



# Preference of International and Domestic Tourists Towards Rajasthani Cuisine with Special Reference to Food Tourism in Rajasthan

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**Abstract:** Rajasthan is known for its majestic forts, vibrant festivals, and mouth-watering cuisine. It is a land rich in history and culture. Rajasthan's gastronomic scene has become a major attraction point for both domestic and foreign travelers in recent years, contributing substantially to the state's booming tourism industry. With an emphasis on the distinctive Rajasthani Cuisine, this study investigates the gastronomic choices of both domestic and foreign visitors to the culturally vibrant state of Rajasthan, India. As a developing segment of the travel industry, food tourism plays a very important role in determining the experiences and preferences of tourists. This Study purposeful on present support the taste perception on food preferences among international and local tourists towards Rajasthan cuisine, so that proper suggestive measures could be given to culinary tourism stakeholders to attract more tourists. The study adopts a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative methods to gather extensive knowledge about the culinary preferences of travelers. Surveys, interviews, and observations conducted at different Rajasthani tourist attractions are some of the methods used to collect data. Results prove that it is not just the gustatory properties of food that impact the taste perception on food choice for Rajasthani cuisine but also two elements constitute at major are appearance and flavour. The scores of these extracted factors were finally compared among domestic and international tourists to know whether different weightages were given by them to these factors. The study underscores the importance of culinary infrastructure development, including the establishment of food trails, food festivals, and culinary museums, in enhancing the overall food tourism ecosystem of Rajasthan. The study offers views in-depth at how tourist' overall satisfaction and inclination to return to Rajasthan are influenced by their culinary experiences. The study aims to demonstrate the potential impact of culinary attractions on destination loyalty by examining the relationship between meals that satisfy the overall trip satisfaction.

**Keywords-** Tourist, Flavour, Food tourism, Regional food, Cuisine, Rajasthani cuisine

## 1. Introduction

"Food tourism is the act of traveling to experience the taste of a local place in regulate to increase a sense of that place." [1]. The main inspiration of food tourism is to experience a specific local dishes along with host culture while travelling. As per the research statistics shared by world food tour organization, travellers spent roughly 25% of their travel budget on food and refreshments and if the destination is expensive this figure can go up to 35%. Overall, the range lies between 15% to 35%. The Food in travel industry became a parameter of standard since the tourism industry opened up on social media and varied travel shows [2]. Currently, it incorporates the full scope of involvement like cooking classes, attending food fairs and festivals, exploring street food, visiting wineries, cafes, meeting culinary specialist and so forth, in direct to sample authentic cuisine. Food tourism, characterized by the pursuit of authentic culinary experiences, has emerged as a prominent niche within the broader tourism industry [3].

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“Culinary tourism, an aspect of the travel industry, involves venturing beyond one's local area to discover exceptional food” [4]. The culinary and travel industries encompass any travel experience in which an individual learns about, enjoys, consumes, or appreciates dishes and beverages that reflect the local cuisine, heritage, or culture of the destination. The more people venture to different regions of the country, the more extensive the scope of culinary encounters they appreciate [5]. It is not concerning the foodstuff they eat or is not tied in with eating extravagantly, but the food and travel industry is more about eating bravely to search out new culinary.

There is a strong relationship between tourist destinations and food images. Food in the travel industry incorporates exercises like cooking workshops or classes, food tours, wine, brew, food celebrations, and speciality eating encounters [6]. As per International Culinary Tourism Association, culinary tourism is upward dramatically at a consistent rate. With expanding curiosity in food videos channels, travel illustrates attributing local food, narratives on food, and online digital culinary travel shows, explorers are going to different lengths just to take pleasure in the delight of another food experience [7].

### 1.1 Food Tourism in India

Many travellers are motivated by sightseeing, while for others, it is imperative to notice the local markets and shops. There is a third category of travellers whose main objective is to seek the exclusive cuisine and regional food of some foreign terrain [8]. Food tourism is a thriving trend among travellers whose objective is to understand the food of a specific country or location [9]. Hence, as food is directly associated to the customs of any country or place [10], through food tourism, travellers also understand the singularity of that culture and society indirectly. Some travellers often dine on the varieties that address the host food culture. As the reliable food knowledge and experience grows, there is a call for to assess the environmental, social, and economic implications of culinary tourism on local communities, ecosystems, and cultural heritage sites [11].

India is hard to bundle, particularly in food [12], considering the chance that if we break it state-wise, the understanding of regional dishes changes after every 100 kilometres and tourist will get a perplexing, powerful menu that makes the adventure of revelation [13]. Until a few years back, the concept of culinary tourism was unpopular in India. One of the study states that Indians nowadays are mainly traveling in search of tastes [14]. Most tourists, whether they are international or Indian, during holidays, cull their travel destinations based on the diversity of the famous cuisines available at that specific place [15].

Indian food is not new to international travellers, worldwide explorers are well acquainted with the assorted Indian cuisines [16]. In India, some famous food dishes destinations are Delhi, Kochi, Kolkata, Agra, Punjab, Delhi, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Mumbai, Varanasi and Udaipur, etc. As the demand for authentic culinary experiences continues to grow, it is imperative to prioritize the creation of value-added food tourism offerings that enrich travellers' journey, foster destination loyalty, and contribute to the economic and socio-cultural development of food destinations worldwide [17].

### 1.2 Culinary Tourism in Rajasthan

Rajasthan, known as the “Land of the Kings”, is famous for its remarkable history, royal palaces and architecture but the voyage of the largest state of India is incomplete without feasting on Rajasthani cuisine. Rajasthan is serving dishes are simple and straightforward, yet unusual, tasty, and visually appealing [18]. Mouth-watering Rajasthani dishes stimulate the tourist to showcase the culture of Rajasthan. The dry nature of the land and lack of water or water bodies and vegetation have seen the evolution of exceptional preparation and food propensities for the locals of Rajasthan, which are exclusive as compared to other Indian cooking styles. Just like its culture, Rajasthani gastronomy is also varied, uncommon, rich, and colourful. An array of vegetarian and non-vegetarian Rajasthani dishes is available in Rajasthani meals [19].

The scarceness of water and the insufficiency of green vegetables constrained local residents to prepare food in such a means that it did not need a large amount water and green vegetables. The food is made to last for more than a hardly any days and can also be eaten without heating [20]. Due to dried out climatic environment, people living here cultured to cook with aplenty of milk, buttermilk, cream, and curd to accumulate water.

### 2. Literature Review

Ignatov E. and Smith, S segmented culinary tourists into three categories, i.e., epicures who take an interest just in food-related exercises; second, individuals who just take part in wine-related exercises; and third, individuals who take part in both activities [21]. From the examination of a sample set of 5740 respondents, 25% fell into the first category, i.e., the food segment, whereas the wine and food section accounted for 7%, and the least amount strength, less than 4%, was for the ones who enjoy

only wine. In the food division, there were a great proportion of females with lesser educational backgrounds and lower earnings. The wine segment has a balanced proportion between males and females with an average education and a higher income. Both the wine and food segments accounted for mostly males, with higher education and high-income standards. In other views, there are three different categories of dishes, tourists who want to experience gastronomic tourism differently.

Tourism industry becoming the repositioning in the region of Rajasthan by placing the gourmet of Food dishes via festive cooking as well as legacy of Rajasthani cuisine. In tourism industry of Rajasthan, that embark the new face apart from legacy, history and colorful culture [20]. A Study disclosed about the Mardwardi Cuisine one of the cuisine of Rajasthan as Marawadi belongs to Rajasthan. In their study on developing a conceptual model for regional food utilization at excursions and events, they accessed the factors that persuade the utilization of regional food and drink in traveller objections [22]. The base of the study was beached theory, and a qualitative comes close was used to examine the local food experience. The model was built around a tourist destination and regional food consumption. The meeting method was applied to comprehend the implications that the respondents appended to concern and wonders in greater depth. The rule, in their objective, was that respondents ought to have a sufficient degree of experience with regional food and refreshments, which implies that the individuals participating had in the most recent half-year experienced local food and drinks. A total of 20 individual meetings were conducted with people living in the UK. This study identified factors influencing local food utilization and recommended a theoretical model of local food consumption. The researchers identified a total of nine factors that influence the consumption of local food and beverages, which are: tactile allure, well-being concern, learning information, real experience, harmony, and escape from routine, prestige, physical environment, and exciting experience. The suggested model, comprising multi-dimensional variables, shows a provisional clarification of the impact on how nearby food and drinks are devoured by individuals in a tourist location. This mirrors the segment attributes of members implanted in socio-social changes. The anticipated model consists of three categories, viz., motivational factors, demographic factors, and psychological factors, and it establishes a comprehension on the utilization of regional food in the objective.

### 3. Objective of the study

The main objective of this paper was to acquire the perspective of international and local tourists towards innovative Rajasthani cuisine. So that proper suggestive measures could be given to stakeholders of culinary tourism to pull more tourists and increase revenue.

### 4. Research Methodology

The research was conducted on the data composed from the most acclaimed tourist locations in the Rajasthan state of India. Five major cities were narrowed down from the list of major tourist attractions in the "Land of Kings", i.e., Rajasthan. The list started with Ajmer, Jaipur, Jaisalmer, Jodhpur, and last but not the least, Udaipur.

#### 4.1 Sampling unit

As per the requirement of the subject, the sampling units of the study were chefs, hotel and restaurant managers, and hotel and restaurant owners (referred to as hosts) along with domestic and international visitors. The data was collected in the form of two different samples. The first sample was collected from the parties, including chefs, hotel and restaurant managers, and owners. The second sample consisted of domestic as well as international travellers present in the state. Cochran's formula was used to calculate the sample size for both samples, which came to be 125 for the former and 384 for the latter case.

#### 4.2 Sampling Method

The non-probabilistic convenient sampling method was adopted for the research work as it was not feasible to collect random samples from the tourists and chefs. The feasibility was highly dependent on the respondent's will to fill out the questionnaire. Therefore, the responses were collected from interested individuals, i.e., tourists, chefs, hotel managers, and owners who were willing to fill out the questionnaire.

#### 4.3 Collection of Primary Data

For the collection of primary data from the sampling units, two self-designed questionnaires were prepared, one for the hosts and the second for tourists. The first questionnaire was designed for chefs of hotels and restaurants (hosts) in the state and consists of a total of 21 questions of mixed modes. In

both the questionnaires, queries were of diverse modes, including dichotomous, five-point Likert Scale, ranking, etc. Some open-ended questions were also included at the end of the questionnaire.

#### 4.4 Pilot Testing and Reliability of the Questionnaire

As per the feedback from experts in the field, necessary changes were made and pilot testing was conducted on 100 respondents for the questionnaire created for the tourists. The reliability of the questionnaire was checked using the Cronbach alpha testing approach. The Cronbach alpha value of Rajasthani food characteristics items was found to be 0.738, which was above the threshold value of 0.7. Hence the questionnaire is considered reliable. The measure of reliability ranges from 0 to 1, with values of 0.60 to 0.70 deemed the lower limit of acceptability.

#### 4.5 Data Analysis and Discussion

As per the needs of the research study, responses were collected from tourists visiting Rajasthan. They were asked about their thoughts on Rajasthani cuisine, its varieties, tastes, etc. A total of 384 feedback forms were obtained from various tourists in five major tourist hubs of Rajasthan, which are Jaipur, Jodhpur, Ajmer/Pushkar, Jaisalmer, and Udaipur. Every individual was given a questionnaire and asked to share their thoughts on the various questions mentioned regarding different aspects of Rajasthani cuisine. After data collection, it was analysed using appropriate tools and techniques. A detailed analysis of the gathered responses is shared below.

#### Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Type of Tourists</b>		
Indian	297	77.34
Foreigner	87	22.66
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	248	64.58
Female	136	35.42
<b>Age</b>		
Up to 25 years	108	28.13
26 - 35 years	191	49.74
36 - 45 years	66	17.19
46 - 55 years	10	2.6
56 - 65 years	9	2.34
<b>Food Preference</b>		
Vegetarian	139	36.2
Non-Vegetarian	236	61.46
Vegan	9	2.34

Table 1. depicts the distribution of respondents based on their demographic profiles. There were 77.35% of Indian tourists who came from different corners of the country and the rest 22.66% were foreigners from territories like Australia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Nepal, New Zealand, Russia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, the UK and the USA. Out of these, nearly 65% were male and 35% were female. On the bar of age, the maximum respondents (63.55%) were youth i.e., below the age of 35 years. Regarding food choice, the maximum number of individuals (61.46%) were non-vegetarian, 36.2% were vegetarian, and 2.34% were vegan.

#### Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 2. Demographic Profile of Respondents

Designation	N	%
Chef	53	43.09
Manager	56	45.53
Owner	16	11.38
<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>100</b>

The second questionnaire was developed for the hosts, which included chefs, hotel and restaurant managers, and the owners. As shown in Table III, there were 53 (43.09%) chefs, 56 (45.53%) managers, and 16 (11.38%) owners in the sample considered for the study. The average experience of these individuals (chefs, hotel, restaurant managers, and owners) was close to 14.36 years in the tourism industry, and was approximately 9.04 years with the present employment setup. Thus, we can say that the experience of the applicants was quite enriching and helped us to get the best possible data for our study.

**Frequency and Liking of ordering Rajasthani food by tourists**

Table 3. Frequency and Liking of ordering Rajasthani food by tourists

Domestic Tourists			International Tourists	
Frequency	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Frequently	42	33.6	64	51.2
Often	41	32.8	21	16.8
Sometimes	37	29.6	36	28.8
Rare	3	2.4	4	3.2
Very Rare	2	1.6	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>100</b>

Liking of Rajasthani food by tourists			International Tourists	
Domestic Tourists			International Tourists	
Liking	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Very Much	66	52.80	43	34.40
Much	41	32.80	40	32.00
It's OK	18	14.40	42	33.60
Dislike	0	0.00	0	0.00
Very Much Dislike	0	0.00	0	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>100</b>

To know about the frequency of ordering Rajasthani food, the hosts were asked about the demand for Rajasthani food placed by domestic and international visitors and how they liked the cuisine. Table III shows the distribution of the responses gathered for the same. From the table, it is clear that both domestic and international tourists ask for Rajasthani meals. Surprisingly, the frequency of Rajasthani food orders by international tourists is higher as compared to domestic tourists. The next question for the hosts was to know the extent of the fondness for the Rajasthani meal by domestic and international tourists. The response obtained depicts that both domestic and international tourists like Rajasthani food, but Rajasthani food is more admired by domestic tourists as compared to international tourists.

**5. Characteristics of Rajasthani Food**

To comprehend the preferences of domestic and international tourists about Rajasthani food and cuisine, six attributes were given for every food item to be rated on a range of five to one, five being

the highest. Respondents' ratings were then factor analysed.

Before the application of factor analysis, two pre-tests were conducted to check the sampling adequacy and multivariate normality using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure test and Bartlett's Test for the respective parameters.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.736
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The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy test, or KMO test, depicts how well-suited our data is for factor analysis. A KMO value less than 0.6 indicates that the sample is not adequate to carry out factor analysis. Since our value is above 0.6, which confirms the sampling adequacy of the data for conducting factor analysis successfully.

Bartlett's test is conducted to check if our data is multivariate normal or whether the correlation matrix is an identity matrix. If it turns out to be an identity matrix, then structure detection is not possible. A significant p-value represents that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix and, thus, structure detection is possible. The test results given above show that the approximate chi-square value is 208.035, which is significant (p<0.001). It also indicates that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix and our data is multivariate normal, so structure detection is possible.

**Bartlett's Test of Sphericity**

Table 4. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity

Approx. Chi-Square	208.035
Df	15
Result	*** (p<0.001)

As shown in Table 4, after a detailed analysis and satisfactory results of the pre-conditional checks of conducting factor analysis, exploratory factor analysis was performed on the characteristics of Rajasthani food using the principal component method. The Varimax rotation was used to rotate the factors, and only those factors were retained whose Eigenvalue was more than 1. As a result, two factors were extracted, explaining approximately 54% of the total variance. The first factor explains 29.251% of the variance, and the second factor, on the other hand, explains 24.38% of the total variance.

**Total Variance Explained**

Table 5. Total Variance Explained

Initial Eigenvalues			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings			
Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
	1.849	30.815	30.815	1.755	29.251	29.251
	1.369	22.816	53.631	1.463	24.380	53.631

**Factor Loadings**

Table 6. Factor Loadings

Characteristics	1	2
Presentation	0.728	
Color	0.677	
Ingredients	0.664	
Taste		0.773
Richness in Spices		0.729
Unique Style of Cooking		0.554

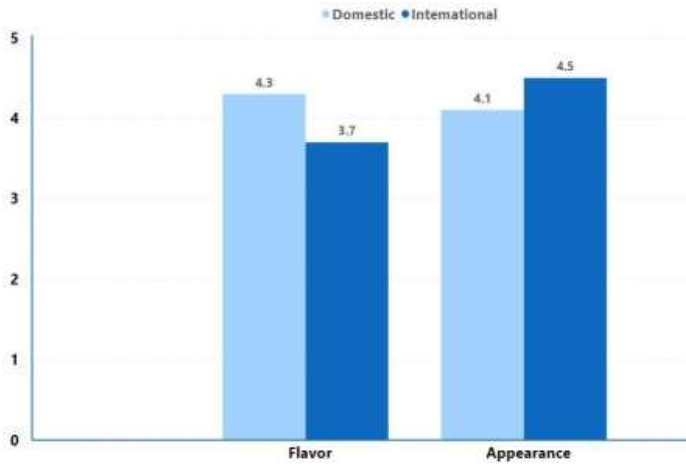
The factor loading table 6 shown above supports the fact that items like presentation, colour, and ingredients are heavily loaded on the first factor, whereas items like tastes, richness in spices, and unique style of cooking are loaded on the second factor. The data in the above-mentioned table VI

shows that factor 1 is related to the presentation and looks of the food item, and factor 2 is related to the taste of the food item. Thus, factors 1 and 2 are named appearance (factor 1) and flavour (factor 2), respectively. Hence, with the factor analysis implementation, the characteristics of Rajasthani food items are categorized into two classes: appearance and flavour. The weightage given by domestic and international tourists to these extracted factors was then analysed and tested for differences in means. A T-test was applied to check whether equal weightage was given by national and international tourists to the factors, and the test results are given in Table 6.

**Test Results**

Table 7. Test Results

Factor	Tourist Type	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Results
Appearance	Domestic	297	4.17	0.54	-5.88	382	***
	International	87	4.53	0.39			
Flavour	Domestic	297	4.33	0.55	9.73	382	***
	International	87	3.72	0.43			



T-test results reveal a significant difference in the ratings given by domestic and international tourists to both factors. For Factor 1, i.e., appearance, the mean score of domestic and international tourists differs considerably ( $t = 5.88, p < 0.001$ ). The mean score shows that international tourists give more weightage to appearance as compared to domestic tourists. In the case of Factor 2, i.e., flavour, there was again a statistically compelling difference between the mean scores of domestic and international tourists ( $t = 9.73, p < 0.001$ ), but in this case, the mean score of domestic tourists was higher as compared to international tourists. This indicates that domestic tourists are more inclined towards the flavours as compared to international gastronomy tourists. Thus, the above analysis affirms that international tourists give more preference to appearance, whereas domestic tourists give more preference to flavour with regard to Rajasthani cuisine.

**6. Scope of the Study:**

With the help of this study which is focused on the Rajasthani Regions, known in the world as a famous tourist destination among the international and national. Few destination can also be promoted and apply the principles into the marketing of the other tourist destinations.

**7. Limitation of the Study:**

The study considers only the region of India which is a state at present. Before 1947 this province was having many small regions which was ruled by the different rulers. Whereas, the India is one of the largest Constitute of in the world and has many of the states, known in the world for their rich classical dishes, cuisines as well as gastronomy.

## 8. Conclusion and Recommendations

The research study aimed to find out the determinant factors that define Rajasthani cuisine and if there are any relevant differences in the preferences and choices made by national and international tourists with regard to the listed factors. To administer the study, two distinct types of questionnaires were designed: one for the hosts (chefs, hotel and restaurant owners and managers) and the second one for the visitors. The research was confined to the state of Rajasthan and the data was collected from five major tourist hubs of the state, namely Jaipur, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Ajmer, and Udaipur. Hosts' questionnaire revealed that though both types of food tourists, domestic as well as international, try out Rajasthani food, as far as their fondness is concerned, regional food is more relished by the native travellers compared to tourists.

Further, to classify the vital characteristics of the state's cuisine, six aspects were given to the participants to rate, and all the factors were analysed using the exploratory factor analysis method. Using the method described above, two primary factors were identified: "Appearance" and "Flavour." The scores of these two factors were finally compared between domestic and international tourists to know whether different weightages were given by them to these two factors. The test results state that international tourists like the food appearance. On the other hand, domestic tourists appreciate the flavour more.

Hence, the above analysis shows that the experiences of domestic and international tourists regarding Rajasthani cuisine are contrasting. Data also supports the fact that though Rajasthani cuisine is ordered by both domestic as well as foreign tourists in restaurants, domestic tourists cherish it more as compared to international tourists. On the contrary, international tourists are pleased by the appearance more, compared to the flavour of the cuisine.

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