

# Culinary Tourism in the US



The idea of culinary tourism started in Paris, with the French reputation for being great chefs luring visitors eager to learn the secrets of their cuisine. Although the term 'culinary tourism' has been widespread for a number of years, only recently has its economic effect been brought to light in the US. In a recent survey by Gourmet magazine, it was discovered that visitors are now flocking to the US on trips based on food and wine. This applies to foreign visitors and, of course, the Americans themselves.

Culinary tourists were found to be younger, more educated and more affluent than other groups of visitors. The survey highlighted the most popular regions for food, which were California, Florida and New York. For wine, California, New York and Missouri were the top three. 27 million tourists went to these areas of the US with food and wine the main themes of their trips. It was calculated that the average 2006 tourist spent \$1.194 per trip, with one third of the whole budget being splashed out on beverages and food. Tourists engaging in wine tasting trips naturally spent most of their money on wine, whereas even those with interests elsewhere still spent 23% of their money on drink.

Prospective travellers have been using the internet more and more to search for new culinary experiences, some making reservations months in advance. The number of visitors, intent on trying new food and wine whilst on trips, is growing at a steady rate of 6% per year. The bigger food chains have begun to cater even more for culinary tourists. For example, Mcdonalds in Oregon even uses the local Tillamook cheese for its cheeseburgers.

Date: 2007-02-27

Article link: <http://www.tourism-review.com/culinary-tourism-in-the-us-news201>