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Food Place Profiling and the Conformity Paradox

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Abstract

Drawing on earlier research on local food, terroir, authenticity, food narratives and conformity in branding efforts, we study the place branding strategies of four Danish coastal destinations, each focusing on profiling themselves as food places for tourists. Based on analyses of online food-related promotional material along the food tourism value chain, overlapping food discourses characterised by terroir typicality and historical references are identified. Differences in food discourses also appear which are critical in view of achieving a distinct food place brand. Moreover, it is argued that these destinations appear to conjure up quite generic food place brands where the promotional discourses are conceived as fairly similar thereby giving little substance to local food. The paper concludes with a discussion of alternative promotional discourses aiming at enhancing local food identity.

Keywords: food place profiling, food tourism, terroir typicality, culinary typicality, authenticity, conformity