired experience for the tourist, thereby ensuring that the product offered, meets the needs of its target audience (George, 2001; King, 2002). Destination marketing focuses on achieving this task and will be the discussion focus of the next section.

2.3.1 Destination Marketing and its Concepts

2.3.1.1 Destination

The destination is the catalyst and central element for all other industries in the tourism sector and is therefore an indispensable part of tourism (Heath, 2002; Keyser, 2004; Laws, 1995). Buhalis (2000) is of the opinion that destinations are combinations of tourism products that offer an integrated experience to consumers. This is verified by Heath (2002) and Lubbe (2003:144) who regards a destination as *a combination of all products, services and experiences provided in a particular area*.

As food tourism is a unique and memorable experience and not only a product or service that the tourist encounters and remembers, it must be marketed and managed as a vital part of the functioning destination (Wolf, 2002). However, the complexity and distinctiveness of destinations make them challenging to market and manage. Both Lumsdon (1997:238) and George (2001:291) identify four core elements comprising a destination, namely: prime attractors; built environment/amenities; supporting supply services/accessibility; and atmosphere/ambience. Each element contributes individually or cumulatively to the marketing challenge. Laws (1995) classifies the features of destinations in two main groups namely: primary features that include climate, ecology, culture and traditional architecture; and secondary destination features which are those developments introduced specifically for tourism such as hotels, catering, transport and entertainment. Various other classifications all include similar elements but the important aspect to bear in mind is that all elements together contribute to the overall attractiveness of a tourist destination. As a result, both the physical and the intangible aspects of a destination contribute to the competitiveness of a destination. Neither facet can be ignored any longer in practice and both are also receiving more equal attention in recent tourism literature (Heath & Wall, 1992; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003).

The components and elements outlined above confirm the fact that a destination offers something very special yet challenging. Lubbe (2003:144) has outlined the challenges posed by destinations from a marketing perspective. These challenges also apply to food tourism

as it forms part of the marketing strategy of a destination. The following challenges would be specifically related to food tourism (Lubbe, 2003:144):

- a destination is a single entity and can therefore include everything in a region that may be part of the overall destination experience, which therefore can include food tourism;
- a destination is both a physical and a socio-cultural entity and is therefore a showcase of its natural, man-made, cultural and historical components. Food and culinary heritage are part of the cultural and historical and natural (agriculture) components;
- a destination has an image, food often being one of the major components of this image;
- a destination is affected by events within and outside its boundaries. Food tourism in most cases is more of a supportive attraction will be influenced by other events occurring in and around the destination;
- a destination is affected by the present and past situations and food as an attraction will be different. However, food is an experience and most tourists enjoy a meal when travelling which is an aspect that can be more favourable for food tourism;
- a destination is affected by events (real and fictitious). Food and beverage consumption is an integral component of all events and contributes to the total experience of the event;
- a destination can be perceived as being inexpensive or expensive and as a large percentage of a tourist's expenditure goes for food, this is an important aspect regarding the marketing of a destination;
- a destination can be a conceptual entity, incorporating several destinations; an African food experience could serve as an appropriate example; and
- a destination differs with regard to size, physical attractions, infrastructure, benefits to the visitor and dependency on tourism, all of which can influence or be influenced by food tourism.

2.3.1.2 Destination marketing strategy

Destination marketing, according to Mihalic (2000), includes both marketing and management activities. Furthermore, destination management is regarded as an essential base for destination marketing (Lubbe, 2003). The marketing of a destination therefore remains a complex and multifaceted task and besides the marketing and management activities, coordination between public and the private sector, the host community, and the visitor to the area is required (George, 2001; Heath, 2002; Lumsdon, 1997; Uysal *et al.*,

2000). Destination marketing should not merely be regarded as a promotional tool, but also be utilised as a strategic mechanism in the larger context of tourism marketing (Heath, 2002; Leibold, 1988). This approach is reflected in the literature where destination marketing is regarded as a culmination of tasks and elements, thereby illustrating its complexity and multi-facetedness. Lubbe (2003) contends that destination marketing strategy formulation should provide an overall plan and framework for all the marketing activities of the respective business units within the destination. According to Ritchie and Crouch (2003:189) destination marketing consists of various elements (Figure 2.4) that include the following:

- *identification of strategic target markets (needs/wants of visitor);*
- *measuring destination awareness and image;*
- *developing a destination brand;*
- *establishing destination positioning in key / supportive markets;*
- *developing promotional activities and materials to support brand and positioning;*
- *determining and implementing timing of marketing activities;*
- *determining effective ways to make destination experiences available;*
- *defining and developing experiences that the destination can offer; and*
- *identifying the price segments where the destination can compete.*

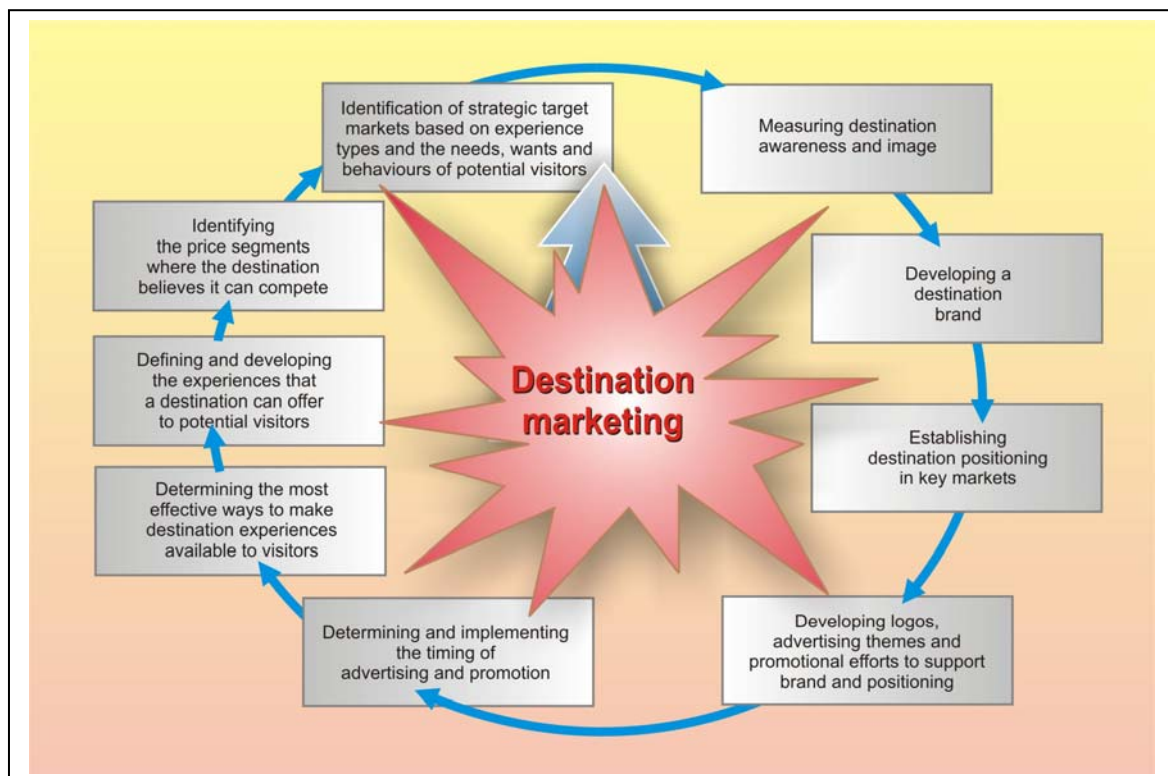


Figure 2.4: Elements of destination marketing (adapted from Ritchie and Crouch, 2003:198)

Achieving the objectives of destination marketing is often more complicated, as they are mainly carried out by public sector run DMOs with limited support by the private sector. Various researchers (Heath, 2002; Laws, 1995) propose that tourism authorities should follow a marketing planning process consisting of diagnosis, prognosis, setting of objectives, and finally implementation and monitoring.

A typical approach of such a systematic form of marketing planning according to Lumsdon (1997:243), would include:

- *a market audit;*
- *a marketing strategy;*
- *tactical marketing plans ; and*
- *monitoring and control.*

The marketing methodology used by destination promoters differs from that which is adopted by other enterprises (Heath, 2002; Lumsdon, 1997). Destination marketing is an intentionally or unintentionally collaborative process and has an impact on the overall destination. This can result in destinations not embarking on fully-fledged marketing, but merely promoting certain aspects within the destination. Furthermore, initiatives to achieve successful destination marketing should involve planned co-operation, co-ordination and linkages between the various tourism organisations or agencies in a country or region (Heath, 2002; Lumsdon, 1997; Uysal *et al.*, 2000).

Destination marketing activities should culminate in a destination marketing strategy and provide a framework for a destination's stakeholders. A destination marketing strategy according to Lubbe (2003:148) comprises the following:

- *decisions regarding the target markets;*
- *approaches utilised to position the destination relative to competitors;*
- *formulation of appropriate destination marketing mixes; and*
- *implementation of an appropriate structure to implement the strategy.*

Such a strategy would enable DMOs to apply destination marketing as a strategic mechanism and contribute to achieving the objectives for destination marketing. George (2001:293) has listed six outcomes for destination marketing performed by DMOs:

- *information provision;*
- *portraying an image of the destination;*
- *amenity provision for locals;*

- *increase pride in the destination;*
- *improve international ties; and*
- *promotion of attractions.*

Not only does food tourism relate to the above points but, in return, it can also contribute to the marketing of a destination via each aspect. Food consumption, according to Quan and Wang (2003), is regarded as one of the important factors in destination marketing development, as food has been proven to be an important means of selling the identity and culture of a destination (Quan & Wang, 2003). Food tourism, as a component of destination marketing, can therefore also constitute a part of the strategy formulation.

2.3.1.3 Stakeholders in destination marketing

Destinations are some of the most difficult entities to manage and market, due to the intricacy of the relationships of local stakeholders (Prideaux & Cooper, 2002; Sautter & Leisen, 1999; Uysal *et al.*, 2000). Managing and marketing destinations is also challenging because of the variety of stakeholders involved in the provision, development and promotion of tourism products and experiences (Heath, 2002; Palmer & Bejou, 1995; Prideaux & Cooper, 2002; Uysal *et al.*, 2000). The tourist destination however, requires the participation of many stakeholders in the marketing of the tourism product as a result of its characteristic complexity. More importantly, the production and consumption of the product takes place at the destination. Stakeholders' views regarding their role in the marketing of the tourist product differ markedly from those of the tourist. Considering the following classic definition of a stakeholder, it can be seen that the role of the stakeholder is a complex and a self-positioning one, an interpretation that would also apply to the tourism industry:

Stakeholders are persons or groups with legitimate interests in procedural and/or substantive aspects of corporate activity. Stakeholders are identified by their interest in the corporation whether the corporation has any corresponding interest in them or not. - The interests of stakeholders are of intrinsic value. That is, each group of stakeholders merits consideration for its own sake and not merely because of its ability to further the interests of some other group, such as shareowners (Donaldson & Preston, 1995:67).

The tourist experiences the destination as a unified tourist product and experience, which is in contrast to stakeholders who experience difficulty in establishing a co-operative marketing effort at the destination. The balance between co-operation and competition among the different stakeholders is not easily achieved. If co-optition is established, an amalgamation

of the individual aims, goals and motives of the various stakeholders would be achieved, contributing to the organisation of co-operative marketing strategies (Palmer & Bejou, 1995; Prideaux & Cooper, 2002). The marketing of food tourism as a destination attraction can be a delicate aspect of the total marketing strategy of the destination, as food is not always regarded as an essential and important component of the marketing strategy at the destination.

The views of stakeholders regarding the importance of food tourism and the degree of their involvement would vary. The solution would be to identify the stakeholders, individuals or groups, who are directly/indirectly involved with food tourism or have an interest in developing food tourism products at the destination. Key stakeholders could include local communities, the business sector, tourists, tourism intermediaries, government agencies, DMOs, the media, micro-community development enterprises, and other civic organisations or interest groups (Buhalis, 2000; Heath, 2002; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). Stakeholders could represent both private and public government sectors.

The government plays a significant role in the tourism system. In fact, in most cases, destination marketing is deemed to be the sole responsibility of government agencies such as DMOs and their provincial, regional and community counterparts (Weaver & Opperman, 2000:223). In South Africa, DMOs also tend to be part of the local, regional or national government. Such positioning represents political and legislative power, including the financial means to manage resources rationally, ensuring that all stakeholders benefit in the long term (Buhalis, 2000). The most important challenge for destination marketing therefore, is to bring all individual partners together to co-operate rather than compete and to pool resources towards developing an integrated marketing mix and delivery system (Buhalis, 2000; Fayos-Sola, 1996; Prideaux & Cooper, 2002). DMOs play a crucial role in establishing the situation of co-optation rather than competition amongst the key stakeholders. This can boost the development of an attraction such as food tourism significantly by linking tourism resources, products and services to the mutual benefit of the tourism experience and the competitiveness of the destination.

2.3.1.4 Critical success factors in destination marketing

Destination marketing is becoming increasingly complex and competitive as tourists, more now than before, are consuming regions as experiences, oblivious of the fact that tourism products are a combination of individually produced products and services (Buhalis, 2000). As food tourism is a relatively new attraction in the destination context and the only attraction that is experienced using all the human senses, it is imperative to establish what contributes

to its successful marketing. Similar to other attractions in the destination, focusing on innovative and co-ordinated tourism offerings and experiences is absolutely essential (Heath, 2002).

According to relevant literature (Buhalis, 2000; Heath, 2002; Prideaux & Cooper, 2002; Terzibasoglu, 2004), the following have been identified as the most critical issues for successful destination marketing:

- knowledge and understanding the needs of the new tourist, as this will, according to Heath (2002:15) will *facilitate innovative, flexible and market-driven tourism offerings*;
- image, branding, and positioning will enable destinations to attract intentional demand, with unique offerings, which will differentiate them from other competitive destinations (Prideaux & Cooper, 2002);
- improvement of collecting reliable data and competent analysis of this data which will enable destinations to create a ‘strategic fit’ between the offerings of the destination and the changing environment (Heath, 2002);
- increased competitiveness of the destination, which can be established by collaboration marketing when stakeholders join forces and pool resources enabling them to compete with other destinations (Prideaux & Cooper, 2002);
- innovation and tourism product management that can be achieved by continuously adapting to ever changing macro, competitive and market environments (Prideaux & Cooper, 2002);
- management of new technologies such as the internet, that will enhance the destination’s ability to compete effectively, by providing information on tourism attractions, facilities and services of the destination that will appeal to and attract appropriate target markets;
- greater professionalism in human resource management, enabling a destination to utilise the abilities of all stakeholders to focus on the total marketing efforts leading to the optimisation of economic, social and environmental impacts and achievement of the strategic goals (Heath, 2002);
- synergy between all the stakeholders in creating the destination vision, to prevent competition and establish co-optition (Prideaux & Cooper, 2002). According to Heath (2002:16) this is one of the most crucial critical success factors in destination marketing; and

- public - private partnership in the key areas of management and marketing will benefit the destination as a whole, as a participative and strategic approach to destination marketing is essential to optimise the impacts and benefits of tourism for the destination and all the stakeholders (Heath, 2002; Prideaux & Cooper, 2002).

2.3.1.5 Destination analysis

According to the framework for strategic destination marketing presented by Heath (2002), destination analysis, which involves a thorough situational analysis of the destination is divided, into two elements namely environmental analysis and resource analysis. The execution of a situational analysis is fundamental to destination marketing and can provide answers to the question of ‘where are we now’ and help to determine actual development needs (Heath, 2002; Mill & Morrison, 1992; Morrison, 2002). Both an environmental analysis (threats and opportunities) and resource analysis (strengths and weaknesses) of the destination need to be done prior to the determination of any strategies, marketing goals, and objectives (Heath, 2002; Mill & Morrison, 1992). In the case of food tourism, the same requirements apply. Prior to the planning and marketing of food tourism, as an attraction, a situational analysis needs to be executed which must include an evaluation and identification of the environment, markets, resources and attractions. This procedure will allow destinations to decide whether they are in a position to offer food tourism as an attraction. It will also determine the status of food as an attraction at a destination.

To execute a situational analysis at a destination, it is imperative to consider environmental adaptation. The environment is continually changing and the destination marketer cannot control this change, but needs to be aware of it and accommodate it when concerned with strategic destination marketing. According to Heath (2002), continuous environmental scanning needs to be done, change anticipated and appropriate action taken. Morrison (2002) also requires that preparation for the situation analysis be done consisting of research, forecasting and judgement. For appropriate scanning it is necessary to:

- determine the major trends (in the case of food tourism the global leaders need to be identified and a thorough analysis of what is occurring in the food tourism field established);
- establish the possible implications of these trends for the destination (in this instance where food tourism is becoming more popular and a form of niche tourism it will be necessary to determine how it can be used and marketed in the destination); and

- assess the affect of these trends on the destination’s key competitors (by determining what should be done differently or how the destination can incorporate these trends and offer something different to increase its own competitiveness).

For a destination to benefit from environmental adaptation and environmental scanning, the environment needs to be evaluated at the macro, market, competitive and attraction/resource base levels (Heath, 2002; Mill & Morrison, 1992). The execution of the environmental, market and competitor analysis provides a clearer picture regarding the competitiveness and sustainability position of the destination.

The destination environmental analysis or marketing audit, as referred to by Lumsdon (1997) entails an analysis of macro-environmental factors. A market and competitor analysis is regarded in the literature as the means of identifying internal strengths and weaknesses and relating them to external threats and opportunities (Heath, 2002; Lumsdon, 1997; Mill & Morrison, 1992; Morrison, 2002). An analysis of the macro-environmental factors, which include socio-cultural, political, technological and ecological factors; an analysis of existing and potential markets; an evaluation of key competitors; and an identification of strategic opportunities and threats, constitute all the information required when executing an environmental analysis (Heath, 2002).

With regard to food tourism, and more specifically local food, which can be considered as one of the attractions at a destination, all of the previously mentioned factors play a role, and if not identified in the environmental analysis, can hamper the development of a competitive and sustainable destination. The competitor analysis, resource analysis and market analysis all need to be undertaken in conjunction with one another prior to determining the destination positioning strategy (Heath, 2002). A comprehensive and focused effort will be required with regard to food tourism as it is still considered to be alternative or niche tourism.

The destination attraction and resource analysis determines the strengths and weaknesses of the destination. Attractions are believed to be one of the essential elements for destination resource analysis (Buhalis, 2000). Local food can be seen as an attraction in a destination as people could travel to enjoy the food experience. According to Buhalis (2000), other elements constituting the resource analysis at a destination are: accessibility; accommodation and amenities; activities; ancillary services; attitude; and available packages. All these factors also impact on food tourism, and the presence or lack of them, will determine the feasibility of food tourism as an attraction at a destination.

The destination resource analysis can thereby provide an indication of the distinctive competence of the destination with special reference to local food, determining the possibility of a premier ranked destination with regard to food tourism (Heath, 2002). A strategic audit of the tourism attractions and offerings at a destination can assist in this process and can produce an inventory of the resources there, a step that is fundamental for the development of food tourism at a destination (Heath, 2002). The spatial representation of this information can provide a means to measure the capacity of food tourism as an attraction at the destination.

An analysis of both existing and potential activities that can be experienced at the destination can assist in identifying opportunities and generating a demand for specific activities of which food tourism could be one. The resources and activities that create and contribute to an authentic and different experience and which create a differential advantage, can afford the destination the opportunity of becoming more competitive (Heath, 2002; King, 2002; Mill & Morrison, 1992).

Finally, DMOs, both public and private, are in most cases the organisations that are responsible for the destination marketing function and activities in a destination. The DMOs must according to Kotler (1983), be equipped to seize the opportunities, utilising their strengths and overcoming their limitations (Heath, 2002).

2.3.1.6 Key destination marketing tasks

As mentioned, according to various authors (Buhalis, 2000; George, 2001; Heath, 2002; Lubbe, 2003; Prideaux & Cooper, 2002; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003), destination marketing can be regarded as the most complex form of marketing in the tourism industry. The reason for this is that destination marketing should not only be used as a tool for attracting visitors to a region but should also facilitate regional development and ensure that strategic objectives of destinations are achieved (Buhalis, 2000). Marketing the destination should, according to Prideaux and Cooper (2002), occur on both the demand and the supply side, where the aim is to market the destination to intermediaries and increase the number of sellers by developing a viable range of goods and services. Whilst DMOs are predominantly responsible for marketing and promoting a wide and diverse range of tourist attractions and activities, the need to incorporate management and product development activities is inevitable. Furthermore the consumer of tourism products is becoming more demanding, and the competition for attracting visitors is becoming more strenuous globally, forcing the destination marketer to become more sophisticated (George, 2001; Jang *et al.*, 2004).

Destination marketing represents key strategies for destinations and assists in satisfying the demanding consumer, ensuring sustainable development and contributing to establishing a competitive destination (Minghetti, 2001). Once the situational analysis has been carried out, the key destination marketing tasks that need to be performed, according to recent literature (Heath, 2002; Koth & Kreag, 2000; McCleary, 1987) are:

- prioritising products and markets;
- positioning and branding;
- theming, packaging and routing; and
- promoting.

DMOs can only guide and co-ordinate a marketing strategy for a destination. Getting the individual stakeholders together and to co-operate, rather than compete, would contribute to the development of an integrated marketing mix and competitive destination products. Hence marketers would be able to meet the demands of prospective visitors, thereby developing a competitive and sustainable destination (Buhalis, 2000; Fayos-Sola, 1996; King, 2002). These tasks are now discussed in detail.

- ***Prioritising products and markets.*** The destination can be regarded as the showcase of products available for consumption by the tourist, comprising the total tourism product mix that must be ready when the tourist arrives (Heath, 2002; Von Friedrichs Grängsjö, 2003). Therefore, the task of prioritising products and determining the appropriate markets are essential activities to enable the stakeholders of a destination to offer the right combination of products to the visitors from the various markets. According to Heath (2002:149), the tourism product from a destination marketing perspective *encompasses the total spectrum of the tourism experience, including accommodation, natural and other resources, entertainment services, transportation, food and beverages, recreation and other attractions*. Key products and offerings at a destination are identified in the portfolio analysis of the destination or region (Heath, 2002; Heath & Wall, 1992). This enables a destination to realistically reflect what a destination has to offer and match it to the needs of the target market (Jang *et al.*, 2004; Keyser, 2004; McCleary, 1987). To facilitate prioritising products at a destination, the type of products, their attractiveness, viability and need for new or additional product development must be assessed. Jang *et al.* (2004) furthermore, recommend that destination marketers explore new target markets on a regular basis to gain a competitive edge, as travellers' taste of activities and attractions can change quite rapidly. According to Minghetti (2001), the use of these processes and tools by DMOs and tourism marketers is still low. A possible reason could be the lack of awareness of tourism organisations regarding their role in the creation and management of local supply of

products, the image creation of these tourism products both, locally and internationally, and the challenge of establishing a customer destination experience. The latter ought to be unique and different in order to contribute to the competitiveness of the destination (Minghetti, 2001).

In the ever-increasing competitive tourism industry, tourism marketers and DMOs cannot just focus on marketing and sales anymore. Their roles and strategies need to become more comprehensive (Getz *et al.*, 1998; King, 2002). Management functions, such as planning and producing innovative and specialised product development and gauging existing product performance, should be included (Buhalis, 2000; Heath, 2002). The marketing and management activities can enable tourism marketers to prioritise the products and activities in the destination, thereby having a better knowledge of the products which are more lucrative, popular and contribute to making the destination experience different and unique and therefore, more competitive (Koth & Kreag, 2000). Heath (2002) suggests that when developing tourism product strategies, DMOs should take cognisance of two important characteristics of the tourism product, namely: the destination tourism product as a service and not just a tangible article; and the need for the tourist to be attracted or taken to the product, as the tourism product cannot be transported to the tourist.

Prioritising the markets for the products of a destination is equally important, as the products must be developed and positioned for specific markets. Marketing and management strategies once again will help to define marketing segments and potential target markets. This would include the branding of tourism products and matching destination images as strategies are to be positioned in relation to destination identity and customer perceptions (Heath, 2002; Jang *et al.*, 2004; Koth & Kreag, 2000; Minghetti, 2001). Tourists select a destination according to the products and activities offered and the tourists' decision to purchase a trip to a certain destination will largely be the result of the marketing activities and actions taken (Von Friedrichs Grängsjö, 2003).

Von Friedrichs Grängsjö (2003) however, stresses the fact that it is necessary to differentiate between marketing the destination and marketing a single product at a destination. This significant distinction needs to be kept in mind when developing a destination marketing strategy. Care must therefore, be taken when selecting target markets, as they can differ with regard to marketing the total destination and the marketing of a single product or attraction (Jang *et al.*, 2004). Individual marketing is usually performed by organisations marketing their own product. However, collective marketing activities of the destination should be encouraged and carefully co-ordinated (Prideaux & Cooper, 2002).

Market segmentation groups people with similar needs, wants and characteristics together, enabling DMOs to cater to the specific preferences of homogeneous groups and not just delivering a product to a tourist (Heath, 2002; Jang *et al.*, 2004). King (2002) suggests that customers are now segmenting themselves and not leaving it entirely to the marketer. The lifestyle approach to market segmentation tends to focus more on what the consumer would like to see and experience (Heath, 2002; King, 2002). Food tourism lends itself well to lifestyle marketing, as it contributes to creating an experience and connecting it to the customer. It can therefore, assist in developing travel products according to the needs of the more proactive consumer. As food tourism is still thought of as a speciality or niche area or merely a supportive attraction in a destination, it can be more successfully marketed to specific interest groups if on-themed with other attractions, thereby contributing to the total destination experience.

- **Positioning and branding.** The positioning of a destination to lure potential visitors to the destination is a challenging task as it concerns ‘tangibilising the intangible’ yet it is becoming increasingly important, as destination competitiveness increases (Alford, 1998; Chacko, 1997; Goeldner *et al.*, 2000; Heath, 2002; Prideaux & Cooper, 2002; Uysal *et al.*, 2000). Positioning plays a major role in the marketing of a destination and contributes to enhancing the attractiveness of a tourism destination (Chacko, 1997; Uysal *et al.*, 2000). Furthermore, positioning requires a frame of reference, which is provided by a competitive destination (Alford, 1998).

The purpose of positioning, according to Heath (2002), is to create a perception or image of the destination or experience in the visitor’s mind relative to other competitors with similar products. Heath (2002:139) defines it as *a process of communicating the distinctive competencies of a visitor destination, which include any unique features or other attributes that differentiate it from its competitors*. It is therefore, the process of differentiating the destination and providing it with a competitive edge (Chacko, 1997; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003; Uysal *et al.*, 2000). This is achieved by focusing on enhancing and differentiating the abstract aspects of a destination and utilising the tangible elements at a destination (Chacko, 1997).

As elements of a community’s culture, local food and culinary heritage can contribute to the unique difference of the destination and its attractions and, if positioned correctly, could contribute to the competitiveness of the destination. Positioning is essential when developing niche marketing, as is the case with food tourism. However, if it is to be successful, recognition of the marketplace, the competition and the tourists’ perceptions have to be taken

into account (Chacko, 1997). Thus, positioning can be used as a tool to create the desired image that differentiates a destination from its competitors. Therefore, by making it unique, the target market will be served the best (Chacko, 1997; Uysal *et al.*, 2000). According to Uysal *et al.* (2000), in regional destination where destination promotional activities are more specifically positioned to focus on differentiating features of places in a regional context, it is necessary to develop complementary tourism products. Such product development and regional focus could contribute even further to the uniqueness and distinction of a destination, thereby increasing its competitiveness and sustainability. Alford (1998) however, reports that regional tourism boards, in contrast to key stakeholders in the private sector in the United Kingdom, have not implemented product positioning as an integral part of their destination marketing strategy and this has impeded the competitiveness of the destination. Strong partnerships and co-operation among DMOs and private sector stakeholders could address such a situation and establish an improved positioning strategy for the destination.

The positioning strategy of a destination occurs in relation to the target markets selected. These are based on the market segments that produce the greatest benefits and serve the destination best (Chacko, 1997; Heath, 2002). Positioning is used as a technique when developing marketing programs and strategies in which the product is the focal point (Heath, 2002). Chacko (1997) contends that effective positioning must first be credible in the mind of the tourist and second, the destination must consistently deliver the stipulated good quality of product and service to which it has committed.

Branding involves marketing different offerings to particular market segments and is used to increase the awareness of a destination and its attractions as it creates a destination's identity (George, 2001; Goeldner *et al.*, 2000). Branding is about setting a destination apart from competitors in terms of attractions, activities, and overall image (Brooks, 2003). Destinations need planned and targeted branding strategies to cope with present day competition, product parity and substitution (Heath, 2002; King, 2002). Ritchie and Ritchie (1998:103) propose the following definition of destination branding:

A Destination Brand is a name, symbol, logo, word mark or other graphic that both identifies and differentiates the destination; furthermore, it conveys the promise of a memorable travel experience that is uniquely associated with the destination; it also serves to consolidate and reinforce the collection of pleasurable memories of the destination experience.

The emotional connection, which is established by branding, is the tool that will set marketing the destination apart from its competitors. The unique characteristics of a destination can be

used to create differentiation through branding. However, as many destinations have similar good elements, it is imperative for a destination to build a brand on an aspect, such as the local food, gastronomic experiences and culinary heritage, which uniquely connects a destination to the consumer (Heath, 2002; King, 2002). This can put more emphasis on the creation and promotion of holiday experiences which link key brand values and assets such as food and wine (King, 2002; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). In a study done by Joppe, Martin and Waalen (2001) regarding the image of a destination, it was found that food services and cuisine were one of the top drivers of visitor satisfaction. The recommendation it makes is to create a brand image that will increase the visitors' expectations regarding the services offered thus creating a competitive advantage.

The experience that is conveyed by branding the destination is of utmost importance to food tourism, as the visitors need to take the unique and memorable food experience with them when leaving the destination. A destination brand also provides certain secondary functions, such as serving as a co-ordinating symbol for a broad range of community development and promotion activities, and generating revenue from sales of products bearing the destination name or logo (Ritchie & Ritchie, 1998). Both the primary and secondary functions of branding support the development and implementation of food tourism in a destination as it is an experience that the visitor remembers together with the portability of the products taken with when leaving the destination and which are re-experienced at home.

Similar to positioning, branding must meet its commitments and achieve its outcomes. Consumer expectations need to be met, therefore good destination branding should be sustainable, believable and relevant (Morgan *et al.*, 2002). Food tourism, if consistent and of high quality, can contribute positively to the branding strategy of a destination. A well-planned branding campaign can include food and drink products of a country or destination that are already established as popular or preferred brands with emotional connotations, sharing the brand values and emotions as part of the promotion (Heath, 2002).

King (2002) is of the opinion that it is the relevance of the experience offered to the customer rather than the destination promoted that would be the key ingredient for future success in destination marketing. Effective destination branding holds many benefits for the destination and its stakeholders. These include: the creation of a loyal customer base; the income from tourists visiting the destination; and the certainty of the income as the loyalty of the customer base increases (Heath, 2002). Co-operation and networking between stakeholders within the destination area result in effective destination branding which is achieved as a result of mutual support, combined marketing activities, efficient communication channels and the

development of appropriate products and services to enhance the destination (Heath, 2002). Brand fragmentation, which is the converse to brand building, occurs when the stakeholders and DMOs have difficulty in co-operating with one another and do not succeed in establishing a destination-wide brand (Prideaux & Cooper, 2002). This is undesirable and can hinder the development of a competitive destination. A recognisable brand and co-operation amongst all stakeholders are therefore, vital and strategic components of effective marketing (King, 2002; Prideaux & Cooper, 2002).

- **Theming, packaging and routing.** Due to increasing competitiveness and present market trends, more and more destinations are packaging, theming and diversifying their product offering (Heath, 2002). Special interest niche markets, themes, routes and events are being incorporated in specific product-market matches (Heath, 2002). The success of a particular form of tourism at a destination depends on the resources it possesses. Theming, packaging and routing are the instruments to market the available resources in such a manner that they contribute to the competitive edge of the destination. In such endeavours, the uniqueness and authenticity of the destination's attractions and experiences are of prime importance (Heath, 2002).

Providing a seamless destination experience can be achieved by packaging which Morrison (2002:314) defines as *the combination of related and complementary services into a single-price offering*. Selling the experience is a result of an integrated approach to product development and packaging based on an understanding of market needs, the needs of the tourism community, the strength of the destination, the public and private sectors and the attractions within the destination (Heath, 2002). Packaging deepens the travel experience by providing greater value and making the experience more significant and worthwhile (Kotler *et al.*, 1999; Mill & Morrison, 1992). Additionally, it represents an opportunity for small single businesses to develop a product that can be sold to the travel industry, as well as enabling them to establish networks with other producers in the region. Packaging of tourism products is usually performed by tour operators and/or government agencies (Laws *et al.*, 2002). Adding food tourism attractions as a complementary or secondary product to an existing package of the destination will be adding value and contributing to the competitiveness of the destination.

Food tourism as an attraction complies with the strategic guidelines regarding the development and packaging of tourism attractions and experiences as proposed by Heath (2002). It is the ideal product to market as an experience, it can be locally or regionally based, it is consumer and market driven, it can focus on the uniqueness and authenticity of

the destination's food attractions and experiences, it can support and extend existing attractions within the destination, and can make a significant contribution to major events, conferences and festivals.

Theming according to Morrison (2002) can also be considered as programming, which involves developing special activities, events, or programs to increase customer spending (Heath, 2002). These activities add value and increase the appeal of a package. The attractiveness of destinations is furthermore enhanced by the development of thematic tourism attractions and experiences (Heath, 2002). According to Heath (2002), a variety of themes are present such as health, sport and religion. Food is not only a most versatile combination of products and services readily lending itself to the development of a culinary or a gastronomic theme, but it is also suitable for on-theming with other relevant products at a destination.

The development of theme routes is becoming an important aspect of destination marketing and is an effective way of developing and promoting tourism in a region, such as Route 66 in the United States of America (USA) and Route 62 in the Western Cape (de Villiers, 2000; Lubbe, 2003). Tourism routes, initially developed in Europe, have been utilised in tourism with the prime objectives of raising awareness of culture through travel, creating networks and utilising cultural heritage as a means of stimulating social, economic and cultural development, thereby improving the quality of life of the local people (Briedenham & Wickens, 2003; de Villiers, 2000; KwaZulu-Natal, 2003).

Heritage trails in the United States have also provided the impetus for the development of attractions and facilities along the routes (Briedenham & Wickens, 2003). An additional benefit of such initiatives is the initiation of co-operation and partnership between local areas and regions (Briedenham & Wickens, 2003). In Africa, an example is the African Dream Project aimed *to link the splendours of Africa in a continuous network of Afrikatourism routes* (Open Africa, 2002:3). Briedenham and Wickens (2003) found that participants in their study on tourism routes in South Africa supported the concept of developing tourism routes.

The fact that tourism route roads could form a catalyst for the sale of local products and be a great developmental tool for tourism supports the importance of routing as part of the marketing strategy for a destination. The wine and whale routes in South Africa have proven to be very successful. It could be recommended that food route organisers collaborate with existing tourism routes in South Africa to on-theme food attractions. Thereby, sharing the benefits of this type of tourism product.

- **Promoting.** Destinations are involved with promotion and promotional activities because they have the desire and marketing goal to become a recognised destination; remain competitive; and have an increased share of the visitation market (Uysal *et al.*, 2000). The aim of promotion is to create a demand for products and services in a destination (Goeldner *et al.*, 2000). The three principal goals of promotion according to Morrison (2002) are informing, persuading and reminding a customer to purchase or repurchase a particular product and/or service. Achieving these goals contributes to the fact that promotion is the most visible part of a destination's marketing strategy as advertising and a range of other promotional activities are the primary means of communication with tourists from the various target markets (Heath, 2002).

Promotional tools and techniques are used by DMOs and marketing agencies responsible for promoting the destination's attractions. Promotional techniques, together regarded as the promotional mix, are advertising, personal selling, public relations, merchandising, publicity and various sales promotion activities, for example, trade shows (Goeldner *et al.*, 2000; Lubbe, 2003; Morrison, 2002).

Communicating channels between clients and other stakeholders need to be in place when promoting a destination, as the function of promotion in destination marketing is to facilitate transactions (Buhalis, 2000; Heath, 2002). Interplay between national, provincial and regional DMOs will support promotional efforts of all stakeholders. However Heath (2002) is of the opinion that the prime responsibility for marketing communication rests with the tourism industry of the specific destination.

Destination promotional activities ought to focus on differentiating features of destinations in a regional context. This would afford complementary tourism product providers in the region the opportunity to develop and support existing attractions. DMOs need to provide assistance regarding the coordination of the individual marketing activities of the various tourism operators in a destination, so as to provide a strong and coordinated destination image (Heath, 2002). Furthermore, the use of cross-marketing of tourism products in a specific destination can support the development of complementary tourism products, which would also necessitate the need for management and marketing alliances within the destination and region (Uysal *et al.*, 2000).

Destination promotion involves both a pull and push strategy and is thus directed at two target audiences, namely, the individual or group visiting the destination and the tour operators and travel agents selling the products and services of the destination (Heath,

2002). For a destination to achieve success, it is imperative to develop an integrated promotional strategy, which comprises various promotional methods and steps and matches the broader marketing strategy of the destination (Heath, 2002). Heath (2002:197) outlines the following as the major steps in developing a promotional strategy: identifying target audiences; determining promotional objectives for the marketing mix; determining the promotional appropriation; establishing the mix of promotional components; and selecting specific strategies for advertising sales promotion, personal selling and publicity.

Finally, DMOs should heed the following criteria when developing and evaluating destination promotion strategies (Lubbe, 2003:157):

- destination marketing promotion should be coordinated;
- the DMO should implement specific themes for the destination to achieve increased recognition;
- promotion should be authentic; and
- an effective destination marketing promotion program is only one element in the destination marketing effort..

The key destination marketing tasks as discussed and outlined are all fundamental to destination marketing and play an indispensable role in putting food tourism on the map of destinations for both the local and international tourist. As food tourism is only now starting to gain recognition and importance, it would be wise for DMOs to execute the outlined marketing tasks to the best of their ability.

2.3.2 Destination Competitiveness and Sustainability

More and more researchers in tourism are concluding that the destination is the critical unit of the tourism industry (Buhalis, 2000; Buhalis *et al.*, 2001; Dwyer, 2001; Heath, 2002; Heath, 2003; Keyser, 2004; Kim, 2001; Kozak & Rimmington, 1999; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003; Terzibasoglu, 2004; Yoon, 2002). As a result, the attention that destination competitiveness and sustainability have been receiving in tourism research has escalated, as it has become imperative to determine the success of a tourism destination (Chaharbaghi & Lynch, 1999; Gooroochurn *et al.*, 2003). In contrast to the tourism literature, there is substantial debate in the wider competitiveness literature, as to the role that tourism plays regarding competitiveness and how the concept of competitiveness can be conceptualised and measured in a destination (Bristow, 2005a; Deas & Giordano, 2001a).

Competition in the tourism industry has intensified as destinations have adopted a marketing orientation and are not just promoting destinations (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). Destinations according to Ritchie and Crouch (2003) are seeking solutions to the problem of becoming and remaining competitive. Ritchie and Crouch (2003:2) contend that what makes a tourism destination competitive is *the ability to increase tourism expenditure, to increasingly attract visitors while providing them with satisfying, memorable experiences, and to do so in a profitable way, while enhancing the well-being of destination residents and preserving the natural capital of the destination for future generations*. Their definition verifies the contention that *competitiveness without sustainability is illusory* (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003:9). Sustainable competitiveness is based on the multi-dimensional strengths of a destination involving the social, cultural, political, economic, technological and environmental strengths. Maintaining competitiveness within a destination has therefore become increasingly challenging for destinations (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2001). DMOs have to find better ways to compete in the tourism marketplace to achieve and maintain competitiveness in a sustainable manner (Department of Industry, Science and Resources, 2001).

Changing consumer preferences, globalisation and localisation and mounting environmental pressures are posing further challenges for destination competitiveness and sustainability (Hall *et al.*, 2003; Heath, 2003; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). The marketing management strategies of destinations need to comply with these demands and work towards advancing sustainable competitiveness. Destination managers will need a framework and tools to enhance their ability to identify competitive factors and develop effective marketing initiatives that meet market expectations (Hassan, 2000).

Numerous studies have been done regarding the concept of competitiveness within a destination (Buhalis, 2000; Chacko, 1997; Crouch & Ritchie, 1999; Department of Industry, 2001; d'Hautserre, 2000; Dwyer, 2001; Gooroochurn *et al.*, 2003; Hassan, 2000; Heath, 2003; Kim, 2001; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003; Yoon, 2002). The main focus of these studies was on the sustainability and enhancement of destination competitiveness within the framework of destination marketing. Table 2.1 provides an outline of the different concepts or definitions regarding destination competitiveness presented in the literature. Bristow (2005b:286) contends that substantial confusion exists regarding the concept of competitiveness and how it can be effectively operationalised as a result of the fact that *policy acceptance of the existence of regional competitiveness and its measurement appears to have run ahead of a number of fundamental theoretical and empirical questions*. He further argues that this is also the situation in the tourism discipline as a result of the variation of definitions of

destination competitiveness; the confusion that exists regarding which activities constitute competitiveness; and how competitiveness relates to prosperity (Bristow, 2005).

Table 2.1: Key concepts / definitions of destination competitiveness

Author	Concept/ definition
Poon (1993)	Four key principles for destination competitiveness include: environment is priority; tourism is a leading sector; strengthen distribution channels in the market place; and build a dynamic private sector.
Chacko (1997)	Destination competitiveness is determined by the positioning strategy a destination follows to gain a competitive edge.
Crouch & Ritchie (1993; 1994; 1995; 1999; 2000; 2001)	To be competitive, a destination's development of tourism must be sustainable, economically, ecologically, socially, culturally and politically. The most competitive destination must be economically prosperous and effectively create sustainable well-being for its residents.
Buhalis (2000)	The competitiveness of destinations depends on their ability to maximise the performance of each individual element assessed.
d'Hautesserre (2000)	Ability of a destination to maintain its market position and share and/or improve upon them through time.
Hassan (2000)	The destination's ability to create and integrate value-added products that sustain its resources while maintaining a sound market position relative to competitors.
Dwyer, Forsyth & Rao (2000)	Tourism competitiveness is a general concept that encompasses price differentials coupled with exchange rate movements, productivity levels of various components of the tourist industry and qualitative factors affecting the attractiveness or otherwise of a destination.
Kim (2000)	Competitiveness in the tourism industry consists of four dimensions of sources of competitiveness: primary, secondary, tertiary and resultant sources.
Dept of Industry, Science and Resources (2001)	Destination is linked backwards to the various determinants of competitiveness and forwards to regional/ national prosperity, indicating that destination competitiveness is itself an intermediate goal toward a more fundamental aim of economic well-being for residents.
Dwyer & Kim (2001)	Ability of a destination to deliver goods and services that perform better than other destinations on those aspects of the tourism experience considered to be important by tourists.
Yoon (2002)	A destination's ability to create and integrate value-added products that sustain its resources while maintaining market position relative to competitors.
Heath (2003)	Destination competitiveness is linked to the ability of a destination to deliver goods and services that perform better than other destinations on those aspects of the tourism experience considered to be important by tourists.
Ritchie & Crouch (2003)	What makes a destination truly competitive is its ability to increase tourism expenditure, to increasingly attract visitors while providing them with satisfying, memorable experiences, and to do so in a profitable way, while enhancing the well-being of destination residents and preserving the natural capital of the destination for future generations.

Various other studies have investigated the measurement of destination competitiveness, including key environmental factors, elements, determinants, or strategies that influence the enhancement of destination competitiveness (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999; Dwyer, 2001; Dwyer *et al.*, 1999; Gooroochurn *et al.*, 2003; Heath, 2003; March, 2003; Mihalic, 2000; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003; Yoon, 2002). The measurement of destination competitiveness is challenging, as competitiveness is a complex concept encompassing a multiplicity of goals and a variety of elements, often difficult to measure and further complicated by the analyst and the unit of analysis (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999; Gooroochurn *et al.*, 2003; Ritchie & Crouch,

2003). Furthermore, limited empirical research has been conducted regarding the assessment of destination competitiveness and the determination of the significance of the factors or conditions that contribute to destination competitiveness (Deas & Giordano, 2001b; Malecki, 2002).

Destinations involve multi-faceted components comprising various natural and cultural resources, multiple business enterprises, and stakeholders from both the private and the public sector. Therefore, destination marketing must be guided by analytical frameworks that focus on sustainable competitiveness to assist destinations in maintaining a market position relative to other competitors (Hassan, 2000). A suitable analytical framework for destination marketing can contribute to the development and implementation of value-added tourism resources, such as food tourism. These in turn can enhance destination competitiveness.

The tourism literature reflects a number of conceptual models and approaches to developing destination competitiveness. However, testing and validating the proposed models are presently in progress, and the availability of results and empirical studies are limited. Yoon (2002) contends that the development of destination competitive strategies has not been thoroughly addressed and therefore, it is not clear which competitive strategies regarding destination attractions and resources are preferred by tourism stakeholders. DMOs and other tourism stakeholders could enhance sustainable competitiveness if they incorporate competitive marketing strategies at a destination.

2.3.2.1 Concepts and definitions of destination competitiveness and sustainability

The concept of competitiveness is very broad and complex, has a whole range of factors contributing to it and cannot be encapsulated (Kim, 2001). Traditionally the concept of competitiveness stems from international economics and international business literature and has received considerable attention from business, management and international trade (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). Michael Porter (Porter, 1990; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003) is recognised as the expert in the field of economic competitiveness, and his work is used to a large extent as the basis for discussion on competitiveness in tourism-related literature. The concept of competitiveness has been widely debated and discussed in terms of a variety of industries, most often as competition between firms and to a lesser extent, nations (March, 2003; Porter, 1990; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). Moon and Peery (1995) conclude that the notion of competitiveness can apply to 'bloc' economies, entire countries, regions within countries, industry sectors, individual firms and also to individual products and services of firms. It is therefore, appropriate that the notion of destination competitiveness be consistent

with the broader concept of competitiveness, so as to assure that the framework is applicable to tourism-related research.

Since the available literature indicates that a variation in defining, understanding and measuring competitiveness exists, competitiveness has to be acknowledged as being multi-faceted concept, with existing different perspectives as to what the concept actually means and how it can be operationalised. In the field of tourism It implies the combination of assets, natural and created resources, and processes to achieve economic results (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999). Competitiveness, however, needs to be sustained by continuous improvement of the offerings and capabilities of an organisation contributing to customer and stakeholder satisfaction, addressing challenges and utilising opportunities within the competitive environment (Feurer & Chaharbaghi, 1994; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003; Yoon, 2002). Competitiveness in the tourism sector, according to Kim (2001:1), *is not only a measure of potential ability, but also an evaluation of present ability and tourism performance.*

Competitiveness in tourist destinations is infinitely more complex to determine, manage and assess than most other products and services, as it is an amalgam of resources, constituting many individual products and services incorporating the entire destination experience. Furthermore, the participation of the tourist in the experience is critical as he/she travels to the destination to experience the composite tourism product (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003).

Ritchie and Crouch (2003:20) suggests, that to understand competitiveness at destinations it is necessary to consider the basic elements of comparative advantage as well as the more advanced elements that constitute competitive advantage, as outlined by Porter, regarding the competitive advantage of a nation (Porter, 1990). Kim (2001) differentiates between price and non-price factors that influence the tourism product in each country and more specifically each region. Although cost is of major importance when a tourist selects a destination, the non-price factors are equally, if not more, important as they can determine the marketing and promotional activities in a destination. These factors, although transient over time, contribute to the quality, uniqueness and range of tourism products that determine the appeal and the marketing initiatives in a destination (Kim, 2001).

March (2003) outlines two broad approaches to conceptualising and evaluating the competitiveness at destinations. First, a generic model reflecting the important factors that constitutes competitiveness, which are then quantified, ranked and rated by relevant stakeholders. Second, the competitiveness of a country relative to one or various countries

is established. These approaches are reflected in ongoing and completed research regarding competitiveness in the tourism literature of which, the most relevant are the works of Dwyer (2001), Heath (2003), Kim (2001), Ritchie and Crouch (2003), and Yoon (2002).

Studies done regarding destination competitiveness reflect different destination settings, types, approaches and the link between competitiveness and sustainability. Destination marketing is of major importance regarding the competitiveness of a destination, therefore, certain elements of marketing plans and promotional studies, such as stakeholder involvement, market environment, critical success factors, price, quality, image and sustainable tourism have to be addressed. Melián-González and García-Falcón (2003) have applied the resource and capability-based theory to assess and evaluate the competitive potential of a certain type of tourism in a destination. The possession of certain resources and capabilities enables the destination to carry out certain economic activities, which include the marketing and promotion of the destination, thereby gaining a competitive advantage amongst its competitors. The identification of specific types of tourism and their contribution to destination competitiveness has not yet been fully investigated. Therefore, verification of fundamental theoretical and empirical questions regarding competitiveness in the tourism discipline needs to be established, and the acceptance of frameworks for destination competitiveness be validated (Bristow, 2005b).

Various researchers in destination competitiveness are contributing to the link between competitiveness and sustainability (Hassan, 2000; Heath, 2003; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). Hassan (2000: 240) defines competitiveness as *the destination's ability to create and integrate value-added products to sustain its resources while maintaining market position relative to competitors*. Ritchie and Crouch (2003) believe that a destination's sustainability is a precondition for that destination's competitiveness. They measure sustainability along two dimensions: First, the actual success of the destination's contribution to enhancing the sustainable well-being of residents by means of tourism; and second, the extent to which the success has been achieved by an effective utilisation of destination resources. Heath (2003) supports these views, but extends and verifies the importance of sustainability to the requirement of co-operation and co-ordination between stakeholders. South Africa, part of the sub-continent of Africa, has an under utilised competitive advantage. According to Heath (2003:139), stakeholders here are responsible for leading their destinations *with a new sense of pride and economic well-being, constantly aware that they are building part of the economic future of the destination on a sustainable resource base, whilst, utilising the existing global competitive advantage*.

This study aims to focus on the contribution of food tourism to the sustainable competitiveness of a destination. This will entail the identification, development and implementation of food tourism enhancers to achieve destination competitiveness. The contribution of food tourism to destination competitiveness will be assessed as one of the elements of destination attractiveness and experiences offered to tourists when visiting the destination, which in turn will be dependent on market characteristics and accessibility.

The concept of competitiveness utilised in this study is that of Ritchie and Crouch (2003), which involves the ability to increase tourism expenditure by attracting a larger number of tourists, providing them with satisfying, memorable experiences, gainfully, while enhancing the well-being of destination residents and preserving the natural capital of the destination for future generations. Sustainable competitiveness of the destination is then of concern.

2.3.2.2 *Nature and framework of destination competitiveness and sustainability*

New challenges to tourism destinations globally are escalating on a daily basis as a result of the changing face of international tourism. The changing tourism environment, which is becoming increasingly competitive, is the underlying issue and driving force leading to a greater understanding of destination competitiveness (Heath, 2003). Destination marketing management is a fundamental process in assisting destinations to address global changes and increased competition (Buhalis, 2000; Chacko, 1997; Hassan, 2000; Heath, 2002; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). By implication, an understanding of destination competitiveness is essential.

Various conceptual and analytical frameworks for the analysis and understanding of destination competitiveness have been developed and explained. The frameworks presented in tourism literature all take a systematic approach to destination competitiveness research. The work done by Ritchie and Crouch (2003) on the competitive destination, has become one of the primary sources utilised in studies focusing on the different aspects of destination competitiveness in tourism. It has resulted in a breakthrough in the discourse on with regards to all the issues relating to destination competitiveness. The models of Kim (2001), Dwyer (2001), Yoon (2002), Heath (2003) and Jonker (2004) all use the model of Ritchie and Crouch (2003) as their points of departure. These studies have discussed and developed models or frameworks depicting important determinants and sources of competitiveness thereby: determining the means for measuring and comparing competitiveness; identifying the strategies applied in enhancing destination competitiveness; and clarifying the positioning and marketing of destinations in an increasingly competitive market. The limited nature of research regarding the empirical testing of destination

competitiveness frameworks substantiates the fact that the adequacy of such frameworks cannot be ensured. The model of Ritchie and Crouch will be briefly outlined, as it is presently the most important research and study contribution to literature regarding destination competitiveness.

The work of Porter (1990) and his *diamond* model, containing four major factors, is used as a fundamental source in explaining the determinants of destination competitiveness (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). They are: factor conditions (skilled labour or infrastructure); demand conditions (nature of demand for products and services, i.e. tourism product); related and supporting industries (the quantity and connectivity in the industries); and firm strategy, structure and rivalry (nature of competition). These factors are mutually dependent on one another and affect one another (Porter, 1990). Porters' model does not go without criticism and although it integrates competitiveness into one framework, Kim (2001) cautions that it should not be applied by itself, as it does not address present dynamic global forces appropriately, and therefore, the further development, refinement and application of competitiveness in the tourism sector by various researchers.

The existing systematic models of destination competitiveness, such as that of Ritchie and Crouch (2003) in Figure 2.3, exemplifies the dynamics of competitiveness, in which the relationships and interaction among the forces of competitiveness are to be understood. The factors that determine the ability of a destination to compete, namely the comparative and competitive advantages, have to be analysed, as to determine which forces contribute to destination competitiveness.

The distinction between comparative and competitive advantages of a tourism destination according to Ritchie and Crouch (2003), lies in the availability and utilisation of resources at a destination. Comparative advantage refers to natural endowment in factors of production, that is, for the destination the resources that naturally make a destination attractive to tourists, including the culture of a destination as well as its existing infrastructure (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). Competitive advantages relate to a destination's ability to use these resources effectively in the long-term (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). The effective use of available resources is imperative for sustainable competitiveness in a destination and can be achieved by the development and implementation of an appropriate marketing strategy, incorporating the co-operation and support of all stakeholders.

The potential competitiveness of a tourist destination is affected by a group of factors labelled *qualifying and amplifying determinants* by Ritchie and Crouch (2003), and fall outside the control of those that manage the destination. These factors include aspects such

as location, safety, cost/value, interdependencies, awareness/image and carrying capacity at the destination. These moderate or magnify the influence of the other factors, by filtering their influence on the competitiveness of the destination. The tourism destination functions within a global macro-environment, which provides it with many opportunities to become competitive (Ritchie, 2004). The competitive micro-environment is the immediate environment wherein the destination must function, and provide an experience to its visitors, whilst remaining competitive (Ritchie, 2004). Both the macro- and micro-environments influence and guide the destination in its endeavours toward competitiveness and sustainability.

The *core resources and attractors* (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003) are the main reasons why tourists choose one destination over another. They are also the elements that should be considered for increasing destination competitiveness. Examples of these resources include physiography and climate, culture and history, market ties, mix of activities, special events, entertainment and the tourism superstructure.

The model of Ritchie and Crouch (2003) furthermore explains the *supporting factors and resources* as secondary sources for destination competitiveness. The quality, range and amount of these factors, such as infrastructure, accessibility, facilitating resources, hospitality, enterprise and political will, are important for a competitive destination.

The strategic planning and development of the destination is important to ensure that a competitive and sustainable destination is promoted, which simultaneously, meets the quality-of-life aspirations of the inhabitants of the destination. The *policy, planning and development* sub-component of the model include a system definition, a philosophy, the positioning and branding of the destination, the product development, and an analysis which provides an indication of the competition and collaboration and how it is achieved (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). Finally, an audit of the destination's resources and programs is executed to complement the macro-assessment of the achievements and functioning of a destination.

The *destination management* component in the model of Ritchie and Crouch (2003) (Figure 2.3), focuses on the activities that implement the policy and planning framework, enhance the core resources and attractors, strengthens the quality and effectiveness of the supporting factors and resources and adapts to the constraints or opportunities posed by the qualifying and amplifying determinants. The activities in this component influence the management of the destination's competitiveness as they include programs, structures, systems and processes manageable by all stakeholders (Ritchie, 2004). Ritchie and Crouch (2003) have

identified seven specific areas of focus for destination management actions. They are: the nature of the destination management organisation; marketing; assuring the quality of the visitor experience and services; research activities; human resource development; the provision of finance and venture capital; the effective management of visitors; and finally assuring resource stewardship and crisis management. It is these focus areas of the Ritchie and Crouch model that will be discussed and analysed in greater detail in the context of destination marketing management.

Ritchie and Crouch (2003) in particular, have discussed the dimensions of competitiveness that have been collated into a framework for measuring overall competitiveness. Current research literature identifies these factors as influencing competitiveness and sustainability at a destination: price, tourism flow, image, attractiveness and the tourism product itself. The success of tourism destinations is to be utilised as an indicator of competitiveness. The measurement of success can be facilitated by the application of models such as that of Ritchie and Crouch (2003) or the other equally appropriate models that have been developed. The indication of a competitive destination in relation to other competitors will be further determined by key destination marketing tasks such as: prioritising products and markets; positioning and branding; theming, packaging and routing; and promoting the destination.

2.3.2.3 *Development of sustainable competitive destination marketing strategies*

Competitiveness, according to Kozak (2001), is the essential goal of management and marketing strategies. Previous studies (Buhalis, 2000; Chacko, 1997; Crouch & Ritchie, 1999; Dwyer, 2001; Hassan, 2000; Heath, 2003; Mihalic, 2000; Poon, 1993; Ritchie & Crouch, 2000; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003) on management and marketing and the development of competitive strategies, form the basis of this study's investigation into the importance of destination marketing with reference to food tourism. Marketing aspects, such as image, quality, positioning, branding, theming, packaging, routing and promotion are referred to in the literature and should be further supported by incorporating management and sustainable aspects when considering destination competitiveness.

In the destination competitiveness model of Ritchie and Crouch (2003), destination competitive strategies have been expanded upon to include a wide spectrum of very specific areas of focus for destination management actions. These include: the nature of the destination management organisation; marketing; assuring the quality of the visitor experience and associated services; gathering and disseminating information/research; the development of appropriate human resources; the provision of adequate finances and

venture capital; the effective management of visitors; and assuring stewardship of destination resources.

Marketing is a fundamental activity for achieving destination competitiveness that can be developed by ensuring that the products available for tourists are flexible, segmented, and customised to meet consumer needs (Poon, 1993). Linking marketing with product development by providing the appropriate holistic experience for the more discerning consumer, are important strategies for destination competitiveness according to Poon (1993), and verified by Murphy, Pritchard and Smith (2000).

The development of competitive marketing management strategies is essential for the attainment of destination competitiveness. Ritchie and Crouch (2003:189) place a high priority on the destination product in the development of competitive strategies by recognising it as *a critical component of the overall competitiveness and sustainability model* and furthermore that *the product delivered to the customer needs to be viewed as an integral part of the marketing function*. Various marketing challenges face destinations when planning and developing competitive strategies. These can be itemised as the identification of specific visitor markets; determination of the type and quality of experiences that a destination can offer that provide the destination with a competitive advantage; and market matching to determine the potential competitiveness keeping possible constraints such as price, distance, culture or facility requirements in mind (Go & Govers, 2000; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). This process can be facilitated by collated information from research and suitable databases that enable destinations to enhance the performance of the destination's products simultaneously, allowing the destination to adapt to changing market conditions through appropriate marketing strategies.

The marketing of destinations is determined by the promotional activities, achieved by appropriate product development; applicable pricing policies; effective distribution channels; and suitable product packaging, theming and routing. Proper target market selection is necessary for correct image and awareness determination of the destination in potential markets, both locally and internationally (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). Supporting the appeal of a tourism attraction by means of the above mentioned marketing actions, could strengthen the competitive position of a destination (Mihalič, 2000).

Assuring stewardship of destination resources involves the implementation of sustainable competitive destination marketing management strategies by maintaining and sustaining tourism resources, which would include ecological, social and cultural resources. Certain

environmental marketing activities according to (Mihalič, 2000), can also boost destination competitiveness, where the environment includes the global macro-environment of economic, technology, ecology, political and socio-cultural components, as conceptualised by Ritchie and Crouch (2003).

The development of sustainable competitive marketing strategies provides the tools for this study to link destination marketing to food tourism as a competitive tourism offering. The above outlined marketing activities and actions can therefore be considered as sustainable competitive destination marketing strategies, to foster the competitiveness in a destination. Mihalič (2000) verifies this and concludes that destination environmental competitiveness, which includes attractions and resources, can be increased by appropriate managerial and marketing activities. Tourism destinations can therefore achieve better competitive market positions when applying appropriate management efforts, marketing activities, good quality of services and environmental management, which help to create and integrate value in tourism products and resources.

Thus, as portrayed in the literature review, elements of sustainable competitiveness can play an important role in the marketing management strategies of a destination and can contribute to the improvement of destination competitiveness. Consequently, it is imperative to identify the marketing strategies that apply to the development and marketing of food tourism at a destination and the manner in which it enhances the destination and promotes its competitiveness. It is therefore necessary to discuss a model of sustainable competitiveness, as it applies to destination marketing management.

2.3.2.4 A model of sustainable competitiveness in destination marketing focusing on the tourism offering

An analysis of the literature indicates that the rationale for developing a model for sustainable competitiveness focusing on the tourism destination, is based on the tourism 'product' which differs fundamentally from that of the traditional goods and services used in economic models regarding competitiveness, as the tourism service and products have different geographical, environmental and socio-cultural characteristics. From a destination perspective the tourism offering can be regarded as *an amalgam of individual products and experience opportunities that combine to form a total experience of the area visited* (Murphy *et al.*, 2000). The components of tourism services and products are the essence of tourism development and destination marketing and are generally referred to in the literature, as tourism attractions and resources. As mentioned, a tourism infrastructure consisting of various stakeholders, products and services, is managed both internally and externally, and

is required to deliver the destination product (Murphy *et al.*, 2000). Also, the destination product reflects the supply side of tourism and is also used to generate tourism demand (Uysal *et al.*, 2000), thus determining the competitiveness of the destination regarding the attractions offered (Formica, 2001; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003).

Buhalis (2000) considers the combination of all products, services and experiences provided locally as the destination offering and identifies six core components of tourism attractions and resources that are represented in tourism literature and generally included in assessing and evaluating the elements of tourism destinations. The following components are included in the Six As framework of Buhalis (2000:98):

- *Attractions (natural, man-made, artificial, purpose built, heritage, special events).*
- *Accessibility (entire transportation system comprising of routes, terminals and vehicles).*
- *Amenities (accommodation and catering facilities, retailing, other tourist services).*
- *Available packages (pre-arranged packages by intermediaries and principals).*
- *Activities (all activities available at the destination and what consumers will do during their visit).*
- *Ancillary services (services used by tourists such as banks, telecommunications, post, newsagents, hospitals, etc.).*

Heath (2003), Mihalič (2000) and Ritchie and Crouch (2003), have suggested that destination attractions and resources be regarded as important sources of comparative and competitive advantage factors in destination competitiveness. These components are considered to be essential critical attributes regarding the sustainable competitiveness of a destination (Hassan, 2000; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). In the model developed by Ritchie and Crouch (Ritchie & Crouch, 2003), destination attractions and resources are considered as the destination's determinants of competitiveness and include: natural features; climate; cultural and social characteristics; general infrastructure; basic services in infrastructure, superstructures, access and transport facilities; attitudes toward tourists; cost/price levels; economic and social ties; and uniqueness. Hassan (2000), in his model of determinants of market competitiveness and sustainable tourism also associates the comparative advantage of the competitive destination with elements from both the macro- and micro-environments. These elements constitute the following: climate and location; culture and heritage; history and artefacts; tourist orientated services; safety and health, access to information; and environmental quality. Additional attractions, such as hospitality, transportation and

entertainment contribute further to the overall competitive position in the tourism market place through their value-added activities.

Destination attractions, according to Mihalič (2000), determine the environmental quality of a destination. Regarded as an integral part of natural attractions, which in turn influences destination competitiveness, environmental quality needs to be maintained for a destination to remain and also enhance sustainable competitiveness. Mihalič (2000) identifies eleven destination attractions and resources, namely: natural features; climate; cultural and social characteristics; general infrastructure; basic services; tourism superstructures; access and transportation facilities; attitudes toward tourists; cost/price levels; economic; social; and uniqueness.

Food tourism is one of the offerings of a destination that can add to existing tourism products, as it fits the definition of being a mix of individual products, services and experience opportunities. As an offering, food tourism is a compilation of products and services of most of the attractions and resources, as portrayed in the literature. Food tourism is an amalgam of natural features, culture, services, infrastructure, access, attitudes toward tourists and uniqueness. It can enhance the total experience of the destination even further as it is the only product that can be experienced using all the human senses, therefore deepening the tourism experience even more. Food tourism, according to Quan and Wang (2003), holds several implications for destination marketing and development, therefore, local and regional foods should not be regarded as trivial and ignored in tourism marketing. Food as a tourism product and experience, can contribute to the competitiveness of the destination, if appropriately developed and executed.

It is expedient that an appropriate, integrated and dynamic model of destination competitiveness be utilised in this study to contextualise the destination marketing management framework with a key food marketing focus. The current models of destination competitiveness proposed by, among others, Dwyer (2001), Heath (2003), Kim (2001), Ritchie and Crouch (2003) and Yoon (2002), all have their own distinct focus, share similarities and all utilise the basic model of Ritchie and Crouch (2003) as points of departure. This study uses the framework of Ritchie and Crouch as its point of departure to contextualise the position, role, importance and contribution of food tourism regarding the enhancement of the competitiveness and sustainability in a destination. Furthermore it includes certain of the elements of the model proposed by Heath (2003), as this model focuses on vital linkages, such as information management and the importance of the key success drivers, namely people in destination context. For this very reason, tools were

developed and tested in this study to assist the DMOs with developing and implementing food tourism in a destination. The development and implementation of such a framework and tools could be of significant value to decision-makers in the tourism industry and assist in the implementation of policy dimensions. The destination marketing management framework was extracted from the Ritchie and Crouch model (2003), integrated with the Heath model (2003) and further refined to focus specifically on food tourism. The destination marketing framework, with a key food tourism focus, will be outlined and discussed in Chapter 4.

2.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter has provided a theoretical basis and framework for destination marketing management based on the systems theory and focused on elements of sustainable competitiveness. The relevant concepts of destination marketing management and sustainable competitiveness regarding the destination were discussed and integrated with food tourism as an offering at a destination. The concepts discussed serve as the research background to provide answers to the research questions, to meet the study's objectives and to develop a conceptual framework illustrating the interrelationship between sustainable competitiveness at a destination, food tourism and destination marketing management.

Despite the fact that the destination competitiveness and sustainability model of Ritchie and Crouch (2003) and those of other researchers are only now in the initial stages of implementation and assessment, they have offered a sound theoretical basis and structured point of departure for this study to contextualise destination marketing management with a food marketing focus.

Chapter 3 provides a review of the relevant literature regarding food tourism, which lays the foundation for this study and explores the role of food tourism as a key element in destination marketing.

3

The Role of Food Tourism as a Key Element of Destination Marketing

	PAGE
3.1	INTRODUCTION 68
3.2	FOOD TOURISM IN CONTEXT 68
3.2.1	FOOD TOURISM 69
3.2.1.1	CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS OF FOOD TOURISM 70
3.2.1.2	<i>Food and tourism relationships</i> 76
3.2.1.3	<i>Nature and framework of food tourism</i> 81
3.2.1.4	<i>Development of food tourism strategies</i> 84
3.3	LOCAL AND REGIONAL FOOD WITHIN THE TOURISM CONTEXT 90
3.3.1	Culinary Heritage 92
3.3.2	Authenticity 93
3.3.3	Local Food 94
3.4	THE ROLE OF FOOD IN DESTINATION MARKETING 95
3.4.1	Food as a Destination Product 97
3.4.2	Food as a Marketing Tool 98
3.5	BEST PRACTICES 99
3.5.1	Best Practices in Food Tourism 100
3.5.2	PRACTICES AND PRODUCTS IN FOOD TOURISM 101
3.6	CONCLUSION 103

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces food tourism as a key element in destination marketing. The review to the study of destination marketing management and tourism destination competitiveness and sustainability contained in the literature, as presented in Chapter 2, provides the basis and forms the linkage with this chapter. Chapter 3 addresses certain fundamental objectives of this study, which is to review food tourism and develop a theoretical framework, providing a strategic context for food tourism in destination marketing, and subsequently establish key elements of competitiveness from a food tourism perspective. This chapter facilitates the development of a strategic framework and guidelines for developing and implementing food tourism, which could enable destination marketers and entrepreneurs in the tourism industry to optimise the tourism potential of local and regional food.

A review of the relevant concepts regarding food tourism, local and regional food, culinary heritage and authenticity comprises the first section of this chapter. An extensive literature review covers the nature of food tourism, the importance of local and regional food to sustainable destination competitiveness and the role of food in destination marketing. The need for the development of a theoretical framework regarding food tourism and research in this area is extensively discussed. Food as an element in destination marketing, focusing on the key aspects of competitiveness from a food tourism perspective is presented. Finally, the chapter concludes with an analysis of international best practice regarding food tourism.

3.2 FOOD TOURISM IN CONTEXT

Food tourism, in itself, is a relatively new component of tourism. Research reported in this context is minimal therefore this study can contribute to the identification of the gaps in research and reinforce the need for developing a conceptual framework and research agenda in the field of food tourism. Food as an area of interest in tourism studies is growing for various reasons, according to Hall *et al.* (2003b). Certain initiatives, such as the White Paper on Culinary Tourism compiled by Wolf (2002b), have contributed to a more focused interest and approach to research regarding food tourism. Important concepts have been identified and the need for a suitable strategy for the development and implementation of food tourism has become an imperative. Csergo (1999) provides a detailed outline of the historical development food and tourism, which basically initiated with the prominence of regional cuisines as a result of the rise of tourism at the end of the nineteenth century and the advent of the motor car in the 1920s. As outlined in Chapter 1 the strong relationship between food, culture and tourism has only been receiving attention in the last 20 years.

More focus is now being directed to understanding the ways in which food tourism is part of the wider economic, socio-cultural, technological and environmental systems, and additionally how food contributes to tourism marketing strategies both from a destination and stakeholder point of view (Boyne *et al.*, 2003; Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Hall, 2003; Hjalager & Richards, 2002b). Cohen and Avieli (2004:775) propose a so-called *culinary environmental bubble* to represent a systematic approach to the study of the place of food in tourism. They reflect on the constraints and the manner in which these are facilitated in culinary establishments. The work of Scarpato (2002) and of Symons (1999) highlight the connection between food, gastronomy, cuisine and tourism within a gastronomy framework, which is regarded as a very new perspective, with reference to tourism and more specifically to food tourism. Scarpato (2002:68) reviews the links between tourism and gastronomy from both a cultural tourism and a sustainable tourism point of view and accentuates the fact that theory development is required, recommending the following regarding future research and action in the field of food tourism:

- *food tourism should form part of planning, policy making and tourism management strategies;*
- *implementation of a trans-disciplinary field of study incorporating food as an element in tourism research; and*
- *incorporation of food tourism elements in the training of managerial tourism staff, marketers and community planners.*

In the light of these recommendations of the mainstream researchers in the field of food tourism, and the aims of this study, it was valuable to compile an extensive literature review covering the nature of food tourism, the importance of local and regional food to sustainable destination competitiveness and the role of food in destination marketing.

3.2.1 Food Tourism

Stewart (2004:1) in her address at the first international conference on culinary tourism in Victoria, Canada stated that:

Culinary Tourism – Gastronomic Tourism is not a niche market! It is part of every single tourism experience on earth. It has the potential to be of enormous benefit to our national, regional and local economies... Unfortunately, most gastronomers know precious little about tourism and most tourism people know very little about gastronomy.

Fields (2002) and Henderson (2004) attribute this situation to the separation of the fields of tourism and food, and contend that more knowledge of the food tourism market is required to assist in making marketing in this field more effective. This is the challenge for food in the tourism industry and for tourism in the food industry. Food tourism is, however, a form of niche tourism, as the food-tourism relationship has for many years been considered, and also accepted, as solely the provision of food to tourists in hotels, restaurants and the hospitality industry (Hall, 2003; Richards, 2002; Sessa, 1986). This perception is busy changing and in a press release on the 'First International Conference on Culinary Tourism' (Wolf, 2004:1), food tourism is described as : *a new industry that unites food, beverage and travel businesses ... a tool for economic and community development ... also the newest new way to add value to visitor experiences*. In contrast to this perception, Cohen and Avieli (2004), report that at the international conference dedicated to 'Local Food and Tourism' the focus was on local food as an attraction in different destinations and its general acceptance thereof. The confrontation with strange food with which tourists may have a problem with, and which in itself poses a challenge for destinations, is not addressed. Food tourism needs to be identified in the different formats as it is presented by the destination and as the tourist desires it. That both the provider and the consumer should adopt a new way of thinking in a transforming society and meet changing needs is clear.

3.2.1.1 Concepts and definitions of food tourism

To gain a better understanding of food tourism, it is essential to define the key concepts encompassed by food tourism (Table 3.1). As these concepts are intertwined with one another and all have food as the central component, it is useful to draw a comparison between the concepts, identifying the common components of food tourism, gourmet tourism, cuisine tourism, gastronomic tourism and culinary tourism. Hall, *et al.* (2003b) explain the difference between the various concepts in terms of the level of interest and importance of food to the tourist as a travel motivation, from the tourists' point of view and suggestion the classification (Figure 3.1). Rural/urban tourism, although reflecting low or no interest is included in the classification of Hall *et al.* (2003b) as most tourists consume food at a destination.

The distinction between the various levels of food tourism as a form of special interest tourism is because food itself needs to be the primary factor in influencing travel behaviour and decision-making. At this early stage in the development of food tourism, it is the most appropriate explanation. The theoretical substance of the various concepts provides the terms with extra depth, which must be clearly communicated to the DMO stakeholders.

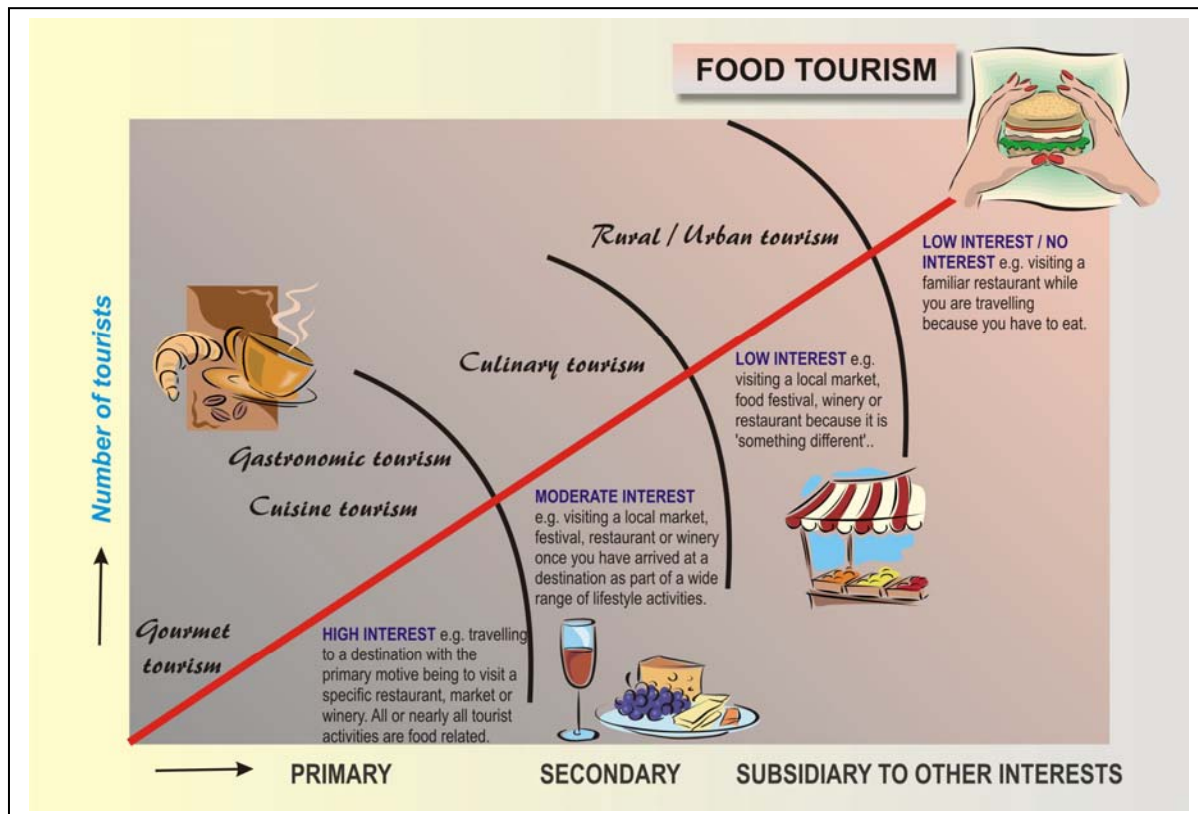


Figure 3.1: The classification of food tourism according to the tourists' level of interest (adapted from Hall *et al.*, 2003b)

Such a classification as that of Hall *et al.* (2003b) regarding food tourism can help the DMOs benchmark the type of food tourism being offered and assist stakeholders in identifying the products and services that need to be developed. It presupposes the level of tourist interest and therefore the level of product and service development.

Considering the terminology in Table 3.1, it is clear that food tourism is concerned with an activity that involves an experience encompassing culture, heritage and food. Additionally the experience also includes all the aspects involved in consuming, enjoying and appreciating the spectrum of food tourism products and services offered by the destination, which is inclusive of local and regional products that contribute to the sustainable competitiveness of the destination.

Food tourism has ceased to be only concerned with the provision of food for tourists in restaurants, hotels and resorts (Hall, 2003). It has changed hands and it is the tourist now travels in order to search for, and enjoy, prepared food and drink. Food is considered as *an expression of a society and its way of life* (Kaspar, 1986:14). This viewpoint is verified by Boniface (2003) who regards culture, both past and present, as an inevitable part of food tourism. Long (1998) emphasises the fact that food or culinary tourism is a social and

Table 3.1: Key concepts and definitions relevant to food tourism

CONCEPT	DEFINITION
Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The activities of a person travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited (World Tourism Organisation, 2002).
Gastronomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The reflexive cooking, preparation, presentation and eating of food (Hjalager & Richards, 2002b:17). The art, or science, of good eating, thus the total meal experience. (Gillespie, 2001). The art of selecting, preparing, serving and enjoying fine food (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2000).
Cuisine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An arrangement of food-related customs, which are culturally developed and transmitted, characterised by a range of basic foods, frequent set of recipes, flavourings, specific processing characteristics, rules for combination, and appropriateness for the occasion, i.e. national dishes identification of cuisine (Marshall, 1995:280).
Culinary heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Art of cooking reflecting the living culture and history of a specific group, country or region, it encompasses preserving the past, capturing the present and creating the future (Richards, 2002). Culinary Heritage is a way of promoting regional foods, and aims at emphasising the cultural and specific characteristics of regions in a country, thereby deepening the regional identity within a destination. The Culinary Heritage concept focuses on two aspects of regional food. One aspect is traditional food, where old recipes from the region are used. The other aspect is the use of local products. Culinary Heritage incorporates aspects from all food-sectors, such as agriculture, fishery, gastronomy, small-scale food-production, farm diversification, hospitality industry, small and medium sized enterprises and the cultural sector. This broad outlook implies that food is not mainly regarded from its nutritional value, but that dimensions of various experiences are added to the product. The common platform is food and regional identity (Ohlsson, 2000).
Local and regional foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The products produced in a specific area or region as a result of the environment and availability and the cultural factors affecting the preparation, cooking and serving of these food products and dishes (Hall & Mitchell, 2002b).
Food tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitation to primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants and specific locations for which food tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of specialist food production region are the primary motivating factor for travel (Hall <i>et al.</i>, 2003b).
Culinary tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A variety of food and beverage-related activities developed for visitors and involving cultural discovery of a region's dishes (Canadian Tourism Commission, 2002). Culinary tourism focuses specifically on the search for, and the enjoyment of, prepared food and drink (Wolf, 2002b). The intentional, exploratory participation in the foodways of another – participation including the consumption, preparation, and presentation of a food item, cuisine, meal system, or eating style not one's own (Long, 2003:21).
Gastronomy tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The production, distribution, presentation and consumption of food encompassing cultural practices and offering authentic culinary experiences of the region to satisfy visitors whose primary motives for travelling are food related (Hjalager & Richards, 2002b). The application of a regions' gastronomic heritage to strengthen the tourism product, enhance the visitor experience and help sustain local tourism, food production and processing sectors (Boyne <i>et al.</i>, 2003).

that sensory experience, therefore making it central to the tourism experience. Hall (2003b:xxiii) summarizes it concisely and contends that food tourism is now:

- recognised as part of the local culture, consumed by tourists;
- an element of regional tourism promotion;
- a component of local agricultural and economic development;
- a product in a competitive destination market;
- an indicator of globalisation and localisation; and
- a product and service consumed by tourists with definite preferences and consumption patterns.

Considering the various facets of food tourism, a focus on how food can contribute to tourism marketing strategies is becoming more urgent and apparent in present day research. It is self-evident that tourism and food have all the characteristics to converge as complementary elements in the tourism product and attraction base (Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Fields, 2002).

Richards (2002) is of the opinion that destinations are now more often orientating their marketing towards the experiences that tourists desire rather than other motivational drivers. Making the tourism experiences memorable is the manner in which the travel industry adds value to essential services, of which food is an extremely important one (Long, 2003).

The roots of food tourism lie in agriculture, culture and tourism (Bernard & Zaragoza, 1999; Bessiere, 1998; Boniface, 2003; Cusack, 2000; Gallagher, 2001; Hjalager & Corigliano, 2000; Refalo, 2000; Selwood, 2003; Telfer & Wall, 1996; Wagner, 2001; Wolf, 2002b; World Tourism Organization, 2000a). All three above mentioned components offer opportunities and activities to market and position food tourism as an attraction and experience in a destination. Agriculture provides the product, namely, food; culture provides the history and authenticity; and tourism provides the infrastructure and service and combines the three components as the food tourism experience. These three components form the basis for the positioning of food tourism as one of the products in the tourism paradigm and contribute to its conceptualisation and contextualisation.

Scarpato (2002:65) contends that, as a contemporary cultural resource, gastronomy satisfies all the criteria to which a cultural tourism product is subjected. These are that it is a viable alternative if it cannot promote the sun, sand and sea; it adds value and quality to the tourism product; that it meets the requirement of consumption tourism with high satisfaction requirements; and lastly, that it adds value to business travel and short breaks. Although this

type of tourism provides new opportunities, it requires appropriate marketing and management to make it competitive and sustainable for a destination.

Several additional aspects also impact on the importance of food as a tourism attraction. These are: attractiveness of the wider region; regional branding that determines market leverage and promotion influencing differentiation and adding value to food in a destination; the interdependence of food and agriculture; and the related industries that offer distinctive places of food tourism consumption. However, the tourist must go to the location of production to consume local foods and experience the being/becoming a food tourist. Nevertheless, the added advantage of food tourism is that the consumption of the local products can take place right there, but some commodities can also be transported back to the visitors home base, making the local food tourism industry even more competitive and thus sustainable (Hall *et al.*, 2003b).

The concept of food tourism, also labelled as culinary/cuisine or gastronomic tourism, is a concept that includes much more than just the mere dining experience. Hall and Sharples (2003:9) are of the opinion that there needs to be differentiated between *tourists who consume food as part of the travel experience and those tourists whose activities, behaviours and, even, destination selection is influenced by an interest in food*. This differentiation supports the fact that food tourism is a much broader concept and pertains to a variety of activities. Cohen (2004:775) agrees and contends this observation by stating that establishments have provided a *culinary environmental bubble* to accommodate the different culinary needs and desires of tourists to create a *tourist cuisine*, that influences local cuisine thereby creating a new cultural product.

According to Deneault, (2002) food tourism includes a variety of cuisine and agri-tourism activities that involve food and beverage activities. Examples are food festivals, farm visits, factory tours that often involve the cultural discovery of a region's unique dishes. Wolf (2002a:4) defines culinary tourism as *travel in order to search for, and enjoy, prepared food and drink*. Hall and Mitchell's (2002b) view of food tourism confirms and extends the previous definitions as they maintain that food tourism comprises visitation to primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants and specific locations for which food tasting and experiencing the attributes of specialist food production region are the primary reason for travelling. Culinary tourism therefore intersects with two industries, food and travel, absorbing all their underlying connotations.

Lucy M. Long (1998:181) observed that food is central to the tourist experience, that *culinary tourism utilizes the senses of taste, smell, touch and vision and offers a deeper, more integrated level of experiencing another place*. A further idea is that food/culinary tourism furthermore is not limited to individual travellers or tour groups but includes an educational factor (Wolf, 2002b) as both professionals and other interested parties embark on learning more about the food and culinary traditions of other countries and groups.

Ignatov (2003:13), identifies the following experiences, though not exclusively, as culinary-related:

- traditional or high quality dining experiences;
- food and wine festivals and events;
- culinary learning experiences – cooking schools, wine education;
- tasting/buying local products/farmer’s markets;
- visitation to and/or tours of wineries and/or vineyards, wine tasting;
- observing chefs compete;
- eating/drinking at a hard-to-find ‘locals-only’ restaurant or bar;
- fruit picking;
- food trails (e.g. apple routes; beer routes); and
- walking in food streets and precincts in cities.

The ability of a destination to offer food tourism is determined by the resources it has available or is able to develop. A typology of food (culinary) tourism resources (Table 3.2) consisting of attractions and events has been identified by Ignatov (2003:14).

Table 3.2: General typology of tourism resources

TYPES	ATTRACTIONS	EVENTS
Buildings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheese Factory, Brewery, winery • Local cafes or restaurants; internationally acclaimed restaurants • Farms and farmer’s markets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food and wine festivals • Consumer shows • Culinary exhibitions
Parks and gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vineyards 	
Museums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A food or beverage related museum 	
Routes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wine or gourmet routes 	

Source: adapted from Ignatov, (2003:14)

Ignatov (2003:14) further integrates food attractions and events into three basic forms of food (culinary) tourism products, namely:

- *the infrastructure of cuisine-related facilities and events;*
- *packages featuring culinary destinations; and*
- *tours within culinary destinations.*

An analysis of best practices in the various destinations globally, as presented in Section 3.5, provides a more extensive identification of food tourism resources and the food tourism products available.

Tourists, both local and international, have become more aware and enlightened regarding the food and culture of other countries as a result of the significant increase of global travel, the Internet and television (Wolf, 2002b). Food tourism can enhance a destination's position if promoted correctly, thereby contributing to the economic development of the area, encouraging the conservation of food and the region and improving the quality of life for local residents. Provincial/territorial tourism departments, destination marketing organizations, restaurants, convention centres, wineries, and cooking schools, all become readily involved.

The food tourism industry in many countries consists mostly of small and medium-sized businesses. Therefore, to achieve the above-mentioned aims, a well-developed knowledge management system and strategy needs to be in place. Food tourism *per se* needs to be part of the marketing strategy.

3.2.1.2 Food and tourism relationships

Food tourism is an integral part of the tourist experience and has become an important element in the marketing of tourism. The relationship between food and tourism needs to be clarified to position the role of food in the tourism experience and justify the importance of marketing food as a component of the tourism experience.

Several issues regarding food tourism have provided insight into food and tourism relationships. Hall *et al.* (2003b) sum it up by contending that both the production and consumption of food tourism are important with regard to **economic development, policy, culture, heritage, identity, markets and lifestyles**. Although the relationships between food and tourism are presented in terms of the categorisation suggested by Hall *et al.* (2003b) they are interdependent and influence one another.

- **Economic development:** Until recently, the contribution of food to tourism has been largely ignored in spite of its apparent importance and potential regarding economic

development (Hall *et al.*, 2003b; Handszuh, 2000; Hudman, 1986; Telfer & Wall, 1996; World Tourism Organization, 2000a). Nevertheless the following points about the relationship between food and tourism ought to be considered particularly in relation to local economic development initiatives:

- Regional **development** is inclusive of sustainability from an environmental, economic and cultural perspective (Hall *et al.*, 2003b). Therefore, sustainable tourism development needs to exhibit the potential to create linkages to other sectors of the economy by generating demand and production in the agricultural, manufacturing and services industry of a destination. This potential has already been identified by the South African Government (1996) in the White Paper on *The Development and Promotion of Tourism in South Africa*, where it is stated that South Africa has the potential to supply almost every need of the tourism industry, including food and other goods and services required by tourists.
- Food tourism strategies have become a popular instrument in regional development as a result of economic restructuring in many countries, with a consequent focus on tourism as a source of **income** (Hall *et al.*, 2003b). Tourism spending on food, as a component of travel, is significant enough to warrant interest from both government and business (Hall *et al.*, 2003b). Tourism spending on food and dining out in South Africa by international tourists averages 8% of the total spending (South African Tourism, 2001), while the domestic tourist spends on average 24% (Rule *et al.*, 2001). In the light of these figures, it is important to consider the role of food tourism and how it can be utilized to further effective marketing of a destination, and as such, facilitate sustainable competitiveness.
- Recent studies have also reflected on dining and sampling local food as one of the most important **activities** for travellers (Law *et al.*, 2004; Wolf, 2004). The provision of food to tourists is more complicated than just the mere offering of a menu item. The inherent constraints that food poses, as a tourism attraction, need to be addressed in marketing a destination to make it economically viable. Cohen and Avieli (2004:757), suggest that the *two faces of food in tourism* imply that local is simultaneously an attraction and a necessity without losing that it is an important and basic necessity for every tourist, as eating and drinking cannot be avoided (Cohen & Avieli, 2004). Both these roles need to be taken into account in the development of food tourism. It is imperative that food offered as an attraction meets the needs of the tourist at the level of their culinary desires. Equally important is that it must be acceptable, palatable and safe, complying with the tourists' pre-conditions regarding their well-being and satisfaction.

- **Policy:** A wide variety of activities are associated with the **marketing** of food and wine at a destination and these should in accord with a range of institutional and sectoral requirements. For example, government activities in promoting food and wine; marketing development policies; the role of local and regional food in destination marketing; positioning of food and wine in destination marketing; product development of food and wine at national, regional and local levels; market segmentation and the food tourist; seasonality of food and wine tourism; and the sustainability of food as a tourism attraction (Gallagher, 2001; Hall, 2003; Hall *et al.*, 2003b; Handszuh, 2000; Hjalager & Corigliano, 2000; Kadera, 2002; Kapner, 1996; Kaspar, 1986; Quan & Wang, 2003; Selwood, 2003; Telfer & Wall, 1996; Wagner, 2001; Waltner-Toews & Lang, 2000; Wolf, 2002b; World Tourism Organization, 2000a; World Tourism Organization, 2000b). Establishing a policy or developing a strategy could facilitate the development and implementation of food tourism in a country and at the destination level.
- **Culture and heritage:** Food tourism encompasses gastronomy, cuisine, culinary heritage and local and regional foods. All aspects are a reflection of local culture, identity, production, provision, consumption and sustainability, relating to the relationships between food, drink and the tourist and not merely the consumption of food and drink (Boniface, 2003; Hall, 2003). According to the Canadian Tourism Commission (2002:2) food tourism goes *well beyond the dining experience*. Food tourism is therefore not only central to the tourist experience but has become a significant source of identity formation in post-modern societies (Hjalager & Richards, 2002b). Additionally, the creation, development and marketing of food tourism as a cultural experience is to be based on an analysis of tourists' needs so as to provide information to destinations regarding the development and implementation of food tourism as a component of their marketing strategies.

The connection between food and culture in tourism context has been reported in the literature (Bessiere, 1998; Cusack, 2000; Hall *et al.*, 2000; Handszuh, 2000; Long, 1998; Long, 2003; Refalo, 2000; Ritchie & Zins, 1978; Scarpato, 2002; van Westering *et al.*, 2000). Food and drink products of a country can be among its most important cultural expressions (Bernard & Zaragoza, 1999; Handszuh, 2000; Hjalager & Corigliano, 2000; Long, 1998; Long, 2003). The way, in which various ingredients are combined and cooked, forms an important element of a national cultural identity and the destination's culinary heritage (Bessiere, 1998; Cusack, 2000; Long, 1998; Long, 2003; Scarpato, 2002). On a practical level a nation and region's identity are reflected and strengthened by the food experiences that they offer, establishing a competitive position in the global tourism marketplace, contributing to the differentiation, authenticity and regional positioning of the destination (Hall

et al., 2003b). Scarpato (2002:65) strongly recommends that tourism research must fully acknowledge the role of food, more specifically gastronomy, as a medium of cultural tourism. In fact, this outlook can even be considered as the impetus of the *cultural revival* in the tourism product lifecycle as proposed by Poon (1993).

The food and tourism industries benefit from their interaction, as local and regional food products become an important means of selling the identity and culture of a destination. Furthermore, it enables food producers to add value to their products by creating a memorable food tourism experience around the raw materials (Corigliano, 2002; Quan & Wang, 2003; Richards, 2002; van Westering *et al.*, 2000). The destination becomes more competitive as wider varieties of attractions are offered and especially when these are packaged in conjunction with already established key attractors.

All indications are that the consumers' attitudes are changing. This is in accordance with the market trend where tourists want to experience and physically 'taste' the region they are visiting (Bessiere, 1998; Boyne *et al.*, 2003; Fields, 2002; Refalo, 2000). An underlying reason being, that culture is playing an increasingly important role in tourism, and food is one of the key elements of culture. Additionally, status and prestige is further motivation for the tourist to experience a novel and distinct food experience by exploring new cuisines that they cannot encounter at home (Fields, 2002; Richards, 2002). Eating as the local people do is regarded as prestigious and considered to be a post-modern form of tourism (Fields, 2002).

- **Identity:** Food is presently considered as a major component of the tourism product (Hall, 2003; Hjalager & Richards, 2002a). As food and drink are integral to all types of tourism, the question that can be raised is '*what distinguishes food tourism from tourism in general?*' Food tourism has the capacity to capture time, place and memory (Long, 2003). This is the very essence of food tourism experiences, the immobility of a coalescence, that makes it essential for the tourist to travel to the place to experience food at first hand, in the exact location with its distinctive climate, history and culture to capture the identity of the country, its people and their cuisine, (Long, 2003). The tourist will only then be able to enjoy the total food experience of seasonal local products and regional dishes served, prepared and presented in the proper way with authentic ambience. Thus, food tourism has the prerogative of using the dimensions of immediacy which are identified by Boniface (2003) as localness, freshness and immediate gratification.

Cohen (2002), regards food tourism as multifaceted and differentiates between gastronomy in well-developed tourist situations, where cuisines of the tourists do not differ radically from

their countries of origin, and culinary experiences in less developed destinations where local food can be strange and unfamiliar. South Africa with its multi cultural society has a specific identity and offers both types of experiences. This ought to contribute to the competitiveness of the destination. The production and consumption of tourism are important aspects to consider based on determining resource availability and catering for the needs of the clientele.

Food tourism, in the tourism industry, can be regarded as a form of niche, special interest or alternative tourism. As a result of escalating competition and a change in traveller wants in terms of destination experiences, food tourism is now more frequently being included as a new or additional sector in the travel and tourism business (Hall *et al.*, 2003b; Poon, 1993; Ritchie & Crouch, 2000; van Westering *et al.*, 2000). Food is thus achieving the status of an attraction in its own right by providing tourists the following: the opportunity to visit a destination for a specific event such as a gourmet festival; to visit a built attraction such as a winery or restaurant; and to experience the speciality products or local cuisine and culinary heritage of the specific destination (Hall *et al.*, 2003b). This situation affords food tourism the opportunity to be an important source of marketable images and experiences for the tourist, reinforcing the competitiveness and sustainability of the destination (Quan & Wang, 2003; Richards, 2002).

- **Markets:** The identification of the appropriate markets and the positioning of food as an attraction are essential for effective sustainable and competitive food tourism. Boyne, Hall and Williams (2003) contend that there is a **lack of knowledge and understanding** of consumer behaviour with regard to food in the context of leisure and tourism. The result is, therefore, that more attention is given to the promotion of food-related tourism activities than to meeting the needs of the food tourism consumer. This lack of knowledge complicates the market identification and positioning of food as an attraction. Fields (2002:37) supports this view and poses the question: *what food-related motivations make people want to travel?* Food as a motivator, can be placed in the four categories of motivation, namely physical, cultural, interpersonal and status/prestige, as suggested by Goeldner *et al.* (2000). This provides an explanation for the question posed by Fields (2002:37). Tourism and food motivators interrelate with one another; the relationship remains complex and the food experience and destination, which the tourist selects, is not understood in its entirety. The food tourism literature and marketing trends also reflect the different motivational categories regarding an increased interest and growth globally of food tourism. The motivators are nonetheless often intertwined with the products and services themselves. Although food can

be found in all four categories of motivation, the motivators themselves are interdependent and cannot be totally separated into a single category.

- **Lifestyle:** Lifestyle changes have been brought about because of an increased coverage regarding food and tourism in the media through magazines, cookery books, television programmes and the visibility of celebrity chefs. The exposure of food, and where it comes from, provides a signal of identity and contributes to a status symbol (Hall *et al.*, 2003b). Food also plays a more important role in our lives as we are exposed to it not only locally, but in a global context too (Sharples, 2003), giving us lifestyle identification and as frequently stated in the literature having an influence on tourism marketing trends.

The consumption of food is a complete physical, social and sensory experience and is the only tourism product that is experienced using all human senses. It is therefore without doubt that the food products of a destination can be a 'pull' factor stimulating and encouraging the destination, to provide the 'experience'. Sharing the food experience on vacation provides the ideal opportunity for interpersonal motivators to be incorporated as the context of consumption with regard to ambience and place is different (Fields, 2002). Many countries, such as Australia, are following the lifestyle approach to marketing food tourism (Canberra Tourism & Events Corporation, 2001).

Attention given to these specific issues and their interrelationships in the tourism research literature can assist in planning and implementing food tourism in destination development and establishing stakeholder co-operation, thereby contributing to destination competitiveness and sustainability.

3.2.1.3 Nature and framework of food tourism

The theoretical issues regarding the development of food tourism are still in their infancy as the relationship between food and tourism is a relatively new field of research. Much work still needs to be done to clarify the relationship (Boniface, 2003; Boyne *et al.*, 2003; Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Hall, 2003; Hall *et al.*, 2003b; Handszuh, 2000; Hjalager & Richards, 2002a; Long, 2003; Macdonald, 2001; Murray & Haraldsdóttir, 2004; Richards, 2002; Scarpato, 2002; Selwood, 2003; World Tourism Organization, 2000a; World Tourism Organization, 2000b). In the food tourism literature, several authors have offered and presented models, frameworks and various perspectives highlighting the multiplicity and complexity of linkages between food and tourism.

Scarpato (2002) advocates food tourism as a trans-disciplinary field of study, claiming scientific status based on the integration of theory and practice. Hjalager (2002:22) suggests a hierarchical model that systematically defines the 'four orders' of gastronomic tourism that reflect the increasing complexity and sophistication of the food chains. Fields (2002:37) portrays a typology of motivators for food tourism, namely physical, cultural, interpersonal, status and prestige motivators. Cohen and Avieli (2004:759) propose a neophobic (dislike new or strange foods) and neophylic (search for new or strange foods) classification to construct a typology regarding the place of food in tourism. Hall and Mitchell (2002b:79) present a three-wave model of food change in industrial society, focusing on the relationship between globalisation and localisation in food, stressing the *placefulness in food* for tourism.

Boyne, Williams and Hall (2002), introduced a new taxonomy of food tourism relationships, which is used as an organising framework relating the bi-directional development process to a theoretical basis. The bi-directional approach identified by Boyne, *et al.* (2002:92) implies initiatives which produce or encourage complementary benefits for both the tourism and food production sectors within a local or regional economy. The framework (Table 3.3) portrays a fourfold classification of tourism and food inter-relationships with related sub-themes. It is based on the division between food production-related and food consumption-related inter-relationships with direct and indirect sub-themes. This framework allows the conceptual domain and the practical initiatives in food tourism development to be approached in a more holistic academic manner. Research, policy and guidelines can be integrated with practical developments where tourism and food are being applied as tools in the development of destinations.

As editors of the book 'Tourism and Gastronomy', Hjalager and Richards (2002) developed an epistemological framework for the study of the inter-relationship between food and tourism. They argued that development of food and tourism support one another and therefore they are inter-dependent. This framework emphasises the challenge involved in maintaining the sustainability of food (gastronomic) products under growing globalisation (Hjalager & Richards, 2002b). The aim with this framework is to develop a holistic inter-disciplinary approach to the fields of food and tourism, extrapolating beyond the direct relationship of food and tourism and indicating the other important indirect ways in which these fields are related.

The indirect relationships between food and tourism are portrayed in the marketing and dissemination of local food products through tourism; the establishment of local identity

through dishes and food products; and the manner in which tourism serves as a mechanism for the globalisation of local cuisines (Cohen, 2002). This matches present trends in tourism studies where the focus is moving away from the pre-occupation with the direct relationship between tourists and locals toward the indirect, broader processes of social and cultural change and innovation incited by tourism (Cohen, 2002).

Table 3.3: Fourfold classification of tourism and food interrelationships with sub-themes

TOURISM AND FOOD INTERACTIONS	
Production-related	Consumption-related
DIRECT	DIRECT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production of the food that tourists eat including aspects such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – agri-and horticultural food production; – agricultural management systems; – food processing; – supply chain management; and – impact of tourism on destination areas' food production. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourists' consumption of food including aspects such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – tourists' food choices; – service sector management studies; – food safety issues; and – impacts of tourism on destination areas' food consumption.
INDIRECT	INDIRECT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • land, labour and capital: competition and complementarity between the tourism and food production sectors; • creation and maintenance of landscapes and settings; • creation of facilities, e.g. farm parks and farmhouse bed and breakfast; • mutually beneficial transport improvements (e.g. tourism-related transport improvements can enhance distribution opportunities for agriculture). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourists' consumption of agricultural landscapes and settings; • Food as a destination image component or marketing/promotion tool; • Consumption of agri-tourism products and services such as farm parks and visitor attractions

Source: adapted from Boyne *et al.*, 2002:92

In line with this present trend, Boniface (2003) and Long (2003) use culture as the theoretical framework to explain the ways in which food and tourism convey culture and is used culturally. The contemporary cultural aspects of the consumption of food and drink for tourism as well as the history, production and provision of food tourism as it relates to the relationships between food, drink and tourists in a variety of settings and contexts locally and globally, form the basis of this theoretical perspective.

Hall *et al.* (2003b) approach food tourism from a development, management and marketing perspective, focusing on food tourism as a mechanism for regional development. The authors suggest a research approach integrating the business aspects of food tourism with the more complex issues of identity, culture and heritage thereby connecting sustainable local food and economic systems within a global context (Hall *et al.*, 2003c).

The relationships between food and tourism have been approached from a variety of perspectives within the fields of tourism, marketing, culture and food/gastronomy/cuisine. All fields provide appropriate comprehensive frameworks for addressing food-related tourism development initiatives drawing together consumer behaviour, strategy development focusing on destination marketing and management, product development and promotion related aspects in the area of food tourism (Boyne *et al.*, 2003; Ignatov, 2003). However, the majority of the case studies reported in the present food tourism literature have a marketing approach.

In accordance with the recommendations made by Boyne *et al.* (2003), where future research should prioritise areas with the greatest immediate relevance to planners, policy makers and practitioners, this study introduces food tourism as a key element in destination marketing.

Destination marketing management and tourism destination competitiveness and sustainability, as portrayed in Chapter 2, constitute the theoretical perspective used in this study. The review of the present food tourism theory provides a strategic context for food tourism in destination marketing and subsequently contributes to identifying and establishing key elements of competitiveness from a food tourism perspective. Thus, food tourism as a key element of destination marketing, contributes to the present food tourism theory by supporting the holistic inter-disciplinary approach proposed in the literature. The advantages of the interrelationship between food tourism and destination marketing are the strengthening of marketing and dissemination of local food products through tourism; the establishment of local identity; and increased destination sustainable competitiveness through dishes and food products; and the globalisation of local and regional South African cuisine.

The use of local and regional food and the manner in which it can directly or indirectly contribute to the various elements of sustainable competitiveness in a destination will be comprehensively discussed in Section 3.3.3.

3.2.1.4 Development of food tourism strategies

A number of studies in the tourism literature reflect food tourism as: the recognition of food as part of local culture which tourists consume; an element of regional tourism promotion; a potential component of local agricultural and economic development; a differentiated product in a competitive destination market; an indicator of globalisation; and a form of tourism affected by the consumption patterns and perceived preferences of tourists (Hall *et al.*, 2003b). More specifically food tourism strategies have been developed focusing on tourism

marketing strategies at the destination level, e.g. in Canada, Australia, Britain and the USA (British Tourist Authority, 2003; Canadian Tourism Commission, 2002; Ignatov, 2003; The Economic Planning Group of Canada, 2002; Tourism Tasmania Core Strategy Development Unit, 2002; Wolf, 2002b). Studies in food and wine tourism reflect a variety of issues concerning marketing, but simultaneously highlight the need for research and strategy development regarding destination development and sustainable competitiveness (Hall, 2003; Hall & Mitchell, 2002a; Kozak, 2001; Murray & Haraldsdóttir, 2004; Wolf, 2002a; Yoon, 2002).

Economic development and the establishment of sustainable food systems can be accomplished by strategies to integrate tourism and cuisine which should be present and integrated at national, regional and local levels (Hall & Mitchell, 2002a). The reality of existing strategy formulation in many destinations is that different levels of government and industry undertake their own initiatives without consulting or co-operating with other levels (Hall & Mitchell, 2002a). Various mechanisms for promoting sustainable food systems based on the inter-relationships between food and tourism exist, and operate effectively at different levels (Figure 3.2). Hall *et al.* (2002a) however, note that it is common in Australia and the European Union for the policy activities at higher level to be implemented at the lower levels to achieve regional and local development goals.

The food tourism strategies presently developed provide information and suggestions regarding procedures and plans to be implemented in a specific destination but do not consider a more generic strategy development for food tourism. Colac Otway Shire and Colac Otway Tourism (2001) assert that many of the strategies aim to maximise the development potential of food tourism to produce benefits for private industry and the regional economy in the following ways:

- to develop businesses that produce high quality speciality foods;
- to extend the range and quality of the region's food businesses;
- to market the region as a food destination; and
- to attract high yielding food tourists.

As more destination stakeholders become aware of the importance and feasibility of developing food tourism, which is still very much part of wine tourism in many destinations, they also realise that to develop a successful food tourism product, certain development strategies must be considered and specific resources must be available. Murray and

Haraldsdóttir (2004:4) identified the following criteria that need to be in place, primarily based on wine tourism initiatives, and suggest they be considered for food tourism initiatives:

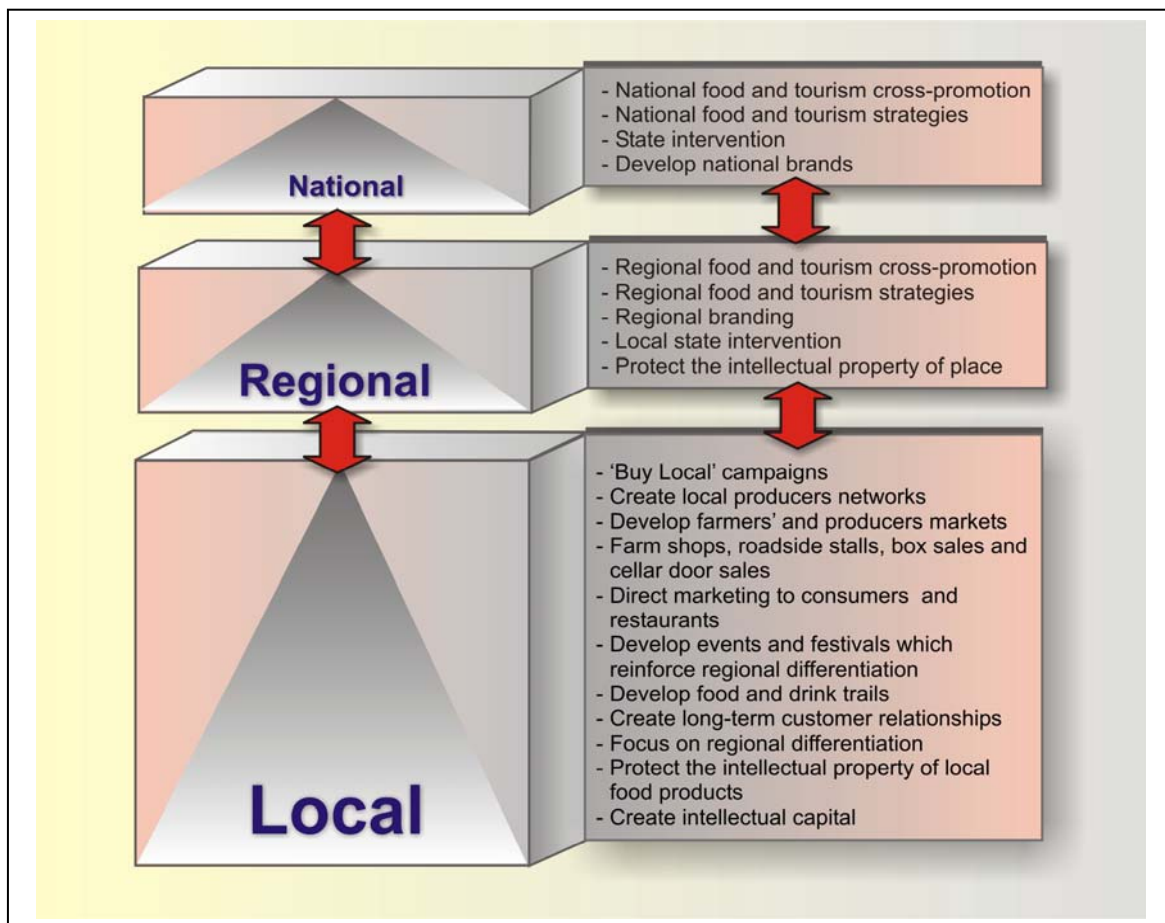


Figure 3.2: Relationship between national, regional and local strategies
(adapted from (Hall *et al.*, 2003a))

- **Multiple players** – there must be multiple food and drink activities, and attractions piggybacked on other complementary products and services, i.e. the development of cluster relationships, networking with a co-operative community-based approach to successfully develop food tourism as part of the tourism initiative in a destination.
- **Government involvement** – many of the present strategies, such as the Canadian initiative, are government driven. The potential of tourism to generate foreign currency and with tourism being one of the most important industries in South Africa, such initiatives could provide government with a good return on investments (South African Tourism, 2003). The Australian Bureau of Industry Economics suggested that governments could perform the following roles in network development, (Hall *et al.*, 2003a:39):
 - information dissemination;
 - encouraging co-operation within industries;

- improve existing networks between public sector agencies and private companies; and
 - examine the effects of existing legislation on the formation, maintenance, and break-up of networks.
-
- **Co-operation and trust** – the need and importance of cooperation amongst stakeholders is clearly emphasized in the literature. However, the challenges in achieving it are also evident. Rosenfeld (1997) noted that for stakeholders to work together there must be reciprocity and trust that will encourage professional interaction and collaborative behaviour. Hall *et al.* (2003a) reported that food and wine industries were not as positive about the tourism industry as the tourism operators' support for the food industry. Ideally, all stakeholders must collaborate with and benefit from the broader tourism industry. The social and economic benefits from cooperative relationships between stakeholders must be encouraged and promoted by champions in the industry.

 - **Leadership** – stakeholders and 'champions' need to be committed to projects and initiatives regarding food tourism for a relatively long time to ensure success. Hall *et al.* (2003a) noted that the involvement of *experts* or *knowledge brokers* contributed to the establishment of collaboration and reciprocal trust, which is critical to the development of food tourism strategies and initiatives at a destination.

 - **Long-term approach and funding** – no major initiative could come to fruition in a short period of time. Hall *et al.* (2003a) report that it has taken Australia and New Zealand several years to develop a market, acquire champions and provide funding. Briedenham and Wickens (2003) have noted that these are also the problems experienced in South Africa and that tourism promotion is deterred as a result of unilateral action, unco-ordinated programmes, duplication of effort and squandering of resources.

 - **Resources** – because of the present scarcity of relevant research, information and data regarding the use of available resources, portraying case studies and best practices are essential in assisting destinations to develop a strategy for food tourism. To assist destinations and stakeholders, such as DMOs, to develop food tourism initiatives, an analysis of the present available strategies and action plans could be performed, utilising the hierarchical model of Hjalager (2002) for the development of gastronomy tourism.

Various destinations have developed strategies or guidelines regarding food and wine tourism, e.g. Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Oregon, Tasmania, Malta, Mexico, California,

and Spain. As can be expected, the strategies reflect varying issues and aims. In the forefront are Canada and the European Union with their Culinary Heritage initiative.

The Canadian Tourism Commission has developed cuisine as a tourism product and published a paper outlining the product development strategy (Deneault, 2002). This publication is intended to serve as a practical and user-friendly tool to facilitate the packaging and enhancement of market-ready products. It is a valuable tool containing information and references to guide a stakeholder or DMO through every stage of developing food tourism products from conception to implementation (Canadian Tourism Commission, 2003). This document can also serve as a feasible point of departure for the development of a food tourism strategy for South Africa.

The European network of Regional Culinary Heritage was established in 1998 to focus interest on regional foods and to enable consumers and tourists to locate culinary resources in the region (Ohlsson, 2000). A European network for regional foods has been established by the European Commission, integrating a common logotype and criteria for participating businesses and regions, based on joint marketing activities to establish and protect uniform standards throughout Europe. The network satisfies both the consumer needs for regional foods and simultaneously contributes to the development of businesses, tourism and rural areas (Ohlsson, 2000). Information in documents of the European network of Regional Culinary Heritage provides guidelines for strategy development regarding food tourism.

From the preceding perspectives, food tourism research needs more structure, the development of a conceptual framework and the application of marketing strategies that will contribute to and support this form of niche tourism.

Hjalager (2002), proposes a hierarchical model for the development of gastronomy tourism, defining four orders of gastronomy tourism as presented in Table 3.4. The orders reflect the economic performance of food tourism and the resources available and how they are marketed and promoted. Each order requires activities to enhance the visibility and viability of gastronomy tourism from the first to the fourth order. These activities range from including food aspects in the promotional materials of the region or destination; campaigns for regional and seasonal products; regional branding or trademarks; food fairs and events; to restaurant promotions and specific signage for the first order gastronomy tourism development.

Activities for the second order include implementing and marketing quality standards; certification and branding of food providers and restaurants; reinventing and modernising

Table 3.4: Typology of value added in food tourism

	First order	Second order	Third order	Fourth order
Main output resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food production resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources in the service sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrepreneurial resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge
Expected tourist behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoy the food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience the food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exchange knowledge about the food
Principal strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher revenues through boosted production and marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining revenues through quality and reinvention of traditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering new products and services to tourists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selling know-how to professionals
Collaborative structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unchanged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforced co-operation between existing organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating new structures and service organisations, still localised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating new structures in a global context
Examples of initiatives to enhance value added	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culinary aspects in regional promotion • Campaigns for particular products • Regional food trademarks • Marketing food fairs and food events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality standards • Certification and branding • Reinventing and commodification of historical food traditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening production plants and sites • Routes and trails • Visitor centres and museums • New events based on tourism • Cooking classes and holidays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and development • Media centres • Demonstration projects

Source: adapted from Hjalager, 2002:33

historical food traditions. The third order gastronomy development entails restructuring the food experience by opening up food production elements to the tourist; establishing and marketing routes whether specific food related or an additional activity on an existing tourism or other route; establishing visitor centres and museums; creating special events based on food and tourism; and instituting cooking classes and cooking holidays. The fourth order aims at a high level of development and encompasses training for gastronomy, food science and tourism professionals, research and development regarding the needs of combined food and tourism industries; development of media centres; demonstration projects to raise new issues in food and tourism such as those developed by the European Union (EU).

Of major importance are the strategies envisioned and the activities required to develop, implement and enhance the value of food tourism in a destination. The development of food tourism along this path can benefit the local population and contribute to the competitiveness and sustainability of the destination. It could be feasible to evaluate existing strategies according to the model proposed by Hjalager (2002:33), thereby determining the level of food tourism offered in a destination; the possibilities available and the goals to be achieved.

3.3 LOCAL AND REGIONAL FOOD WITHIN THE TOURISM CONTEXT

As Governments in developing countries increasingly embrace international tourism, they should not underestimate the importance of food as a vital part of their overall development and marketing strategies (Elmont, 1995). The use of local food can directly or indirectly contribute to the various elements of sustainability in a particular area as portrayed in Figure 3.3, namely: stimulating and supporting agricultural activity and food production; preventing authentic exploitation; enhancing destination attractiveness; empowerment of the community (by means of job creation and encouraging entrepreneurship); generating pride, specifically regarding food; and reinforcing brand identity of the destination with the focus on food experiences in that area (Telfer & Wall, 1996). Furthermore, food service is a generator of jobs and income that is of major importance to the tourism sector in developing countries, including South Africa, and can contribute to the establishment of a destination that is both sustainable and competitive (Elmont, 1995).

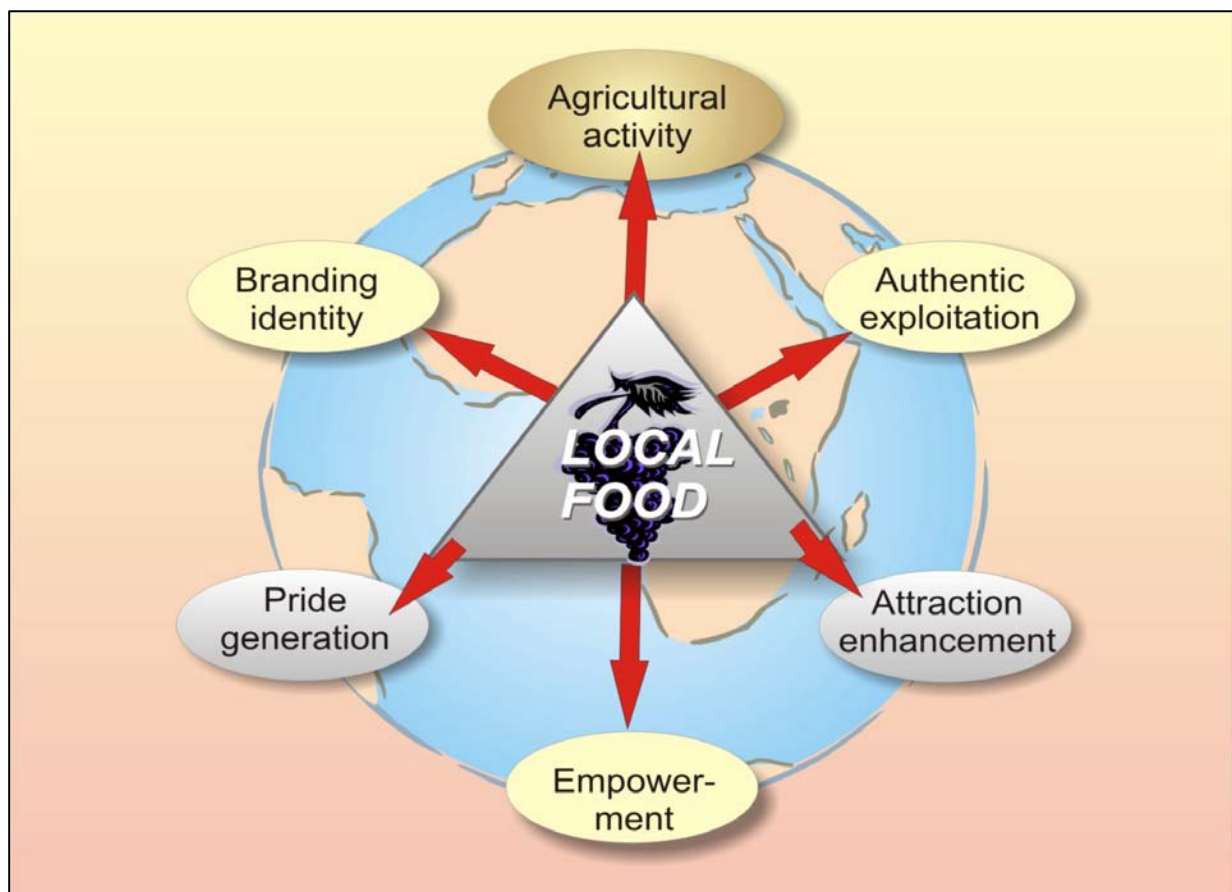


Figure 3.3: The contribution of local food to sustainable destination competitiveness

The reality regarding food tourism is that local food, in the form of regional cuisine, is rarely present as an important resource in publicity material and promotional messages prepared

for mainstream tourism (Frochot, 2003; Handszuh, 2000). It is usually presented as an attraction, promoting a destination or entire country, according to Cohen and Avieli (2004). This also appears to be the case in South Africa and therefore it has become essential to explore opportunities to promote food tourism and more specifically its culinary heritage (du Rand *et al.*, 2003). The popular perception that food is regarded as a given, relative to other attractions, as tourists need to eat, needs to be challenged. A key question that has to be answered is '*if local and regional food does not hold a sufficiently strong appeal to attract visitors, can it not be elevated as a key attraction in many destinations with considerable untapped potential?*'

In their research *Food in tourism: Attraction and impediment*, Cohen and Avieli (2004) acknowledge the impediments of food in tourism; outline the constraints experienced; and proceed to provide and discuss the different ways in which culinary establishments facilitate the procedures to overcome the constraints. Hall *et al.* (2003a) report that the developed world is experiencing an increased interest in local and regional food products as a promotional medium. They furthermore imply that long-term global competitive advantage can be gained by capitalising on what is unique and different to a destination (Hall *et al.*, 2003a). Therefore, to thrive in the global food and tourism environment, the promotion of the interrelationships between local and regional food products and tourism should be established and become an essential component of the place marketing and development mix (Hall *et al.*, 2003a).

When developing the food potential of a particular area, the warning should be heeded to, that the presence of tourists might negatively influence the local culture. Appropriate planning and co-ordination is therefore essential to prevent the altering of social values and diminishing standards concerning food production (Cohen & Avieli, 2004; Handszuh, 2000; Nield *et al.*, 2000). Cohen and Avieli (2004) contend that *local food* only becomes acceptable if it is transformed to meet the needs, desires and tastes of the tourist and, in contrast to other research reported, challenges food as a mere attraction by highlighting the complications and impediments of food in tourism. Care must therefore be taken to ensure that definite checks and balances are in place to prevent exploitation of the local community and environment, thereby assuring the sustainability of food tourism as not purely an income generating activity but also as a cultural enhancement activity, ultimately contributing to the sustainability of the destination.

Furthermore, local and regional food poses a challenge to food tourism stakeholders by using the *dimensions of immediacy* as identified by Boniface (2003:166) namely, *localness*,

freshness and immediate gratification. These issues become further intensified by distinctiveness with the development of food tourism in a destination. These dimensions can be applied as the strengths of food as an attraction. They are the attributes of food that make the difference when used in a fitting way as a marketing tool.

The opportunity for a tourist to sample the foods of a destination also contributes positively to the region. Handszuh (2000), argues that local food holds much potential to enhance sustainability in tourism. The tourism planner and the entrepreneur should work hand in hand to satisfy the consumers; contribute to the authenticity of the destination; strengthen the local economy; and provide for the environmentally-friendly infrastructure, including the ways and means by which food resources, both local and imported are handled. This approach is not always common practice at the local level. Traditionally many local people did not hold their own cuisine in high regard, and often viewed it as not being sophisticated enough and definitely not something a tourist would want (Kapner, 1996).

Local and regional food hold great potential for contributing to sustainability in tourism by, *inter alia*, broadening and enhancing the local and regional tourism resource base; adding value to the authenticity of the destination; strengthening the local economy (both from a tourism and agricultural perspective); and by providing for environmentally-friendly infrastructure. To achieve success in food tourism it is important to link food to the image of the destination and the experiences it offers. This can result in 'creative tourism' and forms the basis of active tourism experiences where the tourist participates in a creative activity and skill development or consumes a tourism experience (Fields, 2002; Richards & Raymond, 2000).

The concepts of culinary heritage, authenticity and local food are paramount in the development and implementation of food tourism in a destination and are outlined in Section 3.2.1.1.

3.3.1 Culinary heritage

As food is considered a reflection of the culture of a country and its people, the identification of the culinary heritage reflected in a destination focuses on two aspects of local and regional food. One aspect is traditional food, where old recipes from the region are used. The other aspect is the use of local products. Culinary Heritage incorporates aspects from all food sectors, such as agriculture, fisheries, gastronomy, small-scale food-production, farm diversification, the hospitality industry, small and medium sized enterprises and the cultural

sector. Culinary Heritage is a way of promoting regional foods, and aims at emphasising the cultural and specific characteristics of regions in a country, thereby deepening the regional identity of a destination (Ohlsson, 2000).

Gastronomy develops and evolves as a result of the changes taking place in the living culture (Richards, 2002). The sustainable development of food tourism therefore concerns not only preserving the past but also experiencing the present and creating new experiences in the future (Richards, 2002). The strength of food tourism as a cultural resource lies within its adaptability to change, which according to Richards (2002) can be through globalisation and localisation. The culinary heritage of a destination can be used to distinguish one destination from another by reflecting on what is unique to it as a destination. In the case of South Africa, where the presence of various cultural and language groups all contribute to the culinary heritage as a distinguishing trait, an experience still currently primarily unknown globally, food can be used as a marketing tool and be developed as an additional tourism attraction.

3.3.2 Authenticity

Authenticity, according to Long (2003), is the hallmark of tourism experiences and includes food tourism, as it is the culmination of agriculture, culture and tourism. Food tourism activities are often so-called designed experiences such as a meal at an ethnic restaurant. Very often the aim is specifically to create an authentic experience at the cost of true authenticity (Long, 2003). This practice can occur as a result of the market adapting to consumer needs and wants and at the same time contending with competition. However, losing sight of the acceptance and enjoyment of the unknown and often unfamiliar 'authentic' experience would be detrimental. Moreover, it should be kept in mind that not all tourists are equally inclined to choose an unusual food experience as they would not feel comfortable. Food and culinary experiences regarded as strange in less developed destinations must provide the tourist with an authentic and also still acceptable experience (Cohen, 2002; Long, 2003). Food tourism, however, offers stakeholders opportunities and challenges to develop new and even more unfamiliar experiences for the tourist seeking authentic culinary experiences (Long, 2003).

Tourists enjoy indigenous food, particularly items of local or ethnic nature (Wagner, 2001). Many tourism suppliers have tried to meet tourist demand for ethnic or authentic and traditional food, resulting in the *emergent authenticity* of dishes offered in tourist resorts (Fields, 2002:39). Furthermore, knowledge of the local, regional and national cuisine has

become a source of interest for tourists (Chappel, 2001; Gallagher, 2001). Macdonald (2001), Bessiere (1998) and Santich (1999) report that the number of people interested in travelling for gastronomical reasons is increasing. The challenge in offering of gastronomical experiences lies in the fine balance of authenticity and acceptance. Whilst most tourists interested in the cuisine of another country and its inhabitants would be willing to try the new or unknown eating experience not all tourists are comfortable in eating food that is very strange to their own palate (Kleynhans, 2003).

3.3.3 Local food

Burnett (2000:29) regards cuisine as *one of the easiest ways by which cultures regain some distinction in the global marketplace*. Food 'speaks' for a national identity of a country or a specific region. South African cuisine also complies with this viewpoint and certain dishes are regarded as 'national'. These include dishes and practices such as a braai, bobotie, biltong and pap, reflecting the traditional dishes of the country and in some instances used by the tourism industry as a promotional tool².

It is apparent that food tourism has considerable potential to enhance visitor experiences and contribute to the branding and competitive marketing of destinations. It is, however, important to ensure that the authentic cuisine of a region and marketable local and regional foods are presented in a delicate manner. If food is changed only to suit the taste of foreign tourists, then traditional foods and specialities of the region would be lost, having far-reaching and even negative implications for the sustainability of the community and development in general (Chappel, 2001).

Local and regional food definitely hold great possibilities for the promotion of sustainable competitiveness at a destination, from both a tourism development and a destination marketing perspective. The development of a framework and guidelines for developing and implementing food tourism can enable destination marketers and current and prospective entrepreneurs to optimise the tourism opportunities local and regional food can offer.

Swarbrooke (1999) stresses the merit of reinforcing sustainable responsibility on the part of the destination and the tourist through education with regard to local foods. In particular, they

² The dishes and practices mentioned above as part of the national identity of South African cuisine are: **braai** – a barbeque that includes meat such as beef, lamb and traditional sausage *boerewors*; **bobotie** – a dish made of curried flavoured ground lamb or beef covered with a custard-like topping and baked in the oven; **biltong** – spiced meat that is air dried and eaten as a snack; **pap** – finely ground cornmeal cooked with water and eaten as a cereal or side dish similar to polenta.

should be informed regarding the ingredients, what they are called in the local language and how they form part of the local cuisine and culinary heritage of the specific region and destination.

3.4 THE ROLE OF FOOD IN DESTINATION MARKETING

Prior to discussing best practices in the field, attention is drawn to the general role of food in destination marketing. The analysis of the relevant tourism literature and the promotional material of various destinations indicate that, in spite of its potential, the contribution of food to sustainable tourism and its role in the marketing of destinations, has until recently received very little attention globally as well as in South Africa. These observations are reinforced in a study undertaken during 2000 by the World Tourism Organization, where food and drink products of a destination were deemed to be one of the most important cultural expressions of a destination (Bernard & Zaragoza, 1999; Handszuh, 2000; Hjalager & Corigliano, 2000). Furthermore, no studies determining the role and importance of local and regional food concerning food tourism in South Africa have been undertaken.

The destination is the central point around which all revolves in tourism. Therefore, according to Ritchie and Crouch (2000) the most important product in tourism is the destination experience. Destination attractions and the experiences they offer are becoming the competitive edge of tourism destinations and are receiving more attention and funding regarding promotion (Ritchie & Crouch, 2000). The support of destination attraction development and competitive marketing strategies by tourism stakeholders can contribute to successful tourism in a region. Furthermore, it can also help to improve destination competitiveness and contribute to sustainability in a region. Tourists and visitors will receive more benefits from travel experiences if the tourism destination and attractions are appropriately developed and marketed (Yoon, 2002). Enhancement of the tourism experience, of which the food experience is one of the major components, could therefore be achieved.

Food, local and regional, as one of the important components of food tourism, holds great potential to contribute to sustainable competitiveness in a destination, from both a tourism development and a destination marketing perspective. The promotion of local and regional food is an effective way of supporting and strengthening the tourism and agricultural sectors of local economies by preserving culinary heritage and adding value to the authenticity of the destination; broadening and enhancing the local and regional tourism resource base; and stimulating agricultural production. The development of a framework and guidelines for

developing and implementing food tourism can enable destination marketers and current and prospective entrepreneurs to optimise the tourism potential of local and regional food in the tourism industry. Boyne *et.al.* (2003) verify the need for a framework that allows for stakeholder co-operation to thus achieve effective implementation of food tourism marketing strategies.

Local food enhances the appeal of a destination, and eating is an important activity for tourists once at the destination (European Commission, 1999; Selwood, 2003). Tourists seeking nature and culture are particularly interested in sampling local food products and tasting authentic regional recipes. According to the Euro-barometer survey (European Commission, 1999) more and more attention is being paid to the origin of food, i.e. local and regional specialties and locally produced goods. Based on these perspectives it can be argued that local and regional food is a feature that can add value to a destination (Boyne *et al.*, 2003; Handszuh, 2000; Telfer & Wall, 1996) and contribute to its sustainable competitiveness (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999).

Tourists enjoy indigenous food, particularly items of a local or ethnic nature (Wagner, 2001). Furthermore, knowledge of the local, regional and national cuisine has become of interest to tourists (Chappel, 2001; Gallagher, 2001). Santich (1999), Macdonald (2001) and Bessiere (1998) report that more and more people are motivated to travel for gastronomical experiences. In spite of these trends, gastronomy has not been able to realise its true potential (Bernard & Zaragoza, 1999; Selwood, 2003); nor exploited expediently as a tourism resource. However, food is seldom the key reason for visiting a destination and more often than not is merely seen as part of another attraction, e.g. accommodation or culture. Food is simply a necessary element of the tourists' survival (Hjalager & Richards, 2002b; Long, 2003; 2003). However, it is fast becoming one of the most important attractions, as tourists seek new and authentic experiences and alternative forms of tourism (Boyne *et al.*, 2003; Crouch & Ritchie, 1999; Hjalager & Richards, 2002b; 2003).

This very paradox creates the opportunity for food tourism to become an important and appealing facility at a destination. Correct marketing, through sound product development, packaging, positioning and promotion of the attraction, can capitalise on the resources and attractions to benefit all concerned (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999). Destination marketing and food tourism have already been discussed in Chapter 2 and comment in this section serves only to reiterate that a destination cannot afford to ignore the importance of food as a key and, more often than not, a supportive attraction.

In the process of developing food tourism at South African destinations with food as a destination product and a marketing tool, sustainable destination competitiveness would improve through viable marketing strategies to benefit communities, tourists, and providers alike.

3.4.1 Food as a Destination Product

A successful tourism destination is, among others, evaluated by the positive reports of visitors to the area, the amount of money spent per capita and prospects of repeat visits to the destination. In this regard, Murphy, *et al.* (2000) argue that visitors consume the products of a destination, therefore the products must be something the visitor wants and needs. An additional thought gleaned from the literature indicates that food and drink products of a country can be among its most important cultural expressions (Bernard & Zaragoza, 1999; Handszuh, 2000; Hjalager & Corigliano, 2000). On a practical level, a nation's identity is reflected and strengthened by the food experiences that it offers. The way, in which various ingredients are combined and cooked, forms an important element of a national cultural identity (Bessiere, 1998; Cusack, 2000). Based on these perspectives, it can be argued that local and regional food is a feature that can add value to a destination (Handszuh, 2000; Telfer & Wall, 1996), and furthermore contribute to the sustainable competitiveness of a destination (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999).

It is necessary to determine the role of food as a tourism resource. As a product of a destination, it plays a role in the tourism experience offered and marketed by the destination. The attractions and products of a destination can be categorised as key and supporting resources (Fields, 2002). Key attractions reflect the strongest pulling power and represent the key motivational factors for a tourist to select a specific destination and experience. Supporting attractions supplement a tourist's experience but do not represent a prime motive for selecting a specific destination. Food is more commonly regarded as a supportive attraction and only in countries such as France and Italy can gastronomy be regarded as a key attraction (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Fields, 2002).

In marketing food as a destination product the prospective client should be able to visualise the food experience as one that would be different and exclusive, strongly typifying the identity of the destination.

3.4.2 Food as a Marketing Tool

Tourist satisfaction, according to Fields (2002), depends on the image tourists have of the destination prior to visiting the destination and experiencing the attractions. When promoting and marketing food tourism it is important to keep this in mind and address the pre-consumption knowledge of the tourist (Phelps, 1986). At present both television and the printed media are playing a major role in converging food and destinations (Fields, 2002; Hall *et al.*, 2003b). Popular media is thus a powerful tool that can be used by DMOs to market their destinations and promote the food of a region. It can assist the destinations in creating images of *culturally distinct and gastronomically attractive destinations ...to create a sense of anticipation among tourists which should stimulate demand* (Fields, 2002:45). Fields' (2002) vision is that the parallel development of tourism and food experiences may contribute to the ability of destinations to differentiate them in the globalising tourism market, a happening that would indeed benefit an up and coming destination.

Tourism is an intangible that needs to be 'tangible' by its images. Food and the hedonistic experience it provides is an appropriate product to assist in achieving this. Images of the uniqueness regarding the food of the destination can be utilised to build and strengthen an image in the minds of prospective tourists. Fields accentuates the fact that besides providing the destination with a more up-market image, food tourism also strengthens cultural distinctiveness and identity (Fields, 2002). Food tourism has a reciprocal role, being simultaneously sustained through tourism via food and culinary heritage and promoting the culture of the destination (Bessiere, 1998; Cusack, 2000; Dunbar-Hall, 2001; Hegarty & O'Mahony, 1999; Long, 1998; Long, 2003; Ohlsson, 2000; Ritchie & Zins, 1978; Roberts, 2002; Stebbins, 1997; Stewart, 2004; Wolf, 2002b; World Tourism Organization, 2000b).

The Internet is increasingly serving as an advertising medium, one that focuses on individual consumer needs (Fields, 2002). By its very nature, it requires access to and competent use of the required technology. The website is utilised in marketing as a type of mix between direct selling and advertising, where it is designed to generate awareness, explain the product and provide information (Berton *et al.*, 1996). Tourism marketing is no exception and too is being led away from traditional mass media and towards this new form of advertising media. It is worth noting Richards' (1996) view that it is aimed specifically at the skilled consumer wishing to achieve new tourism experiences. Marketing via the Internet has immense potential for food tourism where the tourism product can be supported by the food product. Up until now this aspect has not come to fruition as there is no supportive

knowledge management strategy in place to achieve this nor has the tourism industry exploited the potential of the Internet to link food and tourism needs of potential visitors (Fields, 2002).

Marketing comprises much more than just the advertising of the product, good or service. According to George (2001) marketing concerns meeting the consumers' needs and wants as well as the promotion and sale of the product. This is of utmost importance, particularly in the tourism industry, as nearly 100% of tourists dine out when travelling (Wolf, 2002b). Food tourism is part of the destination product that needs to be promoted to achieve destination competitiveness and sustainability.

As a result of the immense growth of the Internet as a communication and information medium, destination marketing systems have adapted and become Web-based (Rita, 2000). Food tourism forms part of this marketing requirement and needs to be:

- incorporated into the web site design;
- promoted via the website; and
- contributing to effective marketing of the destination.

Prospective tourists visit the destinations based on the information to which they are exposed. As a result of the wealth of information available on the World Wide Web, tourists are using this source as the primary source of destination information (Rita, 2000). This reinforces the need for a knowledge management strategy to be in place and to be implemented in the tourism industry.

For emerging destinations, such as South Africa, to compete with leading destinations and meet or improve on their food tourism initiatives, it is important to learn from existing best practices and then benchmark the country's initiatives against global best practices. Current global best practices are discussed in Section 3.5.

3.5 BEST PRACTICES

Best practices are defined by Dube, Enz, Renaghan and Siguaw (1999:16) as *exemplary or successfully demonstrated ideas or activities that are viewed by at least some observers as top-notch standards for guiding benchmarking*. Best practices are intended to maximise the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of services and products delivered to consumers and, are identified by the relationship between practice and performance (Davis & Kochlar, 2000).

They are considered as repeatable and successful procedures which have been proven over time in more than one instance (Berglund, 2005; Shiring *et al.*, 2001). Selecting best practices prevents mistakes being made in industry by enabling stakeholders to build on the knowledge and expertise of others, without reinventing the wheel (Berglund, 2005). The reason for adapting to best practices is to use all the knowledge and technology available to ensure success and improve product and service delivery.

Best practices can be generated by establishing a knowledge management system to enable collation of the positive results from industry as it employs a holistic approach through the acquisition, creation, organising, sharing and applying of knowledge (Gupta *et al.*, 2002; Jackson, 2002; Malhotra, 2000). Through knowledge management the transfer of best practices i.e. the 'best way' to identify, collect, evaluate, disseminate, and implement information and monitor outcomes is achieved (Gupta *et al.*, 2002; Jackson, 2002; Malhotra, 2000). These processes are necessary in the fragmented tourism industry and are addressed by the development of a culinary database, FOODPAT, as discussed in Chapters 5 and 7.

3.5.1 Best Practices in Food Tourism

The reason why best practices need to be studied is among others, as a result of increased pressure that the tourism industry is receiving regarding sustainable competitiveness (Kotler *et al.*, 1999; Porter, 1990). A set of best practices could be useful for benchmarking and accomplishing improvements in the tourism industry focusing on food tourism. Kotler *et al.* (1999:7) identify five primary reference points around which best practices in destination marketing are structured, namely:

- *the tourist;*
- *the destination;*
- *the tourism service supplier;*
- *the citizen; and*
- *the public/private coordinator.*

These reference points were used as a guideline and a review of current trends and best practices focusing on food tourism was conducted. As this study highlighted the use of local food as a marketing tool in destination marketing, the focus was on the practices and products used in food tourism. The position of food as a form of niche tourism in the tourism

field and the marketing thereof was identified, and provides insights into the reference points mentioned above.

This assessment is by no means a complete assessment of all products and practices, but merely an overview of what types of actions, activities, attractions and events are presently being offered in the tourism industry regarding successful food tourism. The importance of performing an assessment of best practices for this study was to identify the rationale of products and practices included in food tourism offered internationally. Furthermore, to include the identified products and practices as a component of the stakeholder survey, as it allowed stakeholders and DMOs to benchmark themselves in the execution of tasks for the provision of food tourism as an attraction in a destination. The range of best practices was also used to develop the tools that formed an important assessment component in the Strategic Food Tourism Destination Marketing Framework, as outlined in Chapter 7.

3.5.2 Practices and Products in Food Tourism

There are many examples of how the interrelationship between food, wine, tourism and regional development has been put into practice around the world, by either the development and promotion of a specific product, course, event, service or any combination of products and services (Boniface, 2003; Boyne *et al.*, 2002; Corigliano, 2002; Hall *et al.*, 2003b; Macdonald, 2001; Richards, 2002; Scarpato, 2002; Sharples, 2003; Wolf, 2002a). Numerous publications illustrate this relationship in countries such as the **USA, New Zealand, Australia and various countries in Europe** (Boniface, 2003; Cambourne & Macionis, 2003; Hall, 2003; Hall *et al.*, 2003b; Hassan & Hall, 2003; Murray & Haraldsdóttir, 2004; Sharples, 2003) in **Canada** (Deneault, 2002; Murray & Haraldsdóttir, 2004; Selwood, 2003; Telfer & Hashimoto, 2003) and many **other countries** (Bernard & Zaragoza, 1999; Chang & Yeoh, 1999; Cusack, 2000; Demhardt, 2003; Haas, 2002; Handszuh, 2000; World Tourism Organization, 2000a).

Examples such as food and wine tourism networks exist in Australia and New Zealand, where in many cases it is the well-established wine industry that serves as a catalyst in the development of a lagging food tourism industry (Cambourne & Macionis, 2003; Hall, 2003a; Smith & Hall, 2003). Likewise the promotion of local foods and wine in restaurants help to build and strengthen such networks (Cambourne & Macionis, 2003; Constantineau, 2003; Hall *et al.*, 2003a; Smith & Hall, 2003; Wolf, 2002b). Tourism New Zealand's web campaign focuses on food, wine and garden tourism and offers an integrated tourist experience with stronger and more established attractions supporting the lesser-developed attractions such

as food tourism (Tourism New Zealand, 2004). The German Federal Government launched their 'Culinary Germany' campaign during the late 1990s and are benefiting from a well-established food tourism marketing initiative, which has grown even stronger by also being web based (German National Tourist Board, 2005). A number of regions and locations in Europe, especially those in France and Italy, use their food and/or wine reputation for tourism promotion, e.g. Burgundy, Champaign, Bordeaux, Tuscany (Bessiere, 1998; Corigliano, 2002; Santich, 1999). Other countries that have developed food/food and wine tourism as an important component of their tourism strategy are Britain, Scotland, Canada, the USA, Singapore and most recently China (Boniface, 2003; Boyne *et al.*, 2002; British Tourist Authority, 2003; Canadian Tourism Commission, 2002; Chang & Yeoh, 1999; Deneault, 2002; Economic Planning Group of Canada, 2002; Ooi, 2001; Quan & Wang, 2003; Stewart, 2000; Stewart, 2004; Telfer & Hashimoto, 2003; Wolf, 2002a; Wolf, 2004).

Initiatives regarding the development and implementation of food tourism range from food tourism strategies (Deneault, 2002); the establishment of food tourism networks and regional development (Haas, 2002; Hall *et al.*, 2003a; Murray & Haraldsdóttir, 2004; Wolf, 2002b); food tourism marketing activities and branding strategies (Hall *et al.*, 2003b; Handszuh, 2000; Wolf, 2002b); the development of food events, food festivals, local product promotion (Boniface, 2003; Boyne *et al.*, 2002; British Tourist Authority, 2003; Constantineau, 2003; Kapner, 1996; Meyer-Czech, 2003; Ohlsson, 2000; Rusher, 2003); culinary heritage identification (Boniface, 2003; Cusack, 2000; Flandrin *et al.*, 1999; Handszuh, 2000; Long, 1998; Long, 2003; Ohlsson, 2000; Symons, 1999); and the development of a variety of food related activities such as gourmet cooking holidays, special food courses, gourmet food festivals, farmers markets, food and wine tours and dedicated food routes and trails (Bernard & Zaragoza, 1999; Bessiere, 1998; Boniface, 2003; Boyne *et al.*, 2002; British Tourist Authority, 2003; Cambourne & Macionis, 2003; Kadera, 2002; Lockie, 2001; Meyer-Czech, 2003; Roberts & Hall, 2004; Sharples, 2003; Telfer & Hashimoto, 2003; Wolf, 2002a).

These global, and to an increasing extent, local initiatives, provide sufficient reason to encourage DMOs to develop similar and competitive food tourism products and activities in their own destinations. The framework and tools developed and outlined in this paper can further help DMOs to develop and implement these initiatives.

The above are all examples of the different initiatives unfolding regarding food and food and wine tourism. South Africa, as a developing country, with its multicultural society, and resource availability has the opportunity to be added to this list if the potential of food tourism is developed and marketed appropriately.

3.6 CONCLUSION

Current limited awareness of the needs of the food tourist and little information gathered regarding consumer needs makes it difficult to develop a quality food tourism product (Fields, 2002).

Many researchers in the tourism literature have identified destination marketing as an imperative process contributing to sustainable competitiveness in a destination. Local and regional food hold great potential to contribute to sustainable competitiveness in a destination and needs to be incorporated into the destination marketing strategy of a destination such as the various tourism regions of South Africa. As the sustainable competitive destination becomes more imperative, the importance of niche market tourism such as food tourism becomes an increasingly valuable source of new products and activities to attract tourists. According to Wolf (2004:1) *cuisine has emerged as the sole component of the visitor experience that still holds potential for further development.*

The conceptual framework for food tourism destination marketing is presented in Chapter 4 to contextualise the concepts and determine the interrelationships between destination marketing, destination competitiveness and food.